

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE STATE OF KERALA, INDIA: A STUDY OF DESTINATION ATTRACTIVENESS

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Abstract

This paper describes the context and framework for assessing destination attractiveness of Kerala, an emerging tourism destination in a developing country. The study reveals its strengths and weaknesses from the demand side perspective and suggests a number of valuable implications for destination marketing efforts. Comparing an array of attractions and experience elements for the destination of Kerala, the analysis highlights the importance of specific destination attraction elements as core appeals of the destination. The analysis provides a solid theoretical rationale for the spectacular performance of Kerala tourism in recent years across a number of fronts. However, negative gaps have been observed for a few vital attraction elements, broadly suggesting the need for modifying area specific development efforts to enhance the tourists experience with these attraction elements. Based on the findings of the study, the need for a moderately different emphasis in guiding both the product and promotional development activities were identified. In addition, this paper gives a glance into the development and prospects of tourism in the state of Kerala.