

## **Hurdles Faced By Tourism Industry in Kerala**

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Date of Submission: 13-01-2019

Date of acceptance: 28-01-2019

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### **I. Introduction**

Tourism being one of the most important smokeless service industries brings a handsome revenue to the state of Kerala. The tourists to Kerala include both domestic and foreign travelers. The government of Kerala and Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) considers this industry as one of the most important sectors contributing to the development of the state. Moderate climate, geographical peculiarities, culture, educated native people, medical facilities etc makes the state a marketable tourist destination.

In such a context, it is very important to know the gap between the expectations and experiences of the various components of the tourism industry. The investigator through an opinion survey attempts to analyze the perceived hurdles faced by tourism industry in Kerala to emerge as a tourism hub.

### **II. Method**

#### **Participants**

The sample was extracted from a heterogeneous group. The sample included tour operators, travel agents, registered tour guides, local guides, service providers, medical tourism centers, officials of KTDC and domestic and foreign tourists. Data was collected from a sample of 300 individuals giving due weightage to each group.

#### **Tool**

In this study, the investigator used a questionnaire with a proforma. The proforma consist the personal details like name, age, experience in the field, area of operation etc of the respondent. Apart from the proforma a questionnaire on perceived hurdles faced by tourism industry in Kerala (Labeeba & Subramanian, 2018) containing ten items which were to be rated from one to ten was also administered.

#### **Procedure**

Each item of the questionnaire was about a perceived hurdle to tourism industry in Kerala. The respondent was to rate them from one to ten as the most important hurdle to the least important.

### **III. Analysis Results**

According to the percentage analysis of the survey results the most important hurdle is unhygeinity of tourist locations and public places (43%). The second one is the negative propaganda and comments through social media (23%). Third one is the connectivity problems between tourism destinations (12%). Scarcity of translators & help desks, unexpected strikes & harthals, hostile attitude of some local people, pathetic condition of roads, outdated marketing strategies of KTDC, safety and security reason and red tapism of various governmental departments constitutes the remaining 22%.

#### **Suggestions**

A well planned, well organized and well co-ordinate cleanliness drive of a sustainable nature by seeking co-operation from all the sectors of society with appropriate management from the part of the government is the urgent need for the survival of the industry. Cyber warriors of official nature are to be appointed to counter the negative propaganda and online bad mouthing. Connectivity and conveyance especially through water ways are to be improved. Government or KTDC must provide training to various groups connected to tourism industry. Special hospitality training is to be given to auto-taxi-cab drivers and tourist guides. Public awareness must be created to highlight the scope of tourism industry as an earning to all sectors of society. Tourist felicitation centers and help desks with internet connectivity and ticket booking facilities are to be open in all major bus terminals, railway stations and airports.

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IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM) is UGC approved Journal with SI. No. 4481, Journal no. 46879.

Labeeba.K. "Hurdles Faced By Tourism Industry in Kerala" *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 2019, pp. -.73-74