

Impact and Influence of Eco Tourism on the Local People with Special Reference to Konni

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ABSTRACT: *Word over tourism is fast picking up as a tool for economic development and employment generation. Kerala is dominated by domestic tourism within the state although foreign tourists arrivals to the state has been growing at a faster rate than national average. The present study on the “impact and influence of eco-tourism on the local people with special reference to Konni” is aimed to study the degree of influence of ecotourism to the inhabitants of Konni village. The study revealed that tourism creates employment opportunities and helps in improving the standard of living of local people.*

KEYWORDS: *Tourism, eco- tourism, Konni, development*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the World's largest and fastest growing industries. The world Tourism organizations (WTO) statistics indicate that tourism industry will continue to expand over years. According to WTO, international tourists arrivals worldwide will reach 105 billion by 2020. It was felt that both international and domestic tourism can contribute towards regional development within a country.

The most visible economic benefit of tourism is employment. Most sectors of this tourism industry are labour intensive and require relatively short training for most jobs. In Kerala the total employment generated in the sector both direct and indirect is about 7 lakhs. With the accelerated investments in tourism sector there should be direct employment opportunities for over 10 thousand persons every year.

Ecotourism is a form of tourism involving visiting fragile, pristine, and relatively undisturbed natural areas, intended as a low-impact and often small scale alternative to standard commercial tourism. Ecotourism brings a large amount of income in to a local economy in the form of payment for goods and services needed by tourists, accounting for 30% of the World's Trade of Services and 6% of overall exports of goods and services. It also creates opportunities for employment in the service sector of economy associated with tourism.

Konni, a forested village in the State of Kerala in South India, situated on the bank of mighty Achencoil River has a long and rich history of man-forest interface it is an amazing place which shows the beauty of the wild.

Statement Of The Problem

Kerala has emerged as one of the prime tourism destinations on the national and international map and is considered as the tourism trendsetter in the country. The present study on the “impact and influence of eco tourism on the local people with special reference to Konni” is aimed to study the degree of influence of ecotourism to the inhabitants of Konni village.

Scope Of The Study

The study on the “impact and influence of eco tourism on the local people with special reference to Konni” is to find out the influence of ecotourism on local people and a beautiful village Konni because of the huge number of tourists arrival to Konni. The data is collected natives only. The study is based on the perception of natives towards the benefits and problems from eco tourism

Objectives

1. To study the current status of tourism in terms of employments.
2. To know the problems faced by natives due to Ecotourism.
3. To understand the challenges in the site.
4. To assess how tourism affects the standard of living of the local people.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Source:

Primary data: To make the study more realistic and accurate, a questionnaire was prepared and administered among 50 natives of Konni.

Secondary data: The secondary data chosen for aiding the study are mainly taken from books, journals, documents, websites, and other publication.

Population

Population of the study consist of all the natives in Konni

Sampling

For the purpose of selecting the sample convenience sampling is used. 50natives from Konni is selected

Tools Of Analysis

The data is analysed and interpreted with the help of mathematical methods. Simple percentage method is used in analyzing' the data.

Simple percentage = No. of respondents /total no. of respondents *100

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. M.V. Vinitha, Sinu Susan Varghese, Sneha Alex in their study "A Study on Tourists Inclination to Visit Konni" analysed the overall review of tourist preferences and satisfaction on Konni elephant cage and various problem faced by the tourists in Konni. SPSS software was used to analyze the data obtained from the tourists. Study revealed that the main factors that influence the tourists to visit Konni is the scenic beauty or attractiveness of nature and the popularity of the place. The study also revealed that majority of tourists were satisfied with the facilities and potentials in Konni. The researchers suggested that most of the respondents were not satisfied with the navigations like sign boards, the management should provide more sign boards to reach the destination.
2. Shihabudheen N, (2012), in his study entitled "Problems and Prospects of Ecotourism in Kerala: Some Empirical Evidence from 'Kumbalangi' Panchayat In Ernakulam District (India)", made a case study of the problems and prospects of ecotourism in Kerala based on a field based survey at "Kumbalangi" Panchayat in Ernakulamdistrict.the researcher conclude that the policies of the Government has already made 'Kumbalangi' a successful ecotourism village in the whole of India. Public private sector participation seems to be quite essential, approach towards a holistic, integrated and sustainable tourism development.
3. N.K.Nikhil * Dr.Santha S ,(2015), in their study on the "Effectiveness of Responsible Tourism at Kumarakom, Kerala", analysed the effectiveness of Responsible Tourism at Kumarakom, Kerala.50 respondents (business houses) were selected as samples by adopting convenience sampling method. Karl Pearson Chi-Square Test, Friedman and percentage were used for analysis. The study revealed that responsible tourism resulted in increase in the standard of living of the respondents. The business houses were able to equipping themselves for tourism.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The present chapter includes the analysis of data collected from the respondents and its interpretation in the form of chart and table. Percentage method is used for analyzing the data.

Table No: 1 Table showing opinion whether tourist arrival is increasing year after year

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	32	64
No	6	12
No opinion	12	24
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: From the data it is observed that 64% of the respondents are of the opinion that the tourist arrival to Konni increases year after year. 24% of the respondents have no opinion in this regard. Others have the opinion that there is no increase in the number of tourist in year after year.

Chart No: 1

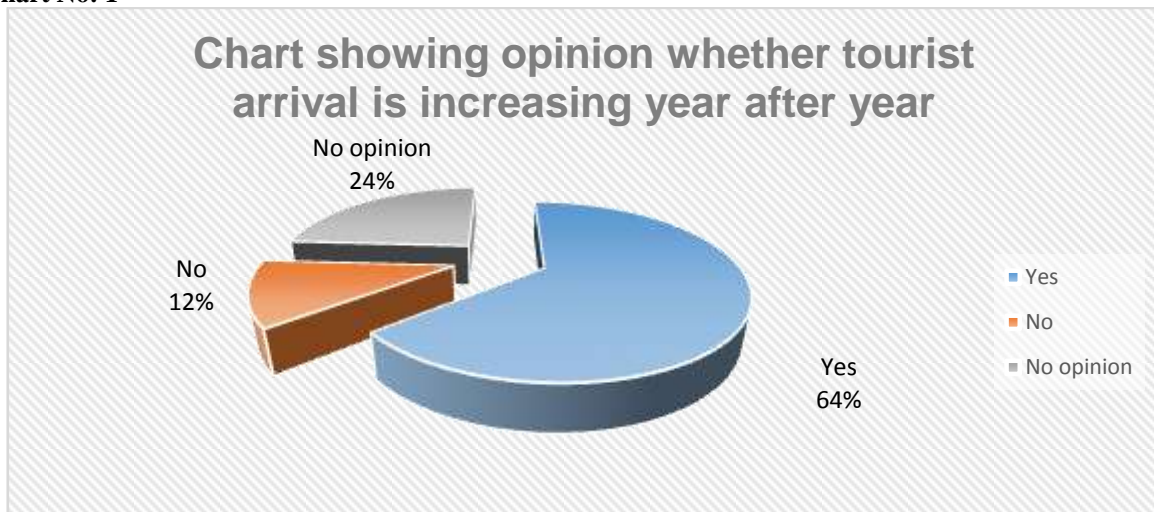


Table No: 2

Table showing opinion whether tourism brings development to the place

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	50	100
No	0	0
No opinion	0	0
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: It is inferred from the above table that 100% of the respondents are of the opinion that tourism brings development to this place.

Chart No: 2

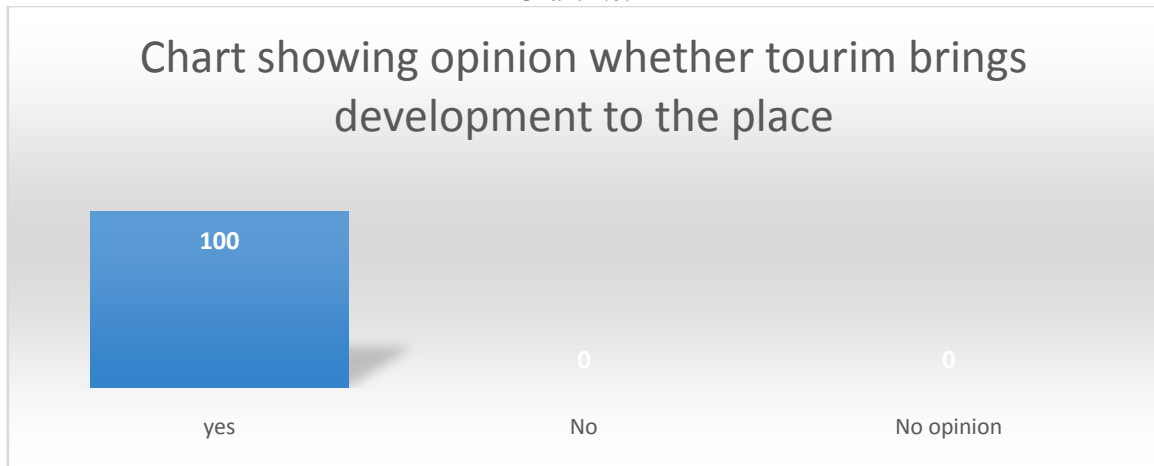


Table No: 3 Table showing opinion whether tourism brings employment opportunities to the local people

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	40	80
No	0	0
No opinion	10	20
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: The above table shows that 80% of the respondents are of the opinion that tourism brings employment opportunities to the local people and 10% of the respondents have no opinion

Chart No: 3

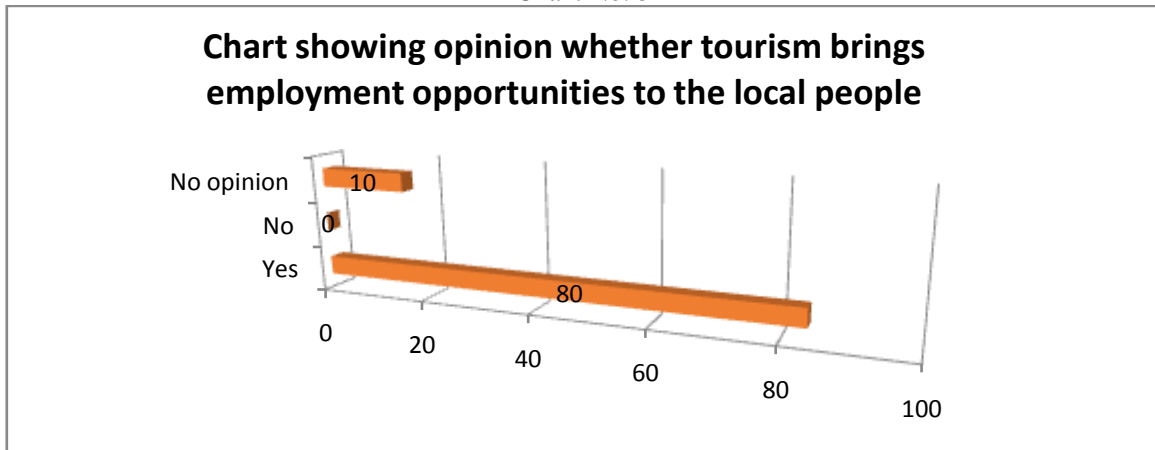


Table No: 4 Table showing opinion whether tourism improves standard of living of the local people

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	35	70
No	11	22
No opinion	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: Respondents have controversial opinion in this regard. 70% favors and 22% oppose.8% have no opinion.

Chart No: 4

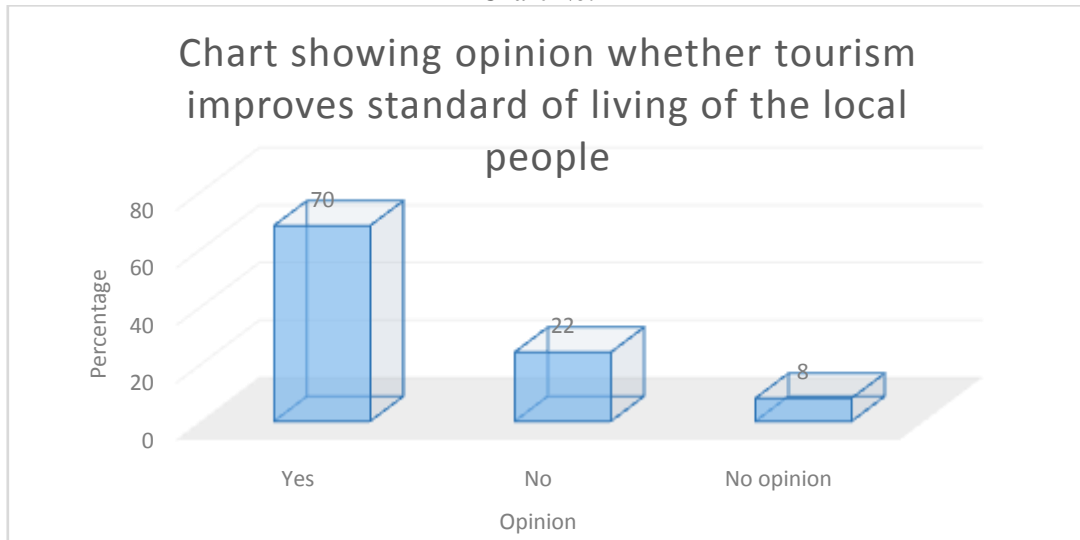


Table No: 5 Table showing opinion whether tourism increases pollution in this area

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	18	36
No	38	56
No opinion	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: From the above data it is found that 56% of the respondents are of the opinion that tourism does not increase pollution while 36% are of the opinion that tourism increases pollution in the area and 8% have no opinion in this regard.

Chart :5

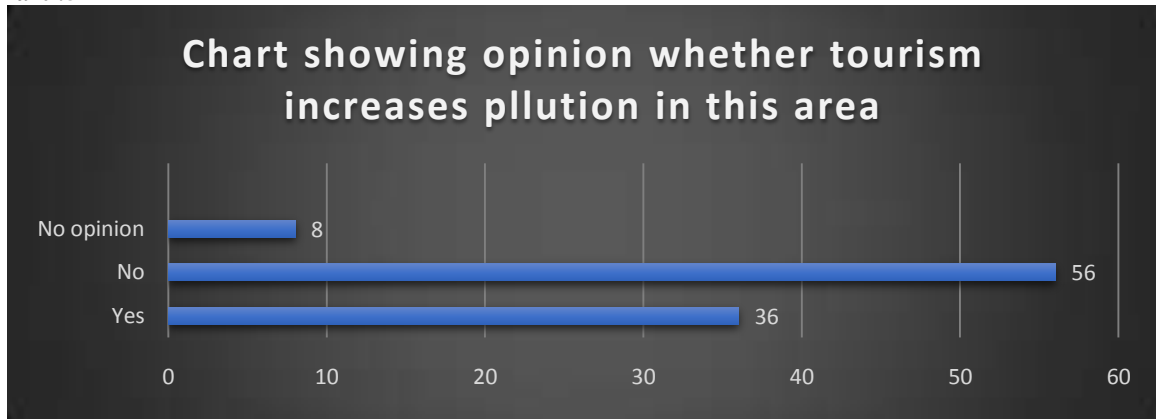


Table No: 6 Table showing opinion whether criminal activities crop up in the area

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	8	16
No	27	54
No opinion	15	30
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: 54% are of the opinion that tourism does not increase criminal activities in the area, 30% have no opinion and 16% thinks that tourism increases criminal activities.

Chart No:6

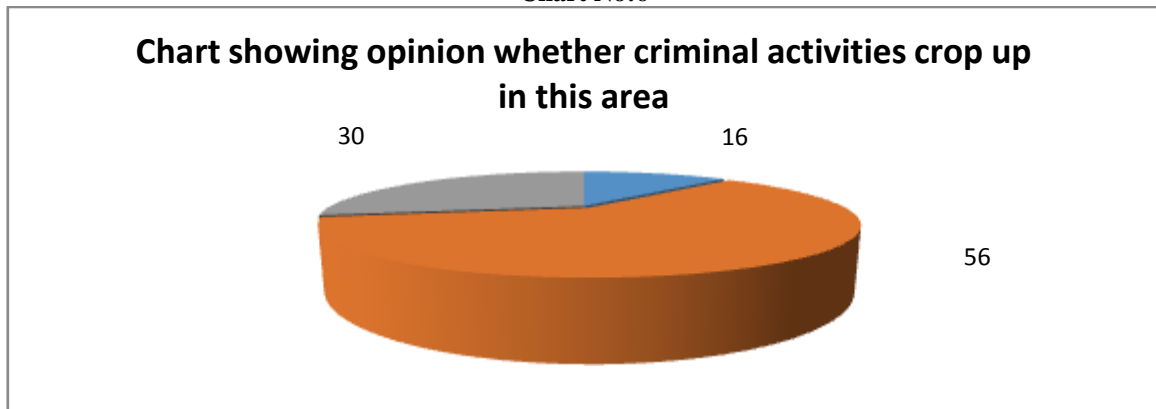


Table No: 7 Table showing opinion whether tourism affects life of the local people adversely

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	20
No	26	42
No opinion	14	28
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: 42% thinks that tourism does not affect the life of the local people adversely, 28% have no opinion and 20% are of the opinion that tourism adversely affect their life

Chart No:7

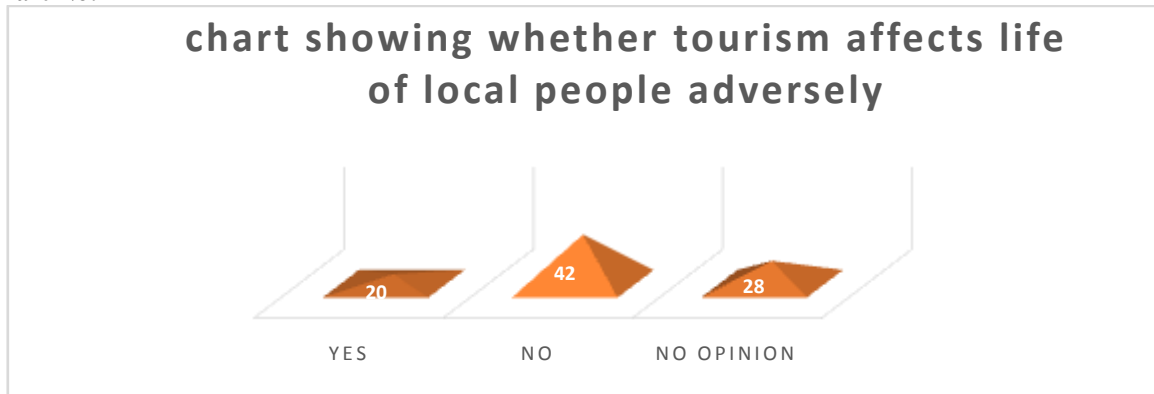


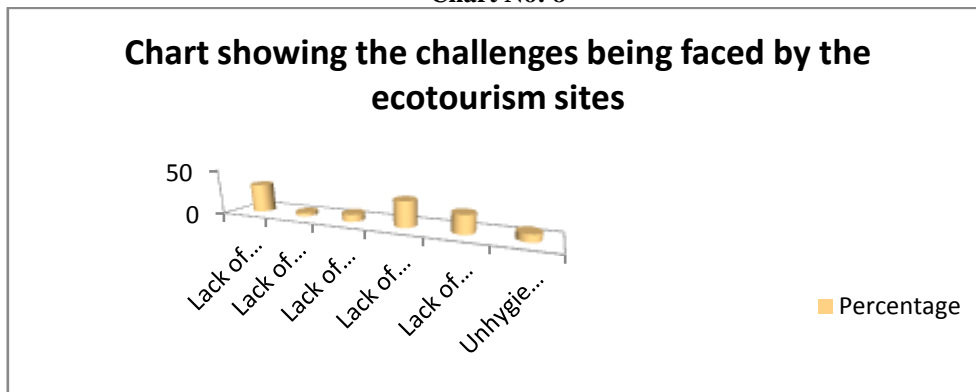
Table No: 8 Table showing the challenges being faced by the ecotourism site

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Lack of local support for promotion of tourism	16	32
Lack of publicity about the site	2	4
Lack of educated and informative guides	4	8
Lack of support from the government	14	28
Lack of maintenance and rejuvenation of the site	10	20
Unhygienic environment	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: Lack of localsupport for promotion of tourism is the most challenging factor. 28% of respondents are of the opinion that lack of support from government is the most challenging factor. Lack of maintenance and rejuvenation of the site is in third position. Lack of educated and informative guides and unhygienic environment are the next most challenging factor. Lack of publicity about the site is in the last position.

Chart No: 8



V. FINDINGS:

The major findings of the study are:

1. Tourists from Kerala are visiting Konni most. Tourists from other states are second in position and foreigners are rare.
2. 60% of the respondents are living in this area for more than 15 years.
3. From the analysis it is observed that 64% of the respondents are of the opinion that tourist arrival to this place increase year after year.
4. The study revealed that tourism brings development to the place.
5. From the analysis it is observed that 80%of the respondents are of the opinion that tourism brings employment opportunities to the local people.
6. 70% of respondents are of the opion that tourism helps in raising standard of living of local people.
7. More than half of the respondents (56%) are of the opinion that tourism does not increase pollution.
8. 54% of the respondents are of the opinion that tourism does not increase criminal activities in the area.
9. 42% thinks that tourism does not affect the life of the local people adversely,

10. 36% of the respondents are of the opinion that the quality of facilities provided to the tourists is very good.
11. Lack of proper accommodation is the hindrance which affects the tourists most.
12. Lack of local support for promotion of tourism is the most challenging factor of tourism in this area.

Suggestions:

1. Even though Konni is popular and famous to the tourists in Kerala and other states, the sites need more popularity to bring more tourists from abroad through advertisements,
2. Local bodies must give more concentration on pollution control measures. Useful and innovative waste management programmes must be implemented.
3. The attitudes of locals towards tourism and tourists should be modified to bridge the gap between them

VI. CONCLUSION:

Kerala is one of the tourist destinations attracting domestic and international tourist and it is famous for its natural beauty. Konni is a hub of a variety of tourism spot which includes elephant training center, Achencoil river and kumbhuvurutty waterfalls. The study revealed that tourism creates employment opportunities and helps in improving the standard of living of local people. Tourism does not create hindrances to the day to day life of the natives. This study is very much helpful in finding out contributions of tourism to the development of Konni and possibilities of tourism yet to come.

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