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RESPONSIBLE TOURISM IN KERALA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RESPONSIBLE TOURISM IN VAIKOM

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ABSTRACT

Kerala is one of India's top tourist destinations, known as "God's Own Country." Kerala has emerged as one of the prime tourism destinations on the national and international tourism map. Tourism generates a good amount of revenue for Kerala state finance. There are several challenges also Kerala tourism industry faces like water and air pollution, environmental degradation, deterioration of cultural heritage and social problems. Recognizing these adverse impacts now Kerala Tourism department focusses on "to create better places for people to live in and for people to visit." Kerala state tourism department takes forward the concept of responsibility in tourism into practice. For giving an ecofriendly face in the field of tourism the Kerala state tourism department implemented the concept of responsible tourism in the year 2007. Vaikom in Kottayam district is an important tourist place in Kerala.

The Present study is an attempt analyze the various responsible tourism activities in Vaikom in Kottayam district. The main findings of this study are: Majority of local people believes that responsible tourism generates employment opportunities for local people. Many respondents believe that there are still some problems persisting in the tourism sector even after the implementation of responsible tourism. After the implementation of responsible tourism service providers incorporating local people in their work. Responsible tourism is helpful for women empowerment. Tourists are also believing that responsible tourism is good for sustainable development of tourism industry. About half of tourists are ready to pay more for responsible tourism. Responsible tourism in Vaikom serves as a model for those involving in tourism industry. Responsible Tourism has brought numerous benefits, there are still significant challenges to address.

KEYWORDS: Assessing, Performance, Management, Relation, Corporate Culture

INTRODUCTION

Responsible Tourism is defined by Goodwin (2011) as a strategy that "creates better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit" through sustainable practices. Kerala's RT framework

aligns closely with this definition by focusing on stakeholder collaboration and sustainability (Jose & Abraham, 2020). Kerala's Responsible Tourism starts in the year 2008 with a pilot project in Kumarakom in Kottayam district, which became a role model for other regions. Responsible Tourism in Kerala based on four pillars: Local Economic Development, Social Responsibility, Cultural Responsibility, and Environmental Responsibility. More collaboration between government bodies, NGOs, and private stakeholders is essential to streamline Responsible Tourism efforts and ensure policy coherence (Nair & Menon, 2021). Vaikom is one of the famous tourist destinations in Kottayam district in Kerala. Vaikom implemented responsible tourism from 2017 onwards. Here we can see women groups kudumbashree shops, good waste management system, Eco-friendly boating etc.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Tourism emerged as a main contributor for economic development in almost all the developing nations, the authorities are permitting the tourism activities without considering negative effects. As a result, the negative effects will be more than that of positive effects. After realizing many countries introduced Responsible Tourism in many parts of the world. In Kerala also Government realizes the importance of sustainable tourism and introduced the same in main tourist places in Kerala from 2017 onwards. Vaikom in Kottayam district is an important tourist place in Kerala.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Responsible tourism is a approach by creating a win-win situation between present and future, it is about creating better places for people to live in and better places to people to visit. Responsible tourism initiative of Kerala at Vaikom in Kottayam district came up with outstanding results and emerged as the model destination in the implementation of responsible tourism. The Present study is an attempt analyze the various responsible tourism activities in Vaikom in Kottayam district.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To identify responsible tourism activities in Vaikom
2. To evaluate the benefits for local people through responsible tourism in Vaikom
3. To study the pros and cons of responsible tourism in Vaikom
4. To study the opinion of tourist about responsible tourism.

METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the facts collected and observation made in the local people engaged in tourism industry at Vaikom in Kottayam District. Both analytical and descriptive designs were used in this study.

COLLECTION OF DATA

The data required for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data collected by using convenience sampling method from 150 respondents in Vaikom. Secondary data collected from newspapers, Internet, Books KTDC booklets etc.

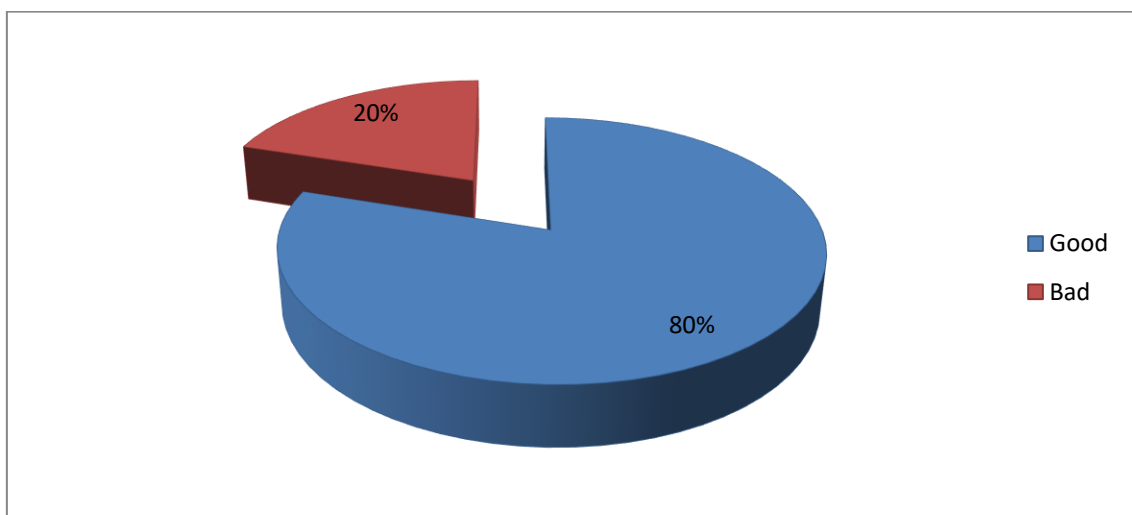
ANALYSIS

Table Is tourism good or bad for Vaikom?

Factors	No. of respondents	Percentage
Good	120	80
Bad	30	20
Total	150	100

Source: Primary data

Figure Is tourism good or bad for Vaikom



Source: Primary data

Majority -80 percent of total respondents feel that the tourism activities are good for Vaikom. But 20

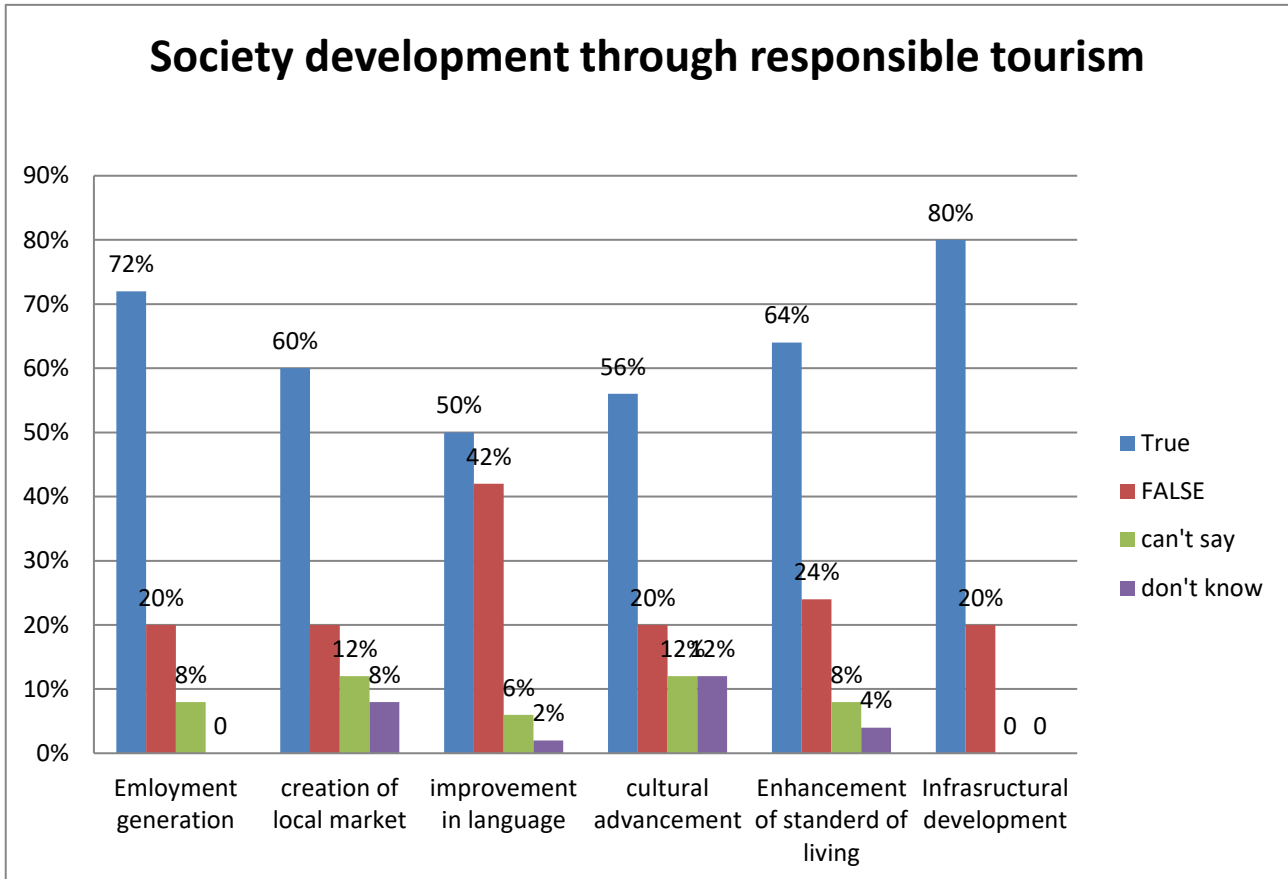
percent are having the opinion that tourism is not good for Vaikom.

Table 4 Society development through responsible tourism

Advantages	True		False		Can't say		Don't know	
	No. of respondents	%	No. Of respondent	%	No. of respondents	%	No. Of respondent	%
1.employment generation	108	72	30	20	12	8	0	0
2.creation of local market	90	60	30	20	18	12	12	8
3.improvement In language	75	50	63	42	9	6	3	2
4.cultural advancement	85	56	30	20	18	12	18	12
5.Enhancement in Standard of living	96	64	36	24	12	8	6	4
6. Infrastructural Development	120	80	30	20	0	0	0	0

Source: Primary data

Figure



Source: Primary data

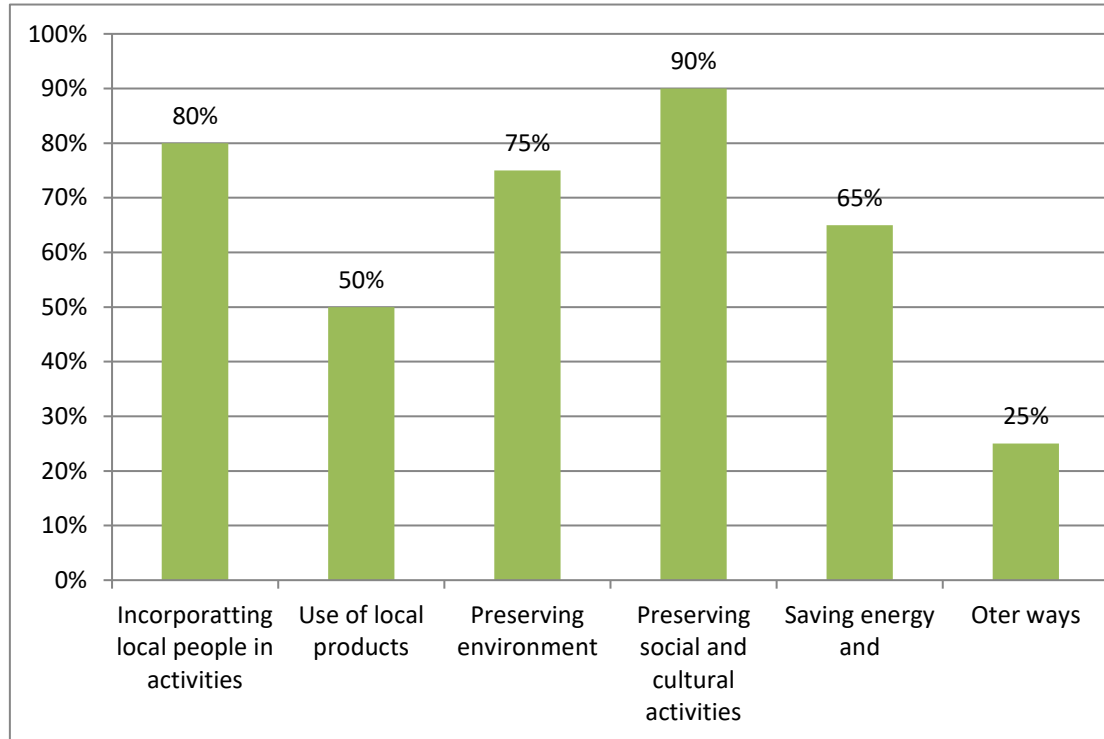
The main benefits of local community from tourism, is employment creation improvement in language capacity of local people, cultural advancement, enhancement of standard of living, infrastructural development. Main benefit received from responsible tourism is employment generation for local people creation of local market is another main benefit from responsible tourism. 64 percent of respondents in vaikom feels that their standard of living improves because of responsible tourism.

Table Responsible tourism by tourism service providers

Nature of activity	Percentage
Incorporating local people in activity	80%
Use of local products	50%
Preserving environment	75%
Preserving social and cultural activities	90%
Saving energy and water resources	65%
Other ways	25%

Source: Primary data

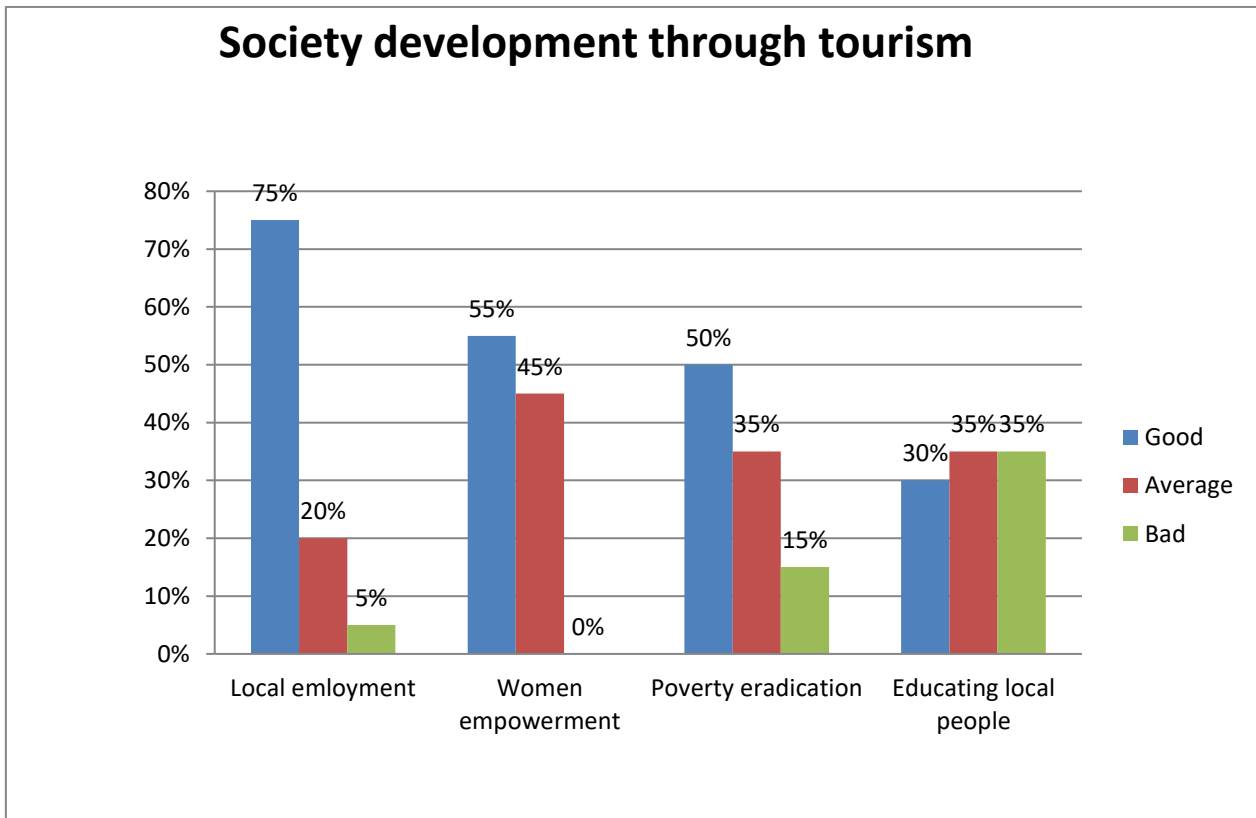
Figure Responsible tourism by service providers



Source: Primary data

In vaikom about 90 per cent of tourism service providers are practicing responsible tourism by preserving social and cultural activities. And 80 percent incorporates local people in their activities by way of providing employment. About 75 per cent are using local products for promoting responsible tourism.

Figure



Source: Primary data

Majority 75 percent of the people rated the local employment as good. Majority 55 per cent feels that women empowerment through responsible tourism could develop the local society.

FINDINGS

1. Majority of respondents believes that tourism is good for development of vaikom
2. Majority of local people believes that responsible tourism generates employment opportunities for local people.
3. Many respondents have opined that there are still some problems persisting in the tourism section even after the implementation of responsible tourism.
4. After the implementation of responsible tourism service providers incorporating local people in their work
5. Responsible tourism is helpful for women empowerment.
6. Tourists are also believing that responsible tourism is good for sustainable development of tourism

industry.

7. About half of tourists are ready to pay for responsible tourism.

Suggestions

- 1. More Training Programs:** For building Capacity for Responsible tourism local governments should give more training for local people and for tourism service providers
- 2. More Incentives:** Government should give more financial incentive to those business they are adopting Responsible Tourism. Because practicing responsible Tourism is an expensive one for tourism service providers.
- 3.Enhanced Marketing:** More advertisement and social media advertisement in all around the world that Kerala is following Responsible Tourism. This will attract more tourists all around the world.

CONCLUSION:

Responsible tourism in Vaikom serves as a model for those playing in tourism industry. has brought numerous benefits, there are still significant challenges to address. Continued efforts in policy enforcement, community engagement, and sustainable practices are essential for the long-term success of responsible tourism in Kerala. Kerala's responsible tourism model has set a bench mark for Responsible Tourism practices in India. Kerala's focusses on local community involvement, cultural preservation, and environmental protection offers great knowledge for other parts of the world.

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