



AN ASSESSMENT OF ECO-FRIENDLY TOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE LIGHT OF QUALITY NATURE AND POLLUTION FREE LOCATIONS

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Abstract

There are various forms of tourism and each has different impacts to the environment. Tourism is a term used to describe the movement of individuals to areas outside their usual place of residence. It involves the actual activity of travelling and the activities that they indulge in during their stay in the destination. One form of tourism is wildlife tourism. In this case, tourists visit areas where wildlife is in abundance in order to view wild animals in their natural environment. Another form is cultural tourism whereby the tourists mainly visit a destination in order to learn more about different cultures. Religious tourists, on the other hand, are those that that travel for pilgrimage. Ecotourism may be described as Environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy, study and appreciate nature and any accompanying cultural features that promote conservation, have a negative visitation impact and provide for substantial beneficial activity. In the changing situation people are busy and uncared about the environment and more particularly the tourism places are not kept clean. There is also other view that emerges these days in the form of ecotourism or ecofriendly tourism that expects the tourists to have more care and concern to the environment in all spheres. This makes base for the study in the light of attitude and perception of tourists towards ecotourism.

Key words: *tourism, attitude, perception, environment.*

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Introduction:

Tourism is a term used to describe the movement of individuals to areas outside their usual place of residence. It involves the actual activity of travelling and the activities that they indulge in during their stay in the destination. There are various forms of tourism and each has different impacts to the environment. One form of tourism is wildlife tourism. In this case,

tourists visit areas where wildlife is in abundance in order to view wild animals in their natural environment. Another form is cultural tourism whereby the tourists mainly visit a destination in order to learn more about different cultures. Religious tourists, on the other hand, are those that that travel for pilgrimage. These individuals mainly travel in large masses to holy cities. Such cities include



Varanasi, Jerusalem and Mecca. Another form of tourism is sports tourism. In this case, individuals visit other places either to view or participate in sporting events. This mainly occurs when there is a sporting event such as the Olympics. Some tourists travel for the sole purpose of rebuilding their health and stamina. They are referred to as health or medical tourists. It involves traveling great distances in search of medical treatment. One of the advantages of this is the issue of reduced costs. Some also enjoy alternative forms of therapy such as those experienced in hot springs. Other forms of tourism include educational tourism, business tourism and family tourism. There are alternative forms of tourism that greatly differ from traditional tourism since they strive to establish a mutual relationship between the tourists and the local communities (Eadington & Smith, 1992). Alternative tourism is vital in today's world since it is a key driver of sustainability and sustainable development. One of these forms is ecotourism. Several benefits are tied to this form of tourism since it encourages conservation and preservation of the environment. Ecotourism may be described as Environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy, study and appreciate nature and any accompanying cultural features that promote conservation, have a negative visitation impact and provide for substantial beneficial activity. In the changing situation people are busy and uncared about the environment and more particularly the tourism places are not kept clean. There is also other view that emerges these days in the form of ecotourism or ecofriendly tourism that expects the tourists to have more care and concern to the environment in all spheres.

Review of literature:

Ting (Tina) Li (2021) *Ecotourism is a fast-growing tourism sector, but the value of ecotourism trips from tourists' perspective has seldom been studied, which led to the current study that examined outbound Chinese tourists' value perceptions of*

ecotourism trips. Data were collected from Chinese tourists on bus tours to a well-known Australian ecotourism site over an one-year period. The study suggested tourists' experiences impacted on perceived ecotour value in a number of ways. In particular, all experience dimensions influenced one or more of the five value dimensions examined, while entertainment, relating, and education experiences influenced each of the five value dimensions. The study offers important implications for both ecotourism researchers and operators attempting to understand and manage the key experiential offerings that could help maximize value to international tourists.

Clare D'Souza (2019) This research sheds light on community organisations and how they can shape the landscape for ecotourism sustainability. It identifies work identity attributes that involve pro-environmental behaviours for achieving institutional challenges to meet sustainability for ecotourism goals. First, a framework on managing community organisations and its impact is proposed and empirically tested, which includes theoretical perspectives of work identity attributes like pro-environmental behaviours, community values and involvement for building community capacity. A conceptual model was developed to guide this study. A mixed-method study has been designed involving 28 interviews, followed by testing 266 responses, analyzed through Structural Equation Modelling and Cluster Analysis. Through identifying clusters of individuals based on their demographics, behaviours and perceived individual effectiveness for supporting eco-tourism the research demonstrates that individuals with pro-environmental behaviour can act as agents of change for realizing ecotourism and sustainable development goals. The research highlights that work identities require specific personal attributes to influence the change process through sustainability for ecotourism.

By examining these attributes on community values and involvement, this study offers insights for institutional change processes that meet the central tenets of sustainability for ecotourism.

Objectives of the study:

1. To assess the eco-friendly experience of tourists based on gender, age, place of tour, place of living with the attitude and perception.
2. To measure the ecofriendly experience of the tourists in terms of preserving the nature (Quality) and pollution free situation.
3. To assess the perception and attitude of tourists in terms of ecofriendly tour experience
4. To compare the opinion of the respondents toward eco-friendly tour experience based on the various types of tour planned / opted by the tourists.

Methodology:

Data Collection: The study covers both primary and secondary data collected from the field and library source.

Sample design: there are two major tourist attractions in south Tamilnadu namely Kanyakumari that that the unique feature of three seas meeting at one place and the other is the Tirunelveli that has lot of dams, falls, temples. Considering these advantageous features, the sample is designed in these locations.

Sampling method: Simple random sampling method is adopted in this study as the researcher has found it to be more relevant for the study. As many as 1200 samples in each such tour places were collected in a period of 4

months. In four months, the researcher has systematically planned to visit various places within the selected areas and initiated his study by identifying the potential respondents.

Results and Discussion:

MEASURES OF CENTRAL TENDENCY AND DISPERSION, Z STATISTIC, ANOVA, BIVARIATE CORRELATION AND STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING – “Eco-friendly tour experience”

The “Eco-friendly tour experience” has been analyzed using Measures of Central Tendency (Mean) and Measures of Dispersion (Standard Deviation), Z Statistic (difference of opinion – two demographical groups), ANOVA (difference of opinion – more than two demographical groups), Bivariate Correlation and Structural Equation Modelling. The analysis is as follows; Measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion – “Eco-friendly tour experience (“Quality nature experience and Pollution free locations”)

The present part of the table represents the mean and standard deviation of the “Eco-friendly tour experience (“Quality nature experience and Pollution free locations”)

. The “Eco friendly tour experience (“Quality nature experience and Pollution free locations”) has been measured under two dimensions like motivation and satisfaction and the gapanalysis is also has been displayed in the table. The “Eco-friendly tour experience (“Quality nature experience and Pollution free locations”) has seven measuring questions. The measures of central tendency (mean) and measures of dispersion (standard deviation) have been used to measure the central point of each variable, as opined by the respondents. The analysis has been displayed separately for the expectation and agreement and is as follows;

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of “Eco-friendly tour experience (“Quality nature experience and Pollution free locations”)

Measuring Items/ Questions	N	Mean	SD
Reduce waste	2400	3.98	.143
Conserve water	2400	3.28	.451
Reusable products	2400	4.62	.486
Eco conscious food service	2400	4.21	.554
Eco conscious accommodation	2400	3.22	.586



Conscious practice of Eco tourism	2400	3.96	.286
Other facilitating factors of ecology	2400	3.78	.417
MeanScore	2400	3.99	.102

The respondents strongly agree with the statement that **“reusable products”** with a mean value of **4.62** and with a standard deviation value of **0.486**.

The respondents strongly agree with the statement that **“Eco conscious food service”** with a mean value of **4.21** and with a standard deviation value of **0.554**.

The respondents agree with the statement that **“reduce waste”** with a mean value of **3.98** and with a standard deviation value of **0.143**.

The respondents agree with the statement that **“Conscious practice of Eco tourism”** with a mean value of **3.96** and with a standard deviation value of **0.286**.

The respondents agree with the statement that **“other facilitating factors of ecology”** with a mean value of **3.78** and with a standard deviation value of **0.417**.

The respondents agree with the statement that **“Conserve water”** with a mean value of **3.28** and with a standard deviation value of **0.451**.

The respondents agree with the statement that **“Eco conscious accommodation ”** with a mean value of **3.22** and with a standard deviation value of **0.586**.

The respondents agree with the variable that they have constraint related to **“Quality Nature Experience”** with a mean value of **3.99** and with a standard deviation value of **0.102**.

Table 2
Mean and Standard Deviation of “Eco friendly tour experience(“Perception and Attitude”)

Measuring Items/ Questions	N	Mean	SD
Use of dustbin for wastages	2400	3.45	1.155
Non-use of plastics everywhere	2400	3.72	.993
Preserve the nature in all aspects	2400	3.92	.613
Purchase of ecofriendly products	2400	3.54	.594
Incentives for conscious practice of eco-tourism	2400	3.69	.463
Smoke free attitude	2400	3.65	.516
Proper drainage facility	2400	3.92	.804
Disposal of waste immediately	2400	3.68	.486
Attitude of co-tourists	2400	4.42	.494
Regulation by the responsible people	2400	4.23	.593
MeanScore	2400	3.85	.356

The respondents strongly agree with the statement that **“attitude of co-tourists”** with a mean value of **4.42** and with a standard deviation value of **0.494**.

The respondents strongly agree with the statement that **“regulation by responsible people”** with a mean value of **4.23** and with a standard deviation value of **0.593**.

The respondents agree with the statement that **“Preserve the nature in all aspects”** with a mean value of **3.92** and with a standard deviation value of **0.613**.

The respondents agree with the statement that **“Proper drainage facility”** with a mean value of **3.92** and with a standard deviation value of **0.804**.

The respondents agree with the statement that **“Non-use of plastics everywhere”** with a mean value of **3.72** and with a standard deviation value of **0.993**.

The respondents agree with the statement that **“Incentives for conscious practice of eco-tourism”** with a mean value of **3.69** and with a standard deviation value of **0.463**.



The respondents agree with the statement that “Disposal of waste immediately” with a mean value of **3.68** and with a standard deviation value of **0.486**.

The respondents agree with the statement that “Smoke free attitude” with a mean value of **3.65** and with a standard deviation value of **0.516**.

The respondents agree with the statement that “Purchase of ecofriendly products” with a mean value of **3.54** and with a standard deviation value of **0.594**.

The respondents agree with the statement that “Use of dustbin for wastages” with a mean value of **3.45** and with a standard deviation value of **1.155**.

The respondents agree with the variable that they have constraint related to “**perception and attitude**” with a mean value of **3.85** and with a standard deviation value of **0.356**.

Table: 3
Mean and Standard Deviation of “Eco friendly tour experience”

Measuring Variable	N	Mean	SD
Pollution free environment	2,400	3.99	.102
Quality nature experience	2,400	3.85	.356
Mean Score	2,400	4.03	.299
<i>* Primary source</i>			

The respondents agree with the variable that they have constraint related to “**eco-friendly tour experience**” with a mean value of **3.99** and with a standard deviation value of **0.102**.

The respondents agree with the variable that they have constraint related to “**quality nature experience**” with a mean value of **3.85** and with a standard deviation value of **0.356**.

The respondents strongly agree with the variable that they have constraint related to “**eco-friendly tour experience**” with a mean value of **4.03** and with a standard deviation value of **0.299**.

Z Statistic – “Eco friendly tour experience”

The part of the analysis measures the difference of opinion between the variable of “**Eco friendly tour experience**” based on the **demographical profile** like “**Gender**”, “**Marital Status**”, and “**Nativity**”. The Z statistics is used to analyze the difference of opinion between the two categories of the demographical profile. Since there are only two groups in the demographical profile the Z statistics has been used. The analysis has been displayed separately for the urban and rural respondent’s and is as follows;

Table: 4

Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience based on the “Gender” Category

H₀: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience based on the “Gender” Category.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
Male	1220	3.99	.112	-.678	.498
Female	1180	3.99	.085	-.711	.477

From the above table the variable “**Eco friendly tour experience based on gender**” shows no significant difference based on the “**Gender**” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference of opinion on Ecofriendly tour experience based on gender.



Table: 5

Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience based on the “Marital Status” Category

H0: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience based on the “Marital Status” Category.

Labels	N	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
Married	1080	3.99	.109	-1.033	.002*
Unmarried	1320	4.00	0.000	-2.659	.008*

N– Number of Respondents
SD– Standard Deviation

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience shows significant difference based on the “Marital Status” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is less than the actual significance ($P < 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant difference of opinion on ecofriendly tour experience based on the marital status of the respondents.

Table: 6

Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience based on the Nativity Category

H0: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience (“Quality Nature Experience”)” based on the “Place of Tour” Category.

Labels	N	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
Rural	1340	3.99	.104	-.240	.811
Urban	1060	3.99	.092	-.260	.795

Source-Primary Data **N– Number of Respondents**
***Significant at 0.05%** **SD– Standard Deviation**

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience shows no significant difference based on the “Nativity” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference of opinion on ecofriendly tour experience based on the place of tour relating to quality nature tour experience.

Table: 7

Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience (“Pollution free”)” based on the “Gender” Category

H0: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience (“Pollution Free”)” based on the “Gender” Category.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
CSD	Male	1220	3.86	.347	.851	.395
	Female	1180	3.84	.370	.841	.401

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience (“Pollution free”)” shows no significant difference based on the “Gender” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference of opinion on ecofriendly tour experience based on gender in relation to pollution free tour experience.



Table: 8
Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience(“Perception & Attitude”)” based on the “Marital Status” Category

H0: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience (“perception and attitude”)” based on the “Marital Status” Category.

Variable	Marital Status	N	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
CSD	Married	1220	3.85	.357	-.037	.971
	Unmarried	1180	3.85	.357	-.037	.971

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience(“Perception & Attitude”)” shows no significant difference based on the “Marital Status” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance level ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference of opinion on ecofriendly tour experience based on the marital status of the respondents relating to perception and attitude towards tour experience.

Table: 9
Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience(“Perception & Attitude”)” based on the “Place of Tour” Category

H0: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience (“Pollution Free”)” based on the “Place of Tour” Category.

Labels	N	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
Rural	1340	3.85	.358	-.208	.835
Urban	1060	3.86	.351	-.211	.833

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience(“Perception & Attitude”)” shows no significant difference based on the “Place of Tour” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table: 10
Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience ”based on the “Gender” Category

H0: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience” based on the “Gender” Category.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
Male	1220	4.03	.206	-.272	.786
Female	1180	4.03	.246	-.263	.793

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience” shows no significant difference based on the “Gender” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table: 11
Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience ”based on the “Marital Status” Category

H0: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience ” based on the “Marital Status” Category.

Marital Status	N	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
Married	1220	4.03	.232	.319	.750
Unmarried	1180	4.02	.150	.437	.663

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience” shows no significant difference based on the “Marital Status” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table:12

Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience ”based on the “Nativity” Category

H₀: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience ”based on the “Nativity” Category.

Nativity	N	Mean	SD	Z	Sig.
Rural	1340	4.02	.220	-1.565	.118
Urban	1060	4.06	.236	-1.495	.137

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience” shows no significant difference based on the “Nativity” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference of opinion on ecofriendly tour experience based on nativity of the respondents.

One Way Analysis of Variance(ANOVA)–“Eco friendly tour experience”

The part of the analysis measures the difference of opinion between the variable of “Eco friendly tour experience” based on the Demographical Profile category like “Age”, “Purpose of tour”, “Duration planning tour”, “Respondent’s Attitude” and “Perception”. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics is used to analyse the difference of opinion between the more than two categories of the demographical profile. Since there are more than two groups in the demographical profile the analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics has been used. The analysis has been displayed separately for the urban and rural respondent’s and is as follows;

Table: 13

Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience (“Quality Nature”)” based on the “Age” Category

H₀: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience (“Quality Nature”)” based on the “Age” Category.

Age	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Less than 25	960 (20.00)	3.91	.294	3.954	.004*
25 – 35	1420 (29.58)	4.00	.064		
36 – 45	1640 (34.16)	3.99	.089		
Above 45	380 (16.25)	3.98	.126		
Total	4800 (100)	4.00	0.000		

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience (“Eco friendly tourism”)” show significant difference based on the “Age” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is less than the actual significance ($P < 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant difference of opinion on ecofriendly tour experience based on age in the light of quality nature experience.

Table: 14

Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience (“Quality nature”)” based on the “Purpose of Tour” Category

H₀: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience (“Quality Nature Experience”)” based on the “Type of Tour” Category.

Labels	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Spiritual	240 (5.00)	3.98	.136		
Entertaining	740 (15.41)	4.00	.056		



Family	3320 (69.16)	3.99	.115	1.227	.299
Others	500 (10.41)	3.98	.158		
Total	4800 (100)	3.99	.102		

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience (“Quality Nature Experience”)” shows no significant difference based on the “Type of Tour” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference between the ecofriendly tour experience and the type of tour relating to quality nature experience.

Table:14
Difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience(“Pollution Free”)” based on the “Duration planning tour” Category

H₀: There is no significant difference of opinion on “Eco friendly tour experience(“Pollution free”)” based on the “Duration planning tour” Category.

Labels	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Less than one month	700 (14.58)	4.00	0.000	1.023	.394
1 – 2 months	840 (17.50)	3.98	.140		
2 – 3 months	1420 (29.58)	3.99	.090		
Above 3 months	1840 (38.33)	4.00	0.000		
Total	4800 (100.00)				

From the above table the variable “Eco friendly tour experience (“Pollution Free”)” shows no significant difference based on the “Duration planning tour” categories of the respondents. Since its calculated significance value is greater than the actual significance ($P > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference between ecofriendly tour experiences based on the duration of planning the tour.

Conclusion:

The study concludes that there are two important dimensions in the ecotourism namely the quality and pollution free tour experience. These two parameters have been checked with the help of perception and attitude of tourists towards ecotourism factors. The study finds that the personal factors like age, gender, marital status, place of tour, purpose of tour, tour plan and type of tour has more relevance. It is because these factors make the tour to be more effective. These influential factors are tested with the help of the statistical tools such as chi square, correlation, factor analysis and ANOVA test. All the tools applied gives the

outcome that there is no difference in the ecotourism factors of Ecofriendly tour experience, quality nature experience and pollution free situation. People love to take up tour programme with a motivation to relax and enjoy the nature. The facilitating factor in the ecotourism is missing to some extent which is found to be a major concern of ecotourism that requires immediate attention on the part of the government, local authority and other stakeholders. The quality nature and pollution free locations cannot be a hundred percent experience for the tourists and the mission points of ecotourism need to be addressed and strengthened to make the expectations of the tourist a reality.

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