

# A STUDY ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF ECO-TOURISM AT PALAKKAD WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ANANGAN MOUNTAIN

Dr. BYJU.K | Principal, AMC Group of Educational Institutions, Manisseri post, Ottapalam pin – 679521.

## Abstract

Through in this paper, an empirical analysis is made to find out the improvement, attitude, opinion and satisfaction scores of civilians in the locality of Anangan Mala (Anangan Mountain) towards eco-tourism in the locality. An effort is also made to find out the development progress such as infrastructure, transport facility, comfort facilities of tourist and also attitudes of government and local authorities towards the progression of eco-tourism in Anangan Mala region.

## Introduction

Kerala, a state located on the tropical coast of Malabar in southwestern India, is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the country. Named one of the ten paradises in the world by National Geographic Traveler, Kerala is especially famous for its ecotourism initiatives and beautiful backwaters. Its unique culture and traditions, along with its varied demography, have made Kerala one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. Growing at a rate of 13.31%, the tourism industry is a major contributor to the state's economy.

Until the early 1980s, Kerala was a relatively unknown destination, with the majority of tourist circuits concentrated in the north of the country. The aggressive marketing campaigns launched by the Tourism Development Corporation of Kerala, the government agency that oversees the state's tourism prospects, laid the foundation for the growth of the tourism industry. In the decades that followed, Kerala Tourism was able to become one of the niche tourist destinations in India. The slogan Kerala - God's own country was adopted in its tourism promotions and became a global super brand. Kerala is considered one of the destinations with the greatest brand memory.

Kerala is an established destination for both domestic and foreign tourists. Kerala is known for its beaches, backwaters in Alappuzha and Kollam, mountain ranges and wildlife sanctuaries. Other popular attractions in the state include the beaches of Kovalam, Varkala, Kollam and Kappad; backwater tourism and lake complexes around Lake Ashtamudi, mountain resorts and resorts in Munnar, Wayanad, Nelliampathi, Vagamon and Ponmudi; and national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in the Periyar, Parambikulam and Eravikulam National Park.

The state's tourism agenda promotes ecologically sustained tourism, which focuses on local culture, desert adventures, volunteering and personal growth of the local population. Efforts are made to minimize the adverse effects of traditional tourism on the natural environment and improve the cultural integrity of the local population.

## Anangan Mala (Anangan Mountain)

Anangan Mala (Anangan Mountain) is located 10 kilometers from the city of Ottapalam heading north. Anangan mala is famous for its wealth of Ayurvedic herbs, as a place of filming movies and as a place of adventure climbing in Ottapalam. The hill extends up to 18 km from Ambalappara to Ananganadi through Varode, Panamanna, Kothakurssi, Melur and Kizhur. You will get a beautiful view of the south side of Anangan Mala travelling through the Ottapalam - Cherpulassery road and you will get the view of the north side travelling through the Melur - Kizhur road, the famous Panikkarkunnu, which was the filming location of many films. Anangan Mala is an eco-tourism site controlled by the Kerala Forest Department, in the Ottapalam forest range.

Anangan Mala has a popular history that was established among local people. In the epic of Ramayana, when Lakshmana is seriously injured during the battle against Ravana, Hanuman is sent to look for the Mitha Sanjivani, a powerful herb that restores life, from the Dronagiri mountain in the Himalayas, to revive it. But when he arrived in the Himalayas he forgot the grass and, therefore, took the whole mountain in his hand and fled to Lanka. On his way, a piece of the hill fell and Hanuman did his best to retake it, but it was in vain. This Anangatha Mala (Mountain without movement) later known as Anangan Mala.

### Statement of the problem

The majority of the civilians in Anangan Mala region is economically and socially backwards. Despite being one of the educated and prosperous states of the country, Kerala is facing the worst natural calamities like Floods, earthquakes recently in the last few years. After achieving so much on the social and economic frontier, what is it lacking? Who to blame? – Monsoon Rains, Unpredictable Cyclones or Human activities? These factors may cause some anxiety and deference opinion among Kerala people and based on the above questions the following objectives were set for the study.

### OBJECTIVES

1. A comparative survey on the socio-economic status of local civilians
2. An empirical study on development progression of eco-tourism in ANANGAN MOUNTAIN area
3. To study the attitude of the local community towards eco-tourism

### Research Methodology

The study uses a descriptive and analytical research design. The primary data was collected from civilians in Anangan mountain area. The convenient sampling method is used to select a sample for data collection. Sample size contains two hundred respondents to collect relevant information a well-structured questionnaire was used.

### Review of literature

According to Dr. Vijaya Kumar's book "Environment, tourism and development" (2014), tourism and the environment should not only depend on each other but also benefit from each other. It also highlights the importance of the environment in tourism.

Viji M. (2014) in his article entitled "Ecotourism and sustainable socio-economic development" talks about how ecotourism can be made sustainable for the socio-economic development of the region. The author considers that the income generated through ecotourism activities can be used in the development of protected areas.

Pandey Deepan (2014) in his article "Perspectives and limitations of ecotourism in the state of Sikkim" tries to show the possibilities and obstacles in the development of ecotourism in Sikkim. The author considers that, if implemented correctly, ecotourism can be a great source of income for poor families and can act as an incentive for local communities to protect the environment. On the other hand, if tourism activities are not properly monitored, it can have a negative impact not only on the ecology but also on the social and economic life of local communities.

Kumar Amit (2014) in his article entitled "Sikkim: a role model for ecotourism in India: a critical analysis" critically analyzes Sikkim's ecotourism policy that is trying to create responsible and sustainable ecotourism. The author states that the efforts made by the Sikkim government to develop ecotourism in the state can act as a reference point for the other states in the Himalayan region. The benefit-sharing approach adopted in Sikkim will make it possible for local communities to participate and contribute to the conservation program.

Mishra et. al (2011), conducted an investigation entitled "Causality between tourism and economic growth: empirical evidence from India". His study used popular time series models for the period from 1978 to 2009 and provided evidence of the long-term unidirectional causality of tourism activities to the country's economic growth. As part of the political implications, they suggested that all the wings of central and state governments, private agencies and voluntary organizations should be active partners in the effort to achieve sustainable growth in tourism and the economy in general.

Prabha Shastri Ranade (2008) in his book "Ecotourism, Perspectives and Experiences" analyzes a series of issues to determine what constitutes successful ecotourism and how to balance conservation with development. It also attempts to highlight general issues related to the concept and principles of ecotourism. His book highlights ecotourism and local economic development. Consider how ecotourism can generate economic benefits and provide alternative employment and income opportunities for local communities.

Rajakumari (2007) in his study on 'Tourism: an epitome of incentives' explains that to reduce financial leaks in tourism, it would be important to increase local ownership of tourism-related companies, build tourism infrastructure using local investors and avoid the foreigners. Investment.

According to Santhosh Thampi (2001), ecotourism became important as a strategy to reconcile conservation with development in ecologically rich areas. He points out that ecotourism comprises a series of interrelated components, all of which should be present for authentic ecotourism to occur.

**Table 1 : AGE GROUP**

Age	No of respondents	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15-25	32	16.0
	25-35	44	22.0
	35-45	43	21.5
	45-55	40	20.0
	55-65	24	12.0
	65-75	17	8.5
	Total	200	100.0

The table one shows that majority of 22% of the respondents in the age group of 25-35 years and 21.5% between 35-45 age group.

**Table 2 Income level**

	No of respondents	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	BELOW 100000	65	32.5
	100000-250000	62	31.0
	250000-500000	56	28.0
	500000-1000000	15	7.5
	1000000&ABOVE	2	1.0
	Total	200	100.0

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents 32.5% belonging to the pay scale of bellow one lakh, and 31% in between one lakh to two lakh. Only below 10% of the total respondents have income more than 5 lakh. So the income status of the area is generally very low.

**Table 3 : EMPLOYMENT**

	No of respondents	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	GOVT	24	12.0
	PVT.	51	25.5
	BUSINESS	27	13.5
	AGRICULTURE	54	27.0
	LABOURER	44	22.0
	Total	200	100.0

The table 3 shows that majority of the respondents in this area are agriculturists (27%), and 22% are labourers and 25.5% employed in the private sector.

**Table 4: GENDER**

		No of respondents	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	132	66.0	66.0
	FEMALE	68	34.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents are male and 34% belonging females.

**Table 5: EDUCATION**

		No of respondents	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SSLC	55	27.5	27.5
	PLUS 2	76	38.0	65.5
	DEGREE	50	25.0	91.0
	POST-GRADUATION&ABOVE	18	9.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	

Table 5 shows that 38% of the respondents have education in plus two and 27.5% in SSLC. Very few going for higher education in this area.

**Table 6 : MARITAL STATUS**

		No of respondents	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MARRIED	155	77.5	77.5
	UNMARRIED	45	22.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	

Table 6 shows that majority of the respondents are married (77.5%), and 22.5% are unmarried.

**Table 7: OWN VEHICLE**

		No of respondents	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO VEHICLE	115	57.5	57.5
	BICYCLE	23	11.5	69.0
	TWO WHEELER	47	23.5	92.5
	FOUR WHEELER	15	7.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	

Table 7 shows that majority of the respondents having no vehicle (57.5%), and very few having four-wheelers only (7.5%).

**Table 8 improvement score by respondents**

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
INFRASTRUCTURE	200	1	4	2.74	0.68
TOURIST SUPPORT	200	2	4	3.12	0.75
TRANSPORT FACILITIES	200	1	4	2.56	0.71
OTHER ENTERTAINMENTS	200	1	4	3.12	0.72
COMFORT FACILITIES	200	1	4	3.00	0.66
average of average :				2.91	

Table 8 shows the weighted average improvement score by the respondents in various variables. The overall mean score is 2.91 it's below average and came under the scale of poor.

**Table 9 opinion score by respondents**

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SAFETY MEASURES FROM NATURAL CALAMITIES	200	1	4	2.60	0.74
REAL ESTATE VALUE	200	1	4	2.61	0.67
STD. OF LIVING	200	1	4	2.74	0.77
SUPPORT FROM GOVT. LOCAL AUTHORITIES	200	1	4	2.85	0.73
JOB OPPORTUNITIES	200	1	5	2.60	0.79
NATIONAL POPULARITY	200	1	5	3.70	0.81
PEACEFUL NATURE	200	1	5	3.07	0.74
average of average :				2.88	

Table 9 shows the opinion score by the respondents and the overall mean score is only 2.88 and came under the scale of poor. Majority of the variable rated below 3. So opinion score is not satisfactory.

**Table 10 OWN VEHICLE \* INFRASTRUCTURE**

		INFRASTRUCTURE				Total
		VERY POOR	POOR	NEUTRAL	IMPROVED	
OWN VEHICLE	NO VEHICLE	1	42	61	11	115
	BICYCLE	0	11	8	4	23
	TWO WHEELER	0	16	21	10	47
	FOUR WHEELER	0	8	6	1	15
Total		1	77	96	26	200
		Value		df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square		8.554 <sup>a</sup>		9	.479	
N of Valid Cases		200				

Table 10 shows the association of own vehicle and infrastructure the P-value .479>.05 and hence rejected H<sub>0</sub> so vehicle and infrastructure are associated.

**Table 11 OWN VEHICLE \* TRANSPORT FACILITIES**

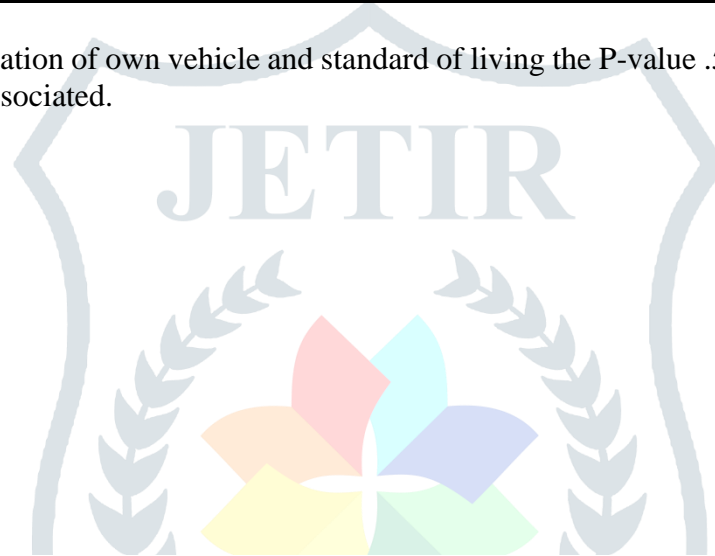
		TRANSPORT FACILITIES				Total
		VERY POOR	POOR	NEUTRAL	IMPROVED	
OWN VEHICLE	NO VEHICLE	2	46	55	12	115
	BICYCLE	2	10	10	1	23
	TWO WHEELER	2	27	16	2	47
	FOUR WHEELER	3	4	6	2	15
Total		9	87	87	17	200
		Value		df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square		18.150 <sup>a</sup>		9	.033	
N of Valid Cases		200				

Table 11 shows the association of own vehicle and transport facilities the P-value .033<.05 and hence accept H<sub>0</sub> so two variables are not associated.

**Table 12 OWN VEHICLE \* STD. OF LIVING**

		STD. OF LIVING				Total
		HIGHLY DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NEUTRAL	SATISFIED	
OWN VEHICLE	NO VEHICLE	2	52	40	21	115
	BICYCLE	1	6	13	3	23
	TWO WHEELER	2	15	21	9	47
	FOUR WHEELER	0	5	8	2	15
Total		5	78	82	35	200
		Value		df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square		8.055 <sup>a</sup>		9	.529	
N of Valid Cases		200				

Table 12 shows the association of own vehicle and standard of living the P-value .529>.05 and hence rejected  $H_0$  so two variables are associated.

**Table 13 EDUCATION \* JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

		JOB OPPORTUNITIES				
		HIGHLY DISSATISFIED	DIS SATISFIED	NEUTRAL	SATISFIED	
EDUCATION	SSLC	3	20	22	9	
	PLUS 2	4	31	32	9	
	DEGREE	3	28	15	5	
	POST-GRADUATION&ABOVE	1	6	10	1	
Total		11	85	79	24	
		Value		df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square		9.724 <sup>a</sup>		12	.640	
N of Valid Cases		200				

Table 13 shows the association of Education and Job Opportunities the P-value .640>.05 and hence rejected  $H_0$  so two variables are associated.



**Table 14 INCOME LEVEL \* STD. OF LIVING**

		STD. OF LIVING			
		HIGHLY DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NEUTRAL	SATISFIED
INCOME LEVEL	BELOW 100000	0	27	24	14
	100000-250000	4	21	28	9
	250000-500000	1	22	23	10
	500000-1000000	0	6	7	2
	1000000&ABOVE	0	2	0	0
Total		5	78	82	35
		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square		11.363 <sup>a</sup>	12	.498	
N of Valid Cases		200			

Table 14 shows the association of Income Level and standard of living the P-value .498>.05 and hence rejected  $H_0$  so two variables are associated.

**Table 15 MARITAL STATUS \* STD. OF LIVING**

		STD. OF LIVING				Total
		HIGHLY DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NEUTRAL	SATISFIED	
MARITAL STATUS	MARRIED	4	56	67	28	155
	UNMARRIED	1	22	15	7	45
Total		5	78	82	35	200
		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)		
Pearson Chi-Square		2.432 <sup>a</sup>	3	.488		
N of Valid Cases		200				

Table 15 shows the association of Marital Status and standard of living the P-value .488>.05 and hence rejected  $H_0$  so two variables are associated.

### ONA WAY ANOVA

One way ANOVA has been applied to find out whether there is any significant difference in improvement score and opinion score among the different age groups.

**Table 16 ANOVA improvement score**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	SIG	S/NS
INFRASTRUCTURE	Between Groups	6.998	5	1.4	3.159	0.009	NS
	Within Groups	85.957	194	0.443			
	Total	92.955	199				
TRANSPORT FACILITIES	Between Groups	0.822	5	0.164	0.318	0.902	S
	Within Groups	100.458	194	0.518			
	Total	101.28	199				
TOURIST SUPPORT	Between Groups	8.466	5	1.693	3.2	0.008	NS
	Within Groups	102.654	194	0.529			
	Total	111.12	199				

COMFORT FACILITIES	Between Groups	4.463	5	0.893	2.073	0.07	NS
	Within Groups	83.537	194	0.431			
	Total	88	199				
OTHER ENTERTAINMENTS	Between Groups	1.154	5	0.231	0.439	0.721	S
	Within Groups	101.966	194	0.526			
	Total	103.12	199				

\* S- Significant, SN – Not Significant

It is understood from the above table 16 there is a significant difference in transport facilities and other entertainments and no significant difference in infrastructure, tourism support and comfort facilities.

Table 17 ANOVA opinion score

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	SIG	S/NS
SAFETY MEASURES FROM NATURAL CALAMITIES	Between Groups		6.645	5	1.329	2.539	0.032	NS
	Within Groups		101.55	194	0.523			
	Total		108.195	199				
REALESTATE VALUE	Between Groups		4.55	5	0.91	2.071	0.071	NS
	Within Groups		85.245	194	0.439			
	Total		89.795	199				
STD. OF LIVING	Between Groups		3.679	5	0.736	1.238	0.293	S
	Within Groups		115.276	194	0.594			
	Total		118.955	199				
SUPPORT FROM GOVT. LOCAL AUTHORITIES	Between Groups		7.688	5	1.538	3.05	0.011	NS
	Within Groups		97.812	194	0.504			
	Total		105.5	199				
JOB OPERTUNITIES	Between Groups		4.994	5	0.999	1.626	0.155	S
	Within Groups		119.201	194	0.614			
	Total		124.195	199				
NATIONAL POPULARITY	Between Groups		11.63	5	2.326	3.8	0.003	NS
	Within Groups		118.765	194	0.612			
	Total		130.395	199				
PEACEFUL NATURE	Between Groups		1.854	5	0.371	0.671	0.646	S
	Within Groups		107.166	194	0.552			
	Total		109.02	199				

\* S- Significant, SN – Not Significant

It is understood from the above table 16 there is a significant difference in the standard of living, Job opportunities and peaceful nature and no significant difference in safety measures from natural calamities, real-estate value, support from government local authorities and national popularity.

### Suggestions

- Income level of local people is below average. The majority having below 1 lakh. So steps to be taken to improve employment opportunities
- 65% of the respondents are undergraduates, encourage them by providing better educational facilities.
- Improve infrastructure facilities to attract more tourist in the area, this variable is rated below average.
- It is required to improve the confidence of the local people from natural calamities
- Steps to be taken to improve public transport facilities in the area.



## Conclusion

The study revealed that eco-tourism development process is a very primitive stage in that area. The overall improvement score and the opinion score are below the average. Steps to be taken to improve the public transport system, educational facilities, job opportunities and thereby enhancing the standard of living of the local people. Give them orientation classes and awareness program for the relevance of education and also eco-tourism and tourism promotion for the overall development of the country.

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