

**THENMALA ECOTOURISM PROJECT AND COMMUNITY
EMPOWERMENT: AN EVALUATION STUDY**

A dissertation submitted to the University of Kerala in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

2017-2019

Submitted by

ANCY LAL

Exam Code: 91514404

Candidate Code: 91517115002

Subject Code: SW 245



LOYOLA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SREEKARIYAM, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM- 695017, KERALA

UNIVERSITY OF KERALA

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled “**Thenmala Ecotourism Project and Community Empowerment: An Evaluation Study**” is a record of genuine work done by **Ms. Ancy Lal**, fourth semester Master of Social Work student of this college under my supervision and guidance and that it is hereby approved for submission.

Dr. Sonny Jose
Research Guide
Head of the Department of Social Work
Loyola College of Social Sciences
Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram

Recommended for forwarding to the University of Kerala

Dr. Sonny Jose
Head of the Department of Social Work
Loyola College of Social Sciences
Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram

Recommended to the University of Kerala
Dr. Saji P. Jacob
Principal
Loyola College of Social Sciences
Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram

DECLARATION

I, ANCY LAL do here by declare that the Dissertation Titled “**THENMALA ECOTOURISM PROJECT AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT: AN EVALUATION STUDY**” is based on the original work carried out by me and submitted to the University of Kerala during the year 2017-2019 towards partial fulfillment of the requirements for the **Master of Social Work** Degree Examination. It has not been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or other similar title of recognition before.

Sreekariyam
Thiruvananthapuram

Ms. Ancy Lal
23/09/2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Fore mostly I extend profound thanks to Almighty God who has blessed me the opportunities and intellectual ability to complete my research successfully.

*I was lucky to have **Dr. Sonny Jose, Faculty Head of Social Work Department, Loyola College of Social Sciences** as my guide. He was the leading spirit in my endeavor; he had motivated me in my times of confusion, stood for me, with me. At this juncture I extend my heartfelt respect and gratitude for all the pain that he had taken for the completion of my study.*

*I extend my heartfelt gratitude to **Dr. Saji. P. Jacob, Principal Loyola College of Social Sciences, Dr Francina. P. X., Dr. Jasmine Sarah Alexander, Fr. Saji Joseph S.J, Mr. Kannan G.S and Ms. Vandana Suresh.,** faculty Members Department of Social Work for their help on various occasions during the course of this work.*

*I express my sincere thanks to **Dr. Sunil Kumar, Librarian and Mr. George Mathew** assistant librarian, Loyola College of Social Sciences for providing necessary reference materials, and their kind support for the successful completion of my work so far.*

*I am also grateful to **Dr. Prakash Pillai, Head of the Human Resource Management Department, Dr. Nisha Jolly Nelson, Head of the Sociology Department and Dr. Leena S. T, Faculty of Counselling Psychology Department** for giving the valuable corrections during the final draft presentation.*

*I express my sincere gratitude to all the **respondents** who have participated in the process of my data collection.*

*It would not have been possible for me to successfully complete this work without the constant encouragement and support of my **beloved family.***

*I could never conclude this without mentioning my **dearest friends,** whose whole hearted support made me to present this before you.*

ANCY LAL

CONTENTS

Sl. No	Chapters	Page Number
1	Introduction	
2	Review of Literature	
3	Research Methodology	
4	Case Presentation	
5	Discussion and Interpretations	
6	Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion	
7	Bibliography and Appendix	

LIST OF TABLES

Sl.No.	Title of the table	Page number
1	Socio-demographic profile of the stakeholders of TEPS	

ABSTRACT

It is widely acknowledged the immense potential of ecotourism for economic development and employment generation in our country. Promotion of ecotourism is particularly relevant in developing nations like India in spite of the excellent ecotourism resources in India the country could not utilize its vast potentials. Only during the last two decades ecotourism has been getting due attention in India. In respect of Kerala state in particular - one of the states with the highest ecotourism resources - the importance of ecotourism has been widely accepted recently. Thenmala Ecotourism Project in Kollam District in Kerala is one such project. This study reveals the prospects of ecotourism in Kerala with respect to the employment creation and consequent financial empowerment of the host community of the Thenmala Ecotourism Project. The study also tries to document the transformation that has been experienced by that community. The study revealed that the project is helpful in improving the standard of living of the stakeholders. This study would contribute to the knowledge base and may facilitate further research in this area. The study is qualitative in nature and multiple case study designs were used. The cases were purposively selected and semi structured interview guide and focus group discussion were used. Thematic analysis was done to analyze the data. The primary data were collected from four respondents and through a focus group discussion. The findings of the study indicate that It influenced the livelihood of the individual community members. The financial and social dimensions of all the respondents were positively influenced. The community members witnessed infrastructural transformations which include roads, transportation, home stays, water supply, communication; as a result of the initiation of the Thenmala Ecotourism Project.

Key words: Thenmala Ecotourism Project, transformation, host community.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Humans have travelled far and wide since the beginning of time. Food, water, safety and or acquisition of resources were the initial travel motivations. Travel for pleasure or exploration soon emerged. But the area covered under travel has always depended upon the mode of technology. The earliest travelers walked or rode on domesticated animals. The invention of the wheel and the sail provided new modes of transportation. Each improvement in technology increased individual's opportunity to travel. As roads were improved and governments stabilized, interest in travel increased for education, sightseeing and religious purposes.

Man's thirst for travelling remained growing from time immemorial. Touring or travelling opened up a person's horizon and complements his personality. Travelling also helped to differentiate between harmonies and encouraged contacts between various cultures and countries. While travelling, a traveller's mind must move and react, race and pause and move on again. Travelling helps not only to reflect on the life and times of the world, it also helps to mix East with West, culture with culture, and people with people.

Tourism has been identified as one of the world's largest smokeless industries and it is one of the fastest growing industries today. The significance of tourism has been well recognized in both the developed and developing countries. In recent times it has ushered-into a new area of expansion and importance and has emerged as an economic activity of immense global importance.

Worship of nature and conservation of ethics have been an inseparable part of Indian ethos and traditions. The Indian tradition has always taught that human kind is a part of nature and one should look upon all creations with the eyes of love and respect. As the new millennium is unfolded, we are becoming increasingly aware of the finite, interconnected and precious nature of our planet home. Likewise, tourism is becoming an increasingly popular expression of this awareness. With advances in transportation and information technology, more and more remote areas of the earth are coming within the reach of the traveller. Today, tourism is ubiquitous in the sanctuaries and national parks and this is becoming the principal means by which

people are able to experience and interact with nature. In response to this increasing appreciation of nature experiences, a new travel ethic has arisen, which is now called ecotourism. This term has become increasingly popular in both conservation and travel circles.

Ecotourism is more than a catch phrase for nature-loving travel and recreation. It is a form of tourism that utilises unique local, natural, historical and cultural resources and promotes the conservation and preservation of forests through proper management. The main activities involved in ecotourism are non-consumptive. They include bird watching, trekking, nature trails, river rafting, mere watching of the scenic beauty of the hills, valleys, meadows, water bodies and learning to live in harmony with nature. It is necessary to implement ecotourism as a green productivity program in a planned way. The philosophies and practices of ecotourism and green productivity have been a part of the tourism development strategy in recent days. It accommodates and entertains visitors in a way that is minimally intrusive or destructive to the environment.

Berle (1990) considered ecotourism as a big business that attracted lots of investment propositions, provided foreign exchange and economic rewards for the preservation of natural environment. Anderson (1994) also pointed out "ecotourism as a part of tourism must be a viable business concept." Boo(1990) explains that ecotourism is a form of nature tourism that contributes to conservation through generating funds for protected areas, creating employment opportunities for local communities and offering environmental education. The Ecotourism Society (1991) defines ecotourism as "responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people". Richardson et al, (1993) describes ecotourism as "ecologically sustainable tourism in natural areas that interprets local environment and cultures, furthers the tourist understanding of them, fosters conservation, and adds to the wellbeing of the local people." Forestry Tasmania (1994) focuses on provision of learning opportunities while providing local and regional benefits and demonstrating environmental social, cultural and economic sustainability. Tickell (1994) explains ecotourism as travelling to enjoy the worlds' amazing diversity of natural life and human culture without causing damage to either.

Ecotourism refers to the type of tourism that is centered around the ecologically interesting exotic and endangered natural environment of a tourist spot (Redfern, 1992). The origin of ecotourism lies in nature and outdoor tourism. Environment aesthetics is the most significant pull factor innate in any ecotourism destination. Ecotourism is a form of tourism that is inspired primarily by the natural history and the environment of an area. Ecotourism projects are less capital intensive. Ecotourism has recently come to be regarded as the panacea that enables us to aggressively seek tourism dollars with no obvious damage to eco systems, since wild resources are not being harvested and there is no apparent associated development. As a concept, ecotourism has gained momentum recently in India, but as a way of life Indians have practiced ecotourism since times immemorial by their traditional approach to nature and rich cultural heritage. It has received much attention in recent years especially within the developing world. Ecotourism in simple terms means management of tourism and conservation of nature in a way so as to maintain a fine balance between the requirements of tourism and ecology on the one hand and needs of the local communities for jobs, new skills, income generating employment and a better status for women on the other. Tourism policy provides the guidelines, goals and objectives and tourism planning is the process of identifying objectives and defining evaluations.

Kerala is the land of scenic beauties. The entire Kerala is an ecotourism hotspot. Kerala is a green strip of land in the South West Corner of Indian Peninsula, Wedged between palms fringed Arabian Sea on the West and the lush green Western Ghats on the East with panoramic and unique stretches backwaters in between the beaches. Backwaters, hill stations, wild life sanctuaries, and cultural festivals are the major ecotourism attraction in Kerala. Ecotourists are mostly interested in trekking, hiking, bird watching, nature photography, wildlife safari, camping, mountaineering, angling, surfing, river rafting, kayaking, and botanical study (Whelam, 1991) and all these are easily done in the ecotourism destination in Kerala". Kerala is a region of tropical climate with its own fragile ecosystems" and cultural identities for which Kerala becomes a major attraction of ecotourists. Kerala is nature's beauty. Ecotourism helps conserve nature. Meanwhile it helps provide economic incentives to the local people and revenues for the government to preserve and manage natural area. Ecotourism utilizes natural resources, it hardly harvests them. Ecotourism

provides employment to local people. Ecotourism maintains sustainability in tourism and helps promote sustainable economic development. Ecotourism provides opportunities in their unending envelops of integrity of ecosystem. It also helps generate economic achievements that make resources beneficial to local populace. Ecotourism involves purposeful travel to natural areas for understanding complexities of nature and environment.

Kerala has won the National Award for the best performing state in tourism sector and now serious attempts are made to practice Ecotourism in the state. Kerala with the super strong position in the world as 'Gods own country' and with internationally acclaimed development model has emerged as the most appreciated tourist destinations in the country. The government of Kerala, has recently announced to brand it's tourism industry in the name of 'eco-tourism'.

Kerala is blessed with the tropical forest ecosystem in the Western Ghats, which provides a natural advantage for the development of ecotourism. The government is planning to diversify the tourism products to facilitate the fast growth of tourism. The different ecotourism projects promote the sustainability of tourism in Kerala. "The needs of today's visitor should not be met at the expenses of future generations. Such as ecotourism project, based on internationally accepted principles. Will help infuse the sustainability concept of other tourism ventures outside the realm of ecotourism"

Ecotourism is becoming popular in Kerala. Eco-tourism contributes to the conservation of the natural areas by providing economic incentives and revenue for the government to preserve and manage natural areas. It utilizes the natural resources and provides employment to the local people. The built in environment education programmes raises the awareness of the local people and helps in conservation of the natural resources. Kerala has commissioned an exclusive eco-tourism project at Thenmala in the Western Ghats. Activities such as trekking through rain forests and wild life sanctuaries, staying in tree top huts etc are also gaining popularity. United Nations has declared the year 2002 as the year of ecotourism. Kerala has already geared up to meet the challenges of converting the entire tourism trade in the state to eco-friendly tourism. Generally, tourism is a large consumer of power. However, the tourism trade in Kerala is motivated to promote power conservation by encouraging

natural ventilation instead of artificial air conditioning. It aims to create the absolute minimum impact on forests, wildlife sanctuaries, farms and other environmentally sensitive regions that the Tourism has resulted in.

Ecotourism provides opportunities to study effortless nature in its original facets without altering the integrity of ecosystem. It also helps generate achievements that make conservation of natural resources beneficial to local people. Ecotourism has very high employment potential and a major source of employment and is expected grow at a higher speed than other employment because of the rapid growth of the sector. It is a complex combination of various industries such as hospitality industry, transportation industries (air, road and water) travel agencies etc, that are directly related to tourism and others such as shops, handicrafts, rental companies, leisure activities, entertainments, banking and insurance cater directly to tourism. This helps to create employment in less developed areas. When compared to many other industries, ecotourism requires employees with relatively low level of job training. As a result it may be possible to absorb a large proportion of work force from traditional sectors of the economy with minimum of training.

Ecotourism which contributes a lot to the development and growth of the economy is the only industry flourishing in Kerala over a number of years. Kerala which has received the award for the best performing state in tourism has attracted 9.95 percent of foreign tourist arrivals to India. Ecotourism in Kerala is considered to be the first state in India to have a planned Ecotourism destination development project which is under successful completion (Ecotourism Project at Thenmala). The Western Ghats of Kerala with its unique and distinct tropical eco-system provides a natural advantage for the development of Ecotourism in the state of Kerala.

Thenmala or the hills that flow with honey is situated about 72 km away from Thiruvananthapuram, on the Shencottai Road and 66 km away from Kollam. Once much sought-after for its honey believed to have medicinal properties, Thenmala is today home to India's first planned eco-tourism project. The nerve-centre of a chain of 10 satellite eco-tourism destinations scattered across the hill ranges of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Pathanamthitta districts, Thenmala is spread over acres of evergreen forests. Thenmala is a natural habitat of diverse flora and fauna, this unique eco-tourism habitat lies 500 meter above sea level. Nature trails dotted

with delightful waterfalls and enchanting picnic spots attract naturalists, conservationists and adventure seekers. With its forests, rubber estates and tea plantations, Thenmala provides the perfect background for leisure activities. Thenmala eco-tourism centre has enough activities to entertain both adults and children. The important activities are divided into Cultural zone, Adventure zone, Leisure zone and other activities.

From the mountains of the Himalayas in Kashmir to the seacoasts of Kanyakumari and from the Thar deserts of Rajasthan to the humid forests of the northeast, India displays her wealth of diversity in cultures, religious fairs and festivals. Indeed, India follows unity in diversity. Thus the geographical diversity of India makes it home to a wealth of eco systems, which are well protected and preserved. These eco-systems have become the major resources for ecotourism.

The key players in the ecotourism business are Government, local authorities, developers and operators, visitors and local community. Each one of them has to be sensitive to the environment and local traditions and follow a set of guidelines for the successful development of ecotourism. In addition, governmental organizations and scientific and research institutions also have to play key role in development of ecotourism.

Special officers have been designated to coordinate activities regarding ecotourism. The Forest and Tourism Departments of the states like Karnataka, Kerala, Sikkim, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have specifically announced a policy for the development of ecotourism laying special emphasis to the involvement of the local communities.

A management plan for each ecotourism area should be prepared by professional landscape architects and urban planners in consultation with the local community as well as others directly concerned. Integrated planning should be adopted to avoid inter-sectoral and cross-sectoral conflict. A first step should be to prepare 20-year master plans for each state. The architectural programme for ecotourism centres should include controlled access points, roads, self-guided nature trails, transportation options, interpretation centers, signs and adequate but unpretentious lodging and dining facilities, docks, garbage disposal facilities and other utilities as needed. If

required, suitable living quarters and facilities for project personnel should be provided.

The chanting ecotourism mantra of India, focuses on the fact that the diverse geographical features of India are enriched with hundreds of tourist destinations. No matter, which region you explore almost every part of the country is laden with numerous spots giving tourists wide range of ecotourism places to explore. Whether one is exploring the monasteries and Himalayan glaciers of Ladakh in Northern part or roaming through rich coffee plantation and world famous Kerala backwater in south or enjoying the arduous trekking in Kanchenjunga in North-East or taking a desert camel safari tour in their desert in western part of the country, the ecotourism spots are pervaded everywhere. Many of them lying still in the pristine lap of mother lap guarantee its visitors to fetch them a unique view of their natural richness.

The diversity in geography in India provides a wealth of natural areas that could support ecotourism activities. There has been significant growth in tourism sector, both domestic and foreign tourists, and the earnings being generated from the tourism industry. Of the 2.35 million foreign tourists who came to India, 26.4% went for wildlife, adventure and beach tourism. The growing interest of the domestic tourists- a phenomenon arising due to increased industrialisation, urbanisation, disposable incomes and changing living styles and attitudes- to nature based-tourism, bring more tourists to the natural areas. Resultantly, the demand of the ecological areas as a product increased considerably. The Ministry of Tourism is making all efforts to make India as more tourist friendly. Ecotourism is a small-scale enterprise. The government through various policy initiatives has acknowledged the significance of ecotourism. Both the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Environment and Forests have responded to the development in the field of ecotourism with policy initiatives. Department of Tourism issued policy and guidelines on Ecotourism in July 1998. The policy lays down the objectives for ecotourism and contains operational guidelines for major stakeholders. During 2000, Ecotourism in Protected Areas and Territorial Forest Division was recognised as one of the fifteen thrust areas of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. The Indian chapter of the Pacific Asia Travel Association has formulated an action plan for National Ecotourism Policy, which has been forwarded by Ministry of Tourism to state governments to review.

Several state governments have also taken policy initiative to promote ecotourism. The government of Himachal Pradesh has announced a “Policy on development of Ecotourism” in May 2001 with special focus on the involvement of local communities. The government of Madhya Pradesh has announced an “Eco and Adventure Tourism Policy” on 2001-2002 placing emphasis on the involvement of the private sector. Forest Departments in Kerala, Goa, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim have designated officials to coordinate ecotourism activities. Several state governments including Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have issued orders for recycling of entry fees from protected areas for conservation and community development. The Forest Corporation of West Bengal and Uttaranchal has initiated ecotourism activities and the government of Kerala has launched The Thenmala Eco-Tourism Promotion Society to develop a model for ecotourism. Recently, practitioners and interested individuals in Sikkim established the Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim (ECOSS) with the objectives of promoting conservation and ecotourism projects, research and advocacy. In the private sector there are examples of eco-friendly concept hotels such as the Orchid Hotel and product development by the Casino Group in Kerala.

Community Based Tourism (CBT), refers to the activities and initiatives of local people in a specific rural destination where the local residents are catering for tourists needs (Naeraa et. al 1993). Community Based Tourism centers on the involvement of the host community in planning and maintaining tourism development in order to create a more sustainable industry (Hall 1996).

CBT is closely linked to ecotourism, but it offers a more concrete concept by stating the type and degree of participation and involvement for local people, and the associated costs (Halstead 2003:7). So, Community Based tourism is more people-centered, community-oriented and resource-based than ecotourism (Armstrong et al 2005 quoted in Manis 2008; 48). The idea behind the community-based approach is to create potential for empowering the community, enhancing their involvement in decision making and ensure that the will and incentive to participate come from the community itself (Amstrong et al 2003:2). Local people must be able to control and manage productive resources in the interest of their own families and the community.

Therefore, it is also important that a responsible proportion of tourism revenues are enjoyed by the community in one way or another.

Ecotourism is an ideal and alternative choice to the devastating nature of mass tourism in the 21st century. Promoting ecotourism through community participation can help conserve the ecology and environment and improve the well-being of local people. Conservation of biodiversity and cultural diversity is implicitly and explicitly ingrained in the principals of ecotourism with much emphasis on sustainable use of natural resources and scope for income generation and employment opportunities. Establishing and maintaining harmonious relationships between environmental conservation, well-being of local people and visitor satisfaction have become a big challenge for the planners, the policymakers and tourism stakeholders. Even though ecotourism or ecological tourism is a western construct, it aims to provide the ways and means to many practical problems, hampering the conservation of biodiversity in the protected areas.

The ministry of tourism is responsible for tourism development in the country. Ecotourism is a part of sustainable tourism. The Ministry of Tourism has the specific agenda to promote tourism in the country in a responsible and sustainable manner and as per this mandate promotion of ecotourism assumes larger importance. Eco-Tourism has been broadly defined as tourism which is ecologically sustainable. The concept of ecological sustainability subsumes the environmental carrying capacity of a given area. The general principals of ecotourism guiding the initiatives of the Ministry are as under:

- The local community should be involved leading to the overall economic development of the area.
- The likely conflicts between resource use for eco-tourism and the livelihood of local inhabitants should be identified and attempts made to minimize the same.
- The type and scale of eco-tourism development should be compatible with the environment and socio-cultural characteristics of the local community.
- It should be planned as a part of the overall area development strategy, guided by an integrated land-use plan avoiding inter-sectoral conflicts and ensuring sectoral integration, associated with commensurate expansion of public services.

Ecotourism is a well-defined approach explaining management of tourism impacts and conservation of nature in a way so as to maintain a fine balance between socio-economic development and conservation. The global importance of ecotourism was largely realized in 2002 when the International Year of Ecotourism (IYE) was celebrated on the theme “Ecotourism- A Key to Sustainable Development”.

“Tourism has a tendency to become something like a steamroller wherever it goes. It can completely destroy natural places. Ecotourism is about trying to stop that”. The quotation tries to define loudly the scope of ecotourism in comparison to mass tourism. Making a concept is much easier than its implementation and it is quite practical if we say that achieving hundred percent successes in any implementation program is inevitable. It is true with the concept of ecotourism all over the world. Indian ecotourism industry is successful but facing with number of problems, which are adversely affecting. There are number of issues relating to ecotourism in India, which contradict the very principle of the concept. Some of the issues relating are discussed below:

Just because something is marketed as ecotourism, it does not necessarily mean that the long-term motto of providing socio-economic benefit with protection of environment to the host areas will be achieved. The fact that ecotourism business are often owned and controlled by outside interests in just the same way as mass tourism means the economic benefits often are not used for the protection of the areas or to support the local community. Besides, the carrying capacity of host areas is not calculated. As a result, there is a breakdown of civil amenities during peak season when the influx of tourists is tremendous.

One of the basic objectives of ecotourism is to engage local communities so that they benefit from conservation, economic development and environmental education. While nearby inhabitants are most directly affected by the establishment of parks and protected areas, they also stand to profit by their conservation. Ecotourism deceives the locals in two ways. First, their traditional economic and social structure undergoes a transformation towards tourism monoculture. Secondly, the promise made to them to provide perennial source of income and rational distribution of profit made is highly insincere. Those locals get jobs but only of low quality, low valued

and seasonal in nature. They serve mostly as tourist guide, food providers, or souvenir vendors in the locality. The lion's share of revenue generated goes only in hands of organisers. So it can be said that the cost of ecotourism is borne by locals and big players like organisers make profit.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ecotourism is a nature bound and ecologically sustainable travel activities by which local populace are mostly benefitted. It is in fact, motivated by spirit of inquiry, love of beauty and search for nature. It is quality tourism without damaging natural, social and cultural environment. Looking at the tremendous potential the ecotourism industry offers in the field of its employment generation and foreign exchange earning capacity, it is the time that Government pays urgent attention to the needs of the ecotourism industry. Ecotourism can bring sustained socio-economic gains to the local community. Its impacts are capable of changing the quality of life of the host community members. The wealth and other incidental transformations that ecotourism brings to the area can be shared between the local population. This is how ecotourism helps the local community. It can be used to develop better roads, water supplies, schools, hospitals etc. The purpose of the study is to understand the socio-economic influence of the Thenmala Ecotourism Project in the life local community members.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Ecotourism has assumed a lot of significance in the contemporary context and it is one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry. Kerala is known for its ecotourism destinations due to rich flora, fauna and Kerala has incorporated sustainability, conservation and preservation of nature and biodiversity in its State policies. One of the significant contributions made in this research is to study the motivating factors and transformations experienced by the community members as part of their participation with TEPS. The findings of the study could be used to bring in better policy decisions which can help in improving the quality of life of members of the host community in Thenmala. This study would also contribute to the knowledge base of social work and facilitate further research in this particular area.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review is a description of the literature relevant to a particular field or topic. It gives an overview of what has been said, who the key writers are, what are the prevailing theories and hypotheses, what questions are being asked, and what methods and methodologies are appropriate and useful. The conceptual and empirical literature reviews help in establishing the rationale and credibility to the study.

The International Ecotourism Society (2006) defines ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well being of local people.”

This chapter is a review of relevant studies conducted in the areas of ecotourism and empowerment. At the end of the chapter, the studies conducted in the area are evaluated in order to identify the gaps in the literature. Both western as well as Indian studies have been reviewed in the chapter.

FOREIGN STUDIES

In a study by Hawkins and Khan (2001) say that though there are a variety of definitions used to describe ecotourism, in general they all depict ecotourism as being in harmony with nature, and as the opposite of mass tourism.

According to Ralf Buckley (2000), “ecotourism, like tourism in general, is an industry as well as a social phenomenon and for private sector ecotourism operators, ecotourism is a business enterprise”. He also emphasized the marketing of ecotourism and environmental education.

In a study Wood (2002) he says, improvement of the socio-economic condition of the local people is one of the major objectives of developing ecotourism, which can lead to sustainable development. Ecotourism strives to be not only a conservation mechanism and an economic development tool, but also a development process that seeks to remain harmonious with local cultural and social needs.

An estimate of the global market share of ecotourism conducted by the United Nations World Travel Organization (UNWTO) revealed that currently it captures 7% share of the international tourism market.

In the book 'Sustainable Tourism: A Geographical Perspective', Hall and Alan (1999) describe, "Ecotourism is environmental friendly and sustainable tourism, which also benefits the local community".

Brandon (1996) opined that "Ecotourism stand for one of the few areas where the relation between economic development and conservation of natural areas is potentially obvious and direct. Ecotourism development also has become a important approach to address socio-economic concerns in a conservation framework.

Gaerling and Fransson (1999), says that the ecotourism will lead to the preservation of natural resources and local culture, environmental education, experience improvement and local economic stimulation.

G He, S.Bearer,S. Zhou. H. Zhang, L. Y. Cheng and Z. Ouyang (2008) demonstrate uneven distribution of economic benefits of ecotourism. They observed that major conservation cost bearer by local residents but the majority of economic benefits like employment, investment and goods have shared in three main ecotourism sectors such as constructions, infrastructure development, hotels, resorts, home stays etc. The distance from the ecotourism activities is also determined the sharing of economic benefits. The major part of revenue of ecotourism is 27 distributed who living to near the ecotourism sites and increasing of distance, benefits also negatively impacts on local people.

In the study by Claire Doole (2000) conducted a study about ecotourism in China. The number of eco tourists is growing in China. They have realised that to attract foreigners they have to show their cultural side, offering more traditional singing and dancing and ensuring that houses are built in the traditional way. Women are now making an income selling their handicrafts to tourists on the way to the reserve.

Depending upon the approach it can be helpful in generating livelihood opportunities; that otherwise could prove detrimental for the society and the people.

The number of tourists coming to the ecotourism destinations within acceptable limits creates a positive economic impact in the form of job generation increased income and a net profit. Ecotourism becomes more successful, when it is linked with the existing environmental friendly traditional economic activities. For example, in Papua New Guinea, villagers have a source of income from tourist accommodation built on their property. By collaborating with the local tour operators they are providing accommodation to tourists (Weaver, 2000).

Jain N Mehta (2003), in his study on the 'Problems and Prospects of ecotourism in Nepal' found that there is no certainty that a particular country can always maintain its share of international tourism. "Factors like political instability, spread of epidemic diseases, change in values and taste of potential tourists over the time, economic recession, terrorism, and other socio-cultural problems affect the flow of tourism in a particular region or country. As such, contemplation of tourism as an alternative to employment-generation activities may be a shaky proposition in the long-term. Therefore tourism should only be promoted with other employment - generation activities and economic programs, not as a sole bread provider".

Noyal Thomas (2007) emphasise that regulated tourism has always been an important part of the protected area management to generate valuable revenue and able to raise the awareness levels of the people visiting these areas towards the conservation of these resources.

In the study of ecotourism effects in Botswana, Africa, Mbaiwa and Stronza (2010) found that ecotourism employment is one of the main benefits that have improved the livelihoods of local people. The authors report that most of the jobs generated by ecotourism are cooks, cleaners, storekeepers and escort guides, which may be described as semiskilled jobs.

The social empowerment can be referred to as the social capital of the community members. In the study "Ecotourism and social capital" (2005), Ms. Jones uses the Social capital theory where the core idea is that social networks have values, as interactions and connections develop shared norms trust and reciprocity that in turn foster cooperation to achieve common ends.

Putnam (2000) through his study on Social capital states that the idea of social capital can enable one to find jobs and maintain businesses. Also claims have been made that the encouragement of social capital can alleviate more social problems including poverty civic irresponsibility, under development and others.

Wood (2002) says that ecotourism strives to be not only a conservation mechanism and an economic development tool, but also a development process that seeks to remain harmonious with local cultural and social needs

In the study by Stronza (2007) acknowledges, more than any other types of tourism, through employment, ecotourism can cause large changes in the economy of families because it usually occurs in relatively rural isolated areas; a small increase in income tends to have a more marked effect on the household of the poor.

Weaver (2000) says that by collaborating with the local tour operators they are providing accommodation to tourists as in Papua New Guinea, where villagers have a source of income from tourist accommodation built on their property. This helps local people achieve income and employment, and the extractive pressure on natural resources is lessened. Further, residents are more likely to support tourism and conservation (even to the point of protecting the site against poaching). When ecotourism provides job opportunities for local people, the migration of the young people becomes less.

Hunter (1999) says in his study that nowadays younger members of the community aspire to a standard of living that the tourists display and may take employment in government and commerce in an attempt to realize their aspiration.

According to Kiss (2004) ecotourism well represent a valuable first step for empowering local residents in tourism destinations.

Studies related to resident' attitudes towards tourism development have been carried out in different geographical locations all around the world and have reported some interesting findings.

Mbaiwa (2005) in his study says that the positive impacts from tourism development include income generation and job opportunities from community based

tourism projects and safari companies, development of infrastructure and the enhancement of social services such as banking, health, telecommunications and access to electricity.

(Appadurai, 1996, 2000; Scheiner, 2014) in their studies says that, the positive transformation in social processes could be identified when the progress of technology and globalization have transformed the traditional societies into more digital societies.

Reisinger, (2013) says that in order to make a change, one need to follow a transformation path. One needs to transform oneself their values, life priorities, lifestyle, and the way one use resources and spend time. Also, one must move towards a world in which we learn about the purpose and meaning of our life, a world that gives way to new values of empathy for others, non-violence, human rights and equality.

Ross (2010) explained the term transformation as: “a dynamic socio-cultural and uniquely individual process that (a) begins with a disorienting dilemma and involves choice, healing and experience(s) of expanding consciousness; (b) initiates a permanent change in identity structures through cognitive, psychological, physiological, affective or spiritual experiences; and (c) renders a sustained shift in the form of one’s thinking, doing, believing, or sensing”.

Thus, it can be concluded that transformation is a process of going through life in order to enjoy a better quality of life compared to the previous life. Our review indicates that the concept of transformation could be applied in any fields including ecotourism.

Human communities represent primary resources upon which tourism depends. And especially Nature-based tourism and ecotourism are particularly linked closely with the local community.

Epler Wood (2000) says that ecotourism has always stressed local participation, ownership and business opportunities, particularly for rural people.

In the study by Epler Wood (2000), opportunities to involve rural communities in tourism have attracted attention, and raised many expectations. Without proper preparations, the risks in fostering local community participation in ecotourism ventures or projects are great. It is strongly advocated that the local community must be informed in advance of all the possible consequences of any tourism development.

The local community involved must receive economic benefits and other tangible benefits (i.e. water, roads and health clinics) from the ecotourism project and its tourist facilities. Facilities such as eco-lodges, restaurants or campsites should be run by or in partnership with the local community

A study by Okazaki (2008) states that participation, empowerment, and collaboration are also essential features to the success of Community Based Ecotourism projects.

In the studies by Scheyvens (2002) and Simpson (2008), they are of the point that empowerment is essential for Community Based Ecotourism and that empowerment requires a certain level of control, property and influence.

According to Wunder (2000) the intensity of control makes the difference between traditional forms of ecotourism and community-based ecotourism. There is a difference between ecotourism cases entirely controlled by external operators where members of the community are used as workforce and cases where a community truly controls all aspects of the project and the key consequence of this difference is the impact on the community.

According to Ralf Buckley (2000), “ecotourism, like tourism in general, is an industry as well as a social phenomenon and for private-sector ecotourism operators, ecotourism is a business enterprise”. He also emphasised the marketing of ecotourism and environmental education.

Lindberg et al. (1996) points out three basic objectives of community based ecotourism. First, it aids in the environmental protection of the area; second, it generates financial revenue through entrance fees, donations and government Giampiccoli and Nauright (2010) point out another dimension of the socio-economic development involved in community based ecotourism. They find its strategies as important for a better distribution of wealth and democratic decision making in the local communities across a country to support; and third, it provides valuable jobs that add to the social and economic structure of the host community. Thus the local community is at the centre of community based ecotourism. That is, in addition to tourists’ enjoyment and environmental preservation, there is a third dimension in community based ecotourism, viz. development of the host community.

According to Freidmann (1992), community participation “permits the poor to reacquire power and control over their own lives and the natural and human resources that exist in their environment...if social and economic development means anything at all, it must mean a clear improvement in the conditions of the life and livelihood of ordinary people”.

Giampiccoli and Nauright (2010) point out another dimension of the socio-economic development involved in community based ecotourism. They find its strategies as important for a better distribution of wealth and democratic decision making in the local communities across a country.

In a study Corless (1999) suggests that to ensure the development of community based ecotourism initiatives such as training, the need for it should arise from within the community rather than the government.

In the study by Sofield (2003) he says that empowerment may be regarded as a developmental concept. Individual, family and community growth and potential are enhanced by empowerment and it may be viewed as either a process or an outcome.

Peter Murphy (1997) in his book ‘Tourism Community Approach’ highlights the different impact of tourism in connection with the individual entrepreneurs and community. He says “Tourism has managed to become a holy cow that can be let in anywhere”.

James Buller (2000) in his study enunciates that ecotourism promotes positive environmental ethics and it doesn’t degrade the resources. He concentrates on intrinsic rather than extrinsic values, and it is bio centric rather than homocentric in philosophy. He defines ecotourism as a responsible way of travelling that supports preservation of natural and cultural heritage and welfare of local communities.

Robert, R, Heane and C. Alejandro Santos (2005) ecotourism is considered to be a low impact means to provide income generating opportunities that are complementary to nature conservation as well as the welfare of local people. Ecotourism supports nature conservation by providing an economic demand for natural ecosystem.

Stronza and Pegas (2008) states that, ecotourism describes an activity, sets forth a philosophy and espouses a model of development. Environmental organizations and development agencies have invested heavily in ecotourism, channeling significant flows of capital and technical expertise directly to local people residing near and in protected areas.

Claire Doole (2000) conducted a study about ecotourism in China. The number of eco tourists is growing in China. They have realised that to attract foreigners they have to show their cultural side, offering more traditional singing and dancing and ensuring that houses are built in the traditional way. Women are now making an income selling their handicrafts to tourists on the way to the reserve.

Tony Parr (1994) conducted a case study about Sirubari Village Tourism Project and says that partnership between the local community and a commercial promotion and marketing agency has successfully established Sirubari as the model for future development.

Thus, participation of communities is considered not only necessary in ecotourism policy construction, but as its main justification as well.

INDIAN STUDIES

According to Kirti Shiva Kumar (2007), “ecotourism is the management of tourism and conservation of nature in a way, so as to maintain a fine balance between the requirements of tourism and ecology on the one hand and the needs of local communities for new job skills, income generating employment and a better status for women on the other”.

Kandari and Ashish Chandra (2003) in their book ‘Tourism, Bio-diversity Sustainable Development’ hold the view that “ecotourism becomes more important economically ensuring that it follows a truly sustainable path will require co-operation and partnerships among tourism industry, government, local people and above all, tourists themselves”. They also stipulate that ecotourism is reputed to be the fastest

growing sector of the world tourism industry and sustainability is the key concept in defining genuine ecotourism.

Bose (2005) suggests that tourism is now becoming a major socioeconomic activity, which contributes to the country and its economy. He also points out that the Kerala has potential to develop as a major tourist attraction in the country.

In the book 'Tourism Management – A Global Perspective', Batra and Chawla (1994) hold the view that "ecotourism is perceived as a viable alternative route by which a measure of economic benefit can be reaped from tourism, with minimal damage to the environment and society and maximum advantage to local people".

In the study "An evaluation of ecotourism projects in Kerala a study with special reference to Idukki district" (2014), Reshmi, speaks that the origin of ecotourism lies in nature and outdoor tourism. Environment aesthetics is the most significant pull factor innate in any ecotourism destination. Ecotourism is a form of tourism that is inspired primarily by the natural history and the environment of an area. Ecotourism projects are less capital intensive. Ecotourism has recently come to be regarded as the panacea that enables us to aggressively seek tourism dollars with no obvious damage to eco systems, since wild resources are not being harvested and there is no apparent associated development. As a concept, ecotourism has gained momentum recently in India, but as a way of life Indians have practiced ecotourism since times immemorial by their traditional approach to nature and rich cultural heritage. Ecotourism can be distinguished from nature tourism by its emphasis on conservation, education, traveler responsibility and active community participation.

A study by Maheshwar Rao (2002) explains the role of tourism in every country as a revenue earner and the most significant source of foreign exchange. He says that a badly organized tourism development strategy have some adverse effects on the country rather than the development of the country.

Mohanlal (2007) holds the view that ecotourism is being entertained by many communities and governments as a reasonable and rational way for economic development and preserving their particular bit of the environment.

In a study by Prabha Shastri Ranade (2008) in her book 'Ecotourism, Perspectives and Experiences' analyses a number of issues to determine what

constitutes successful ecotourism and how to balance conservation with development. She also makes an attempt to highlight broad issues related to the concept and principles of ecotourism. Her book highlights ecotourism and local economic development. It considers how ecotourism can generate economic benefits and provide alternative employment and income opportunities for the local communities.

Kohli (2002) conducted an outstanding study about Ecotourism and Himalayas. According to him, “it is necessary to develop Himalayas in order to improve the standard of living of the local people and to promote further growth of national economies of this region”. The solution lies in carrying out all this development in a new era of heightened co-operation without disturbing the ecosystems of the Himalayas.

A study by Das (2013) finds out that the Chandubi Beel of Assam is a potential ecotourism site. Before the commencement of this project, the local community would indulge in activities like illegal felling of trees, hunting, fishing, etc. to earn livelihood. But these activities were deteriorating the natural ecology of the area. Later on, an NGO Wave Eco Tourism took the initiative to stop destruction of the wetlands and the forestlands of Chandubi Beel. They trained the local youth to take part in promoting ecotourism by means of projects like tree planting and bee keeping. Now there is an active involvement of the local community to promote the natural riches of this area to international and domestic tourists. Increment of tourist visit in this place has helped in the initiation of financial empowerment of the local community.

Haque Immanuel and Shanawaz Ahammed Dur (2007) in their study titled ‘Dynamics of Tourism Economics: An Indian Perspective’, showed the significance of tourism specifically with reference to employment sector, infrastructural facilities and poverty eradication.

According to Thomas (2002), the former Minister of Tourism, Government of Kerala, in order to make Kerala the real God’s Own Country, an up market high quality tourism destination through national utilisation of resources with focus on integrated development of infrastructure sector, conserving and preserving the heritage and environment and enhancing productivity, income, creating employment

opportunities and alleviating poverty thereby making tourism the most important sector for the socio-economic development and environmental protection of the state.

According to Kirti Shiva Kumar (2007), “ecotourism is the management of tourism and conservation of nature in a way, so as to maintain a fine balance between the requirements of tourism and ecology on the one hand and the needs of local communities for new job skills, income generating employment and a better status for women on the other”.

Shaik Ameer and Yasmin Fathima (2007) in their paper titled ‘tourism growth in India and ecotourism impact on rural development’ clarified that ecotourism is based on the four principles –

- (i) nature orientation,
- (ii) ecosustainability,
- (iii) possibility of conducting research and
- (iv) Involvement of local people.

Modern tourism industry may take different forms including adventure, health, trade fairs, cultural and religious festivals, national celebrations and food festivals. Among these ecotourism blends a different strategy of enjoying the nature’s serenity in its own way.

Prabha Shastri Ranade (2008) in his book ‘Ecotourism, Perspectives and Experiences’ analyses a number of issues arising in trying to determine what constitutes successful ecotourism and how to balance conservation with development. She also makes an attempt to highlight broad issues related to the concept and principles of ecotourism. His book focuses on ecotourism experiences and strategies of various countries, including island nations. It highlights ecotourism and local economic development. It considers how ecotourism can generate economic benefits and provide alternative employment and income opportunities for the local communities.

Aga Iqrar Haroon (1999) emphasized the role of communities in ecotourism. To him ecotourism has no meaning without the role of local communities. Ecotourism is a blend of controlled activities of a group of people having a goal of sustainable development in their respective area.

According to Kirti Shiva Kumar (2007), “ecotourism is the management of tourism and conservation of nature in a way, so as to maintain a fine balance between the requirements of tourism and ecology on the one hand and the needs of local communities for new job skills, income generating employment and a better status for women on the other”.

Thampi P. Santosh (2005) in his article ‘Ecotourism in Kerala, India: Lessons from the Eco-Development Project in Periyar Tiger Reserve’ gives an account of the ecotourism project in the Periyar Tiger Reserve at Thekkady in Kerala. The project was started with the involvement of the former inhabitants of the forest and had two basic objectives when it was started. They were managing protected areas with involvement of the local people. The idea was to use the knowledge of these people regarding forest and wild life to promote participatory ecotourism activities in the region. The major ecotourism attractions in this project are the trekking and camping programmes in the forest, which are becoming very popular among the tourists. The author feels that the success of the Eco-development project in the Periyar Tiger Reserve shows that with careful planning and implementation of the ecotourism projects both conservation of the forests and protecting of the livelihood of the people living in and around the region can be achieved.

George and Paul (2005) in their work “Rural Development through Tourism: The Case of Munnar” opined that a rural community of Indian scenario does not have a community structure, a social set up, a regular source of income, a regular employment, an understanding of human values and above all the persisting poverty along with the cruelty of castism. They have conducted a case study in Munnar, Kerala which is both rural and having tourism attraction and found out that the development of tourism in this area brought out employment opportunities to the rural people like information assistant, driver, guide, escort, security staff, food production staff, entertainment performers, etc. and provided them a continuous source of income. They suggested instituting a non-formal Institute for Tourism to develop the various skills of the rural people in a uniform manner, the introduction Rural Tourism promotion Committee (RTPC) and a systematic approach for poverty eradication.

Shini (2005) in her research article attempted to assess the attitude of tourists towards the quality of service offered at Thenmala ecotourism destination, which is the first planned ecotourism project in India. She opined that the major service factor which attracts the tourists to Thenmala is the condition of the environment and suggested that the modern type of accommodation away from the preserved area to increase the flow of tourists in to this place and generate more income both to the government and local people without affecting the quality of the environment.

A C Kunhikannan (2008) says in his study that, the local people of ecotourism centers are very much aware of the fact that they receive economic benefit from ecotourism and the educated youth are aware of the concept of ecotourism. He suggested that the conscious developmental efforts must come from the part of the government in respect of ecotourism, considering its vast potential.

Vinodan and James (2011), in their study revealed that the ecotourism project has reduced the communities' dependence upon the forest fuel wood for their livelihood and has provided them an alternative source of income by participating in various ecotourism programmes; while examining the composition of EDC members, it can be seen that 88 percent are from the tribal category; the existing ecotourism operations could give employment to all tribal settlements of the region and other deserving communities who were below poverty line. They also suggested that a lot of areas which need to be explored to enhance the level of participation of the people. Also, have opined that ecotourism ultimately seeks to contribute to the well-being of the community both directly and indirectly without altering the existing or traditional livelihood like farming, fishing, handlooms, etc. but more often by sustaining such activities.

Rajasenana and Abraham Bijith George (2012), in their study found out that the Community Based Ecotourism has benefited the community in a big way as majority of them solely depend on ecotourism as their only livelihood and the socioeconomic indicators of the community in the ecotourism destinations show a positive trend.

A study by Roy, Tisdell & Sen (1995) says that adoption of Gandhian planning with its emphasis on small-scale developments at the village level being in

harmony with the natural environment. By extension this sustainable approach is exactly what is needed for Indian tourism developments in environmentally sensitive areas

Soundara Raja (1993) in her study found that “Tourism is an activity generating a number of socio-economic benefits. It promotes national integration and international understanding; created employment opportunities and augments foreign exchange earnings. Tourism also gives support to local handicrafts and cultural activities. Expenditure by a tourist has a multiple effect. The economic benefits of tourism are achieved with a relatively low level of investment. Its vast potential, should, thus be fully exploited for economic development of the country”

In the Sustainable Development of ecotourism in Kerala, B.Vijayakumar (1993), observed that the demand for clear environment, quest for authenticity, experience and enjoyment led the Moderns towards all over the world to embrace ecotourism. Further, ecotourism has the financial potential to provide a viable economic alternative of the environment.

Batra (1990) in his study on ‘Tourism in Rajasthan-Problems, Potential and Future Prospects’ points out the various snags, impediments and obstacles in the promotion of tourism in the state of Rajasthan in particular and India in general, some of which are in-built in nature. He strongly recommends that, tourism activity in Rajasthan must be taken as a dynamic tool in uplifting the social status of the society. For this he recommends frequent get together of local people with the foreign tourists. According to him such meetings will help to break some of the age-old rotten social barriers and orthodox systems prevalent in the state.

Rajakumari (2007) in her study on ‘Tourism-An Epitome of Incentives’ explains that to decrease financial leakages in tourism, it would be important to increase local ownership of tourism-related business, building up tourism infrastructure using local investors and avoiding purely foreign investment.

Seema and Jojo (2006) in their study hold the view that ecotourism in the Indian context has significant implications for nature and culture conservation, rural livelihoods and conservation education.

Poya Moli (2007) in his paper on 'Eco-Cultural Tourism in Indian Islands: Some Implications' attempted to focus on paradigm shifts in tourism and environment management with particular reference to Indian Island eco systems. Sustainable alternatives are suggested to ensure that the tourism in Indian Islands are not merely financially self-sustainable, but ecologically and socially sustainable as well, besides culturally responsible.

Haque Immanuel and Shanawaz Ahammed Dur (2007) in their study titled 'Dynamics of Tourism Economics: An Indian Perspective', showed the significance of tourism specifically with reference to employment sector, infrastructural facilities and poverty eradication.

Katja Pactz (1997) studied the relationship between sustainable development and tourism and concluded that "sustainable development is to be seen as the way forward to guarantee the long term viability of the tourism business".

Aga Iqrar Haroon (1999) emphasised the role of communities in ecotourism. To him ecotourism has no meaning without the role of local communities. Ecotourism is a blend of controlled activities of a group of people having a goal of sustainable development in their respective area.

Daniel Gnana Sagar (1998) holds the view that ecotourism is the only way to maximise the economic, environmental and social benefits of tourism. Everyone is a stakeholder in the process and we clearly need to avoid our past shortcomings and negative momentum with more and more travel and travel related organisations are addressing the needs of the eco-tourists and impact that they have had. In India the movement is gathering and promoting ecotourism in the country.

According to Ratna Sree (2010) ecotourism can develop a destination economically, infrastructurally and culturally, but if poorly developed it can create crime and other social problems, which is detrimental. In order to achieve sustainable development through ecotourism, effective partnership between local people, tourists, government and other sections of the industry are essential, otherwise ecotourism a boon for the development of Nation may become a doom.

In the book, 'Tourism Management- A Global Perspective', Batra and Chawla (1994) hold the view that "ecotourism is perceived as a viable alternative route by which a measure of economic benefit can be reaped from tourism, with minimal damage to the environment and society and maximum advantage to local people."

Usha Verma and Rajnish Kumar (1991) make an attempt to highlight broad issues related to the concept and principles of ecotourism. They highlight the growth of tourism industry in India and the necessity to promote ecotourism for the purpose of preserving the uniqueness of tourist destinations.

Sophy Roberts (2008) observes that sophisticated travelers weary of industrial tourism are pushing into the world's wilder margins. He gave more importance to luxury ecotourism. Luxury ecotourism symbolised by new expensive eco lodges point out the rising movement in high-end sustainable tourism with an acute sense of environmental responsibility.

Peter Murphy (1997) in his book 'Tourism Community Approach' highlights the different impact of tourism in connection with the individual entrepreneurs and community. He says "Tourism has managed to become a holy cow that can be let in anywhere".

Vijaya Koteswari (1995) observes that any nature based forms of tourism with observation and appreciation is for admiring, enjoying and studying the nature. Tourists in small groups with local partners can go on ecotourism. It gives awareness towards the conservation of heritage, natural and cultural assets, both among locals and tourists by participatory, interactive, enlightening and educational experiences apart from immense pleasure. It also empower the locals to restrict the others interacting with the nature

Shrivastav (2010) advocates the role of ecotourism in the community upliftment. In his words, "tourism stimulates cultural activities and leads to improved understanding of each other and better relations between the tourists and the hosts". Ecotourism act as a tool for initiating uplift of the community especially in the villages.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology

This chapter deals with the methodology adopted for the study. An attempt is made to narrate the methods and techniques used to identify relevant cases. This chapter includes research design, pilot study, the setting for the study, population, sample, tools, and method of data collection and how the data will be analyzed and interpreted in order to arrive at certain findings, suggestions and conclusions based on the study.

3.1 Title

Thenmala Ecotourism Project and Community Empowerment: An Evaluation Study

3.2 Conceptualization

The conceptual frame work has been derived from the conceptual understanding that has been developed through the literature review and the concepts discussed in the previous chapter.

3.2.1 Definition of Concepts

➤ Ecotourism

Theoretical

Ecotourism Society (1991 a, b) - "responsible travel to natural areas that conserve the natural environment and improve the living standards of local people"

Operational

In this study ecotourism refers to the responsible tourism activities undertake under the aegis of the the Thenamala Ecotourism Project (TEPS) that aims to conserve the natural environment incorporating the community members in order to prove them in the process employment and better living condition.

➤ **Host community**

Theoretical

Mathieson and Wall (1982) defined host community as the “Inhabitants of the destination area”. A host community consists of all those people in the destination, whether they are homogeneous or heterogeneous and regardless of whether the impacts of tourism are beneficial or otherwise.

Operational

In the present study the host community refers to the local community members residing in Thenmala Panchayat and who are working in TEPS.

➤ **Ecotourism Projects**

Thenmala Ecotourism Project is a government initiated project started in 1998 at Thenmala with the aim of involving host community members in the overall economic development of the area; enhancing the resource use and thereby transformations in livelihood of the members.

➤ **Transformation**

Theoretical

Ross (2010) explained the term transformation as: “a dynamic socio-cultural and uniquely individual process that (a) begins with a disorienting dilemma and involves choice, healing and experience(s) of expanding consciousness; (b) initiates a permanent change in identity structures through cognitive, psychological, physiological, affective or spiritual experiences; and (c) renders a sustained shift in the form of one’s thinking, doing, believing, or sensing”.

Operational

In the present study transformation refers to the positive changes that have resulted so far in the financial, social and infrastructural realms of the stakeholders of TEPS who are part of the local community.

➤ **Empowerment**

Theoretical

Rappaport's (1984) "Empowerment is viewed as a process: the mechanism by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over their lives."

Operational

In this study empowerment refers to the ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect and group participation (social), through which people lacking an equal share of resources gain greater access to and control over those resources (economic)".

3.3 Research Question

- What was the motivation for the stakeholder to be part of TEPS?
- How did the stakeholder get recruited into TEPS, the induction process and the transformation the stakeholder underwent working with TEPS?

3.4 Research Approach

Qualitative approach is adopted for the study and multiple case study design was used to collect data for the purpose of the study. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) defined qualitative research as, "primarily an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories." The definition implies that data and meaning emerge "organically" from the research context.

3.5 Research Design

The research design refers to the overall strategy that is chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring that the research problem will be addressed effectively. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data.

The research design adopted in this study is Multiple Case Study design. The multiple case study research design is an in depth study of particular situations rather

than a sweeping statistical survey. The case study method 'explores a real-life; contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information... and reports a case description and case themes' (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). Multiple Case Study Design or collective case design refers to case study research in which several instrumental bounded cases are selected to develop a more in-depth understand of the phenomena than a single case can provide (Mills et al, 2010).

3.6 Pilot Study

A pilot study is a small scale preliminary study conducted in order to evaluate feasibility, time, cost, adverse events, and affect size in an attempt to predict an appropriate sample size and improve upon the study design prior to performance of a full-scale research project. The researcher conducted the pilot study at Thenmala on a respondent working in TEPS. From this the researcher understood the feasibility of the study. Appropriate modifications were made to enhance the instrumentality of data collection tools.

3.7 Research Site

The study was carried out in Thenmala, Kollam, to understand the influence that the Thenmala Ecotourism Promotion Society has rendered to the host community members. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews to gather information from the respondents about the factors that motivated them to join TEPS, the process of their induction and the transformations happening to them.

3.8 Universe and Unit

The universe of this study includes all stakeholders of the TEPS. The unit of study is a single stakeholder of TEPS.

3.9 Sampling Strategy & Criteria

A non-probability, purposive sampling method was used to select the sample for the study. The researcher selected from among the stakeholders, those who were community members and employed under TEPS. The participants were chosen to participate through individual face-to-face semi structured interviews. For the present

study, a total sample of 8 workers of TEPS who were satisfying the exclusion and inclusion criteria was selected.

Inclusion Criteria

1. The community members residing in Thenmala and working under TEPS.

Exclusion Criteria

1. The community members who were not residing in Thenmala.

3.10 Sources of Data

3.10.1 Primary Source of Data

Primary data was collected from the workers under TEPS residing in Thenmala community.

3.10.2 Secondary Source of Data

Secondary data comprises of information from documents, brochures, reports of surveys and studies, literature pertaining to ecotourism, community based ecotourism and other relevant publications.

3.11 Tools for Data Collection

An interview guide consisting of closed questions, dealing with the socio-demographic profile like "age, sex, marital status, religion, education, occupation, income, type of family, size of family and domicile" of the workers was used. The semi-structured interview guide including more than 30 questions was prepared based on the research questions. Certain modifications were made to the questions after the pilot study was conducted. In-depth interviews and discussions were conducted as the techniques of data collection to elicit information from the respondents.

3.12 Data Collection

The researcher collected the data from 8 workers of TEPS, Thenmala, Kollam district. The researcher visited each of them and personally interviewed the workers besides conducting Focus Group Discussions- The interviews in Malayalam were transcribed into English.

3.13 Data Analysis

The data collected through in-depth interviews is subjected to the process of analysis in qualitative research with the primary aim to understand the research concerns from the people's perspective. The analysis of the qualitative cases studies

was done through thematic analysis. Throughout the process of data analysis various lines of inquiry were adopted with the aim of creating concepts, discovering patterns from the emerging concepts, seeing how concepts emerge and explaining why the particular concepts emerge. Data analysis was done based on the research questions which explored about the motivating factors for joining the TEPS, the induction process and the transformation the stakeholder underwent working with TEPS.

3.14 Chapterisation

The chapterisation of the research dissertation is as follows:

Chapter I: Introduction

Chapter II: Review of literature

Chapter III: Research Methodology

Chapter IV: Case Presentation

Chapter V : Discussions and Interpretation

Chapter VI: Major findings, suggestions & Conclusions

Chapter VII: Bibliography and Appendix

3.16 Ethical Consideration

Permission was taken from the Head of the Department of Social Work for approaching TEPS. Consent was taken from Junior Executive Officer, TEPS for selecting 8 respondents for the purpose of the study. Verbal informed consent was taken from all the respondents before conducting the interview after communicating with them the purpose of the study and affirming that full confidentiality would be maintained and the data collected would not be used for any other purpose other than this study.

3.17 Limitations of the Study

The sample is purposive and hence findings cannot be generalized to other group of community members.

3.18 Conclusion

The methodology provides an overall idea regarding the methods use in the study. The methodology guided the researcher to complete the study in a systematic and scientific manner.

CHAPTER IV
CASE PRESENTATION

TEPS

The actual timing of the ecotourism is from 8:00 am and the tickets will be distributed from 9:00 am. The workers like the Horticulture maintenance assistance and the house-keeping workers get to work by 8:00 am. But the tourists will be allowed to enter the zones at 8:00 am provided they are with the ticket. The musical fountain is the last event that lasts for about one hour. Then the events and activities come to an end for the day. The timing differs in Leisure Zone and in the Adventure Zone, where the activities come to an end at 5:00 pm in the evening.

The tourist flow is actually seasonal; and it is very rush at those times. Once the school is opened the visits are less. And during the school days another group of tourists are the children coming for their picnic. There are also other students who come here for their studies and these students stay here for a longer time. Some of these students are foreigners who come as part of their studies.

▪ **Case 1**

As the beginning of the interview my first respondent was Ms. R aged 54 years. She is running a shop in the 'Butterfly Zone' at the Thenmala Ecotourism centre. Situated more precisely in the campus of its administrative office, the Butterfly Zone has an ambience created by having plant species that attract butterflies. R was comparatively more healthy when compared to the respondents whom the researcher interviewed later. R is the Secretary to the Kudumbashree Thenmala Unit. She is residing at Thenmala West, which comes under the Thenmala panchayat. Her family comprises of her husband, aged 62, working as a construction contractor in Thenmala region itself. She had a son who had passed away 7 years ago when he was at the age of 23 years, consequent to a severe heart attack. At the time of his death he was an employee in the Forest department. His place of work was also located close to the Thenmala Ecotourism.

She has been working here for 15 years now. This shop was assigned on contract basis to Kudumbashree, when the TEPS started and since then she was in charge of this shop, which operates from 11am till 7pm. She said that once the tourists go for the Musical fountain, she closes the shop and go back home.

R besides being engaged with the Kudumbashree also provides homestay arrangement for students. Explaining about such students, she says, “These students usually opt for home stays and it is available for them here”. She said that the residents in the community provided food and accommodation for these students. Some of them stay on for about 2 months or so. She also said that she had provided stay for two teachers for some months. The teachers were working in a University Institute of Technology (UIT). She has also provided stay for a pregnant mother who stayed on for about a year; she had been transferred to the Government Higher Secondary School at Ottakal. Later, two foreign students also requested for accommodation, but she was unable to offer them as she did not have time and space for preparing food for them. Besides they faced water shortage at that time. When enquired about whether it was a source of income, she said that for some of the people in the community it was a great support for their livelihoods. When asked whether there are any formalities for starting a Home Stay, she said that there was no need to get any permission from the panchayat or any other forms of formalities were there. The owner of the home just need to prepare and provide needed provisions to the people for the stay. Also, providing food was one of the major aspects when coming to home stay. And this could be done effectively only if one has to completely involve in it. A person with a regular job will find it difficult to manage both of these. She says that tourists come enquiring about it.

When questioned about any other source of income, she said that they had 1 acres of agricultural land, of which 10 cents were given on lease to a telecom company for which they get rent around Rs.9000 every month. The lease arrangement was for 30 years, with the rent to be enhanced each year. And then she also has rubber cultivation from which also they get a additional source of income.

When enquired by the commodities sold in the shop, she said that they sell honey which was unique. Other items include clove, cardamom, pepper, frankincense, tea powder, Khus roots etc. These are taken from estates that are present in the locality. They also sold homemade wine, extracted from grapes, ginger and gooseberry. The honey is harvested by the tribal people from the forest. They give it to some agents and these agents bring this to the shop. She said that if the tribal

people directly gave it to them, then they would have got it at a much cheaper price. But this did not happen and she said that it was the rule that they give it to some stores which serve as an intermediate between the tribal and themselves. The honey is mainly of three types namely, *naadan*, *kattu* and *cheru* honey. It is due to the presence of nutritious honey that the place came to be known as 'Then-mala', connoting 'Honey Hill'. When enquired where the tribal people reside and extract the honey, she said that there was a place Rosemala, Achankovil and other estates. This area is near to Aaryankaavu and the area is basically forest area, where these indigenous tribes reside. They also stay and work in estates from where also they take honey and other commodities.

When asked about the presence of the indigenous tribal population, she explained that there were many tribal people living, in nearby places like Achankovil and Rosemala, but not in Thenmala. There are a number of estates doing cultivation of different variety of spices and most of these people are residing in these estates, where they work too. When questioned about the accessibility to these people she said that they can be contacted if we went there. But it is a little deep into the forest area where they reside. Rosemala is situated beyond Aryamkaavu, a mountain path, about 25 kms from Thenmala.

She also said that during previous years, the tourists were taken to Rosemala by bus. But now it has been stopped. When enquired why the tourists were not taken to these places she had no idea of that but, guessed that it could be due to the absence of good roadway. She also remembered that the tourists were also taken to other tourists spots nearby like the Palaruvi and Kuttalam waterfalls. But at all these have stopped.

When enquired about the accessibility of healthcare, she said that there was a health center in Thenmala. But if one needed more specialized care one had to go to a 'bigger hospital' in Punalur, Venjaramoodu and other such places. Punalur is about 20 kms from Thenmala. The hint of the word 'hopsital' reminded by her of her son, who passed away 8 years back. He completed his degree and a computer course, and was working as a computer operator in the forest department. She vividly remembers that day night when her son had a severe chest pain and had to rush to hospital. Since they didn't have their own vehicle, they found it hard to get to the hospital which was

located about 20 km at Punalur. And she attributes distance from credible health care as one of the reasons for her son's death.

When enquired about the availability of public transport, she once again quoted her loss of her son. She recalled, at that time, there was no taxi or other emergency service, which led to the delay in reaching the hospital. And she said that it was only because of that she felt that their family needed a vehicle of their own. And hence they bought a car. She also says that unlike those days, now the public transport facilities have improved a lot. There is adequate bus and taxi services. Also she mentioned about a round the clock ambulance service provided by the Thenmala panchayat. She says that it is a profound service to the community. And now patients are easily transferred to the hospitals.

When asked about the food, she said that she had to come only at 11:00 am, so will have the breakfast from home. She brings her lunch. She said that a tea stall is working inside this Zone and they have tea from there. Even though they were the staffs they had to pay their bills. The stall is run by the Thenmala Ecotourism Promotion Society (TEPS).

She appeared to be in a hurry. When questioned, she mentioned about the meeting that was going in the administrative office, some sort of a conciliation meeting. This was happening in the light of the conflict arising out of some of the vacancies in TEPS being filled by candidates from outside the community. This was in spite the fact that there were candidates from the Thenmala community. So the candidates along with some of the community members went for a strike at the Ecotourism spot. The conciliation meeting was presided by the District Forest Officer (DFO). According to her, this was three year contract and the appointment is done as trainees. She observed in frustration how the salary offered was a meager ten thousand rupees per month; moreover it did not suffice their needs. She says that apart from Junior Executive Officer, two accountants and two drivers, all others are appointed on contract basis. All others including the house keeping personnel and other maintenance workers are all given jobs on contract basis. Even all the vacancies of these trainees are filled by those residing in Thenmala and if they are not given the opportunity then, she says the people of the party will make it an issue and go for strike until it is allotted to the local people. She also says that at earlier times when

there were no educated and efficient candidates from the community, then people from outside the community were appointed as trainees. And she says, but this is not the case now. There were many youth coming to the forefront are also educating themselves so as to equip themselves with the skills needed for a particular job.

When enquired about the nature of the residents of the community, she said that the area circumscribing the ecotourism site was basically a 'colony'. And these people have come from places and settled here for years and is now considered as a resident. The actual inhabitants of the Thenamala region are seen located about 3 to 5 kms from there at other places such as Ottakal. Thenmala being a protected area, *pattayam* which is the ownership of the property, is granted far away from this site.

When enquired about the job seekers from the community, she said that young people from the community were interested in working here. She guessed that it might be due to the easy accessibility of job and opportunities are being offered to the members from the community if they fulfilled the necessary job criteria. They were offered a variety of work - skilled and unskilled, such as sweeping, horticulture, administrative works, house-keeping, security, driving, trekking and in other adventure activities. She says that if at all the community members feel that they are not given the opportunity then they question the office and go even to the extent of strike.

When enquired about her previous job before coming to the Ecotourism, she said that she was a homemaker. She said that this job is imparting an engagement for her. She said that without this job she would have felt miserable, not as a source of income but as part of an engagement in life.

She said that her actual place of origin is in Kottarkara, a place in Kollam District. Her husband belongs to this place. She said that during those times, about 32 years back, this place was more like a forest, with no accessibility to even basic facilities. She remembered that she used to feel scared travelling to this place. Later, due to this Ecotourism project the place got many developments like more shops, public transportation facilities and so on. She said that before the involvement of TEPS and the ecotourism project, the place was literally a dense forest area. She remembers those days when she was really scared to travel beyond Punalur. But now

that has changed a lot to the betterment. She also says, “because of this job I can connect with new people and establish a friendship with them.”

When enquired about her knowledge on any illegal activities from the part of the tourists, she says “I have never come across any such activities until now, before also there were no such activities. If at all any such things happened, the police is there to deal with it.”

Thus, she is pretty very much satisfied and has a positive outlook towards the working of TEPS and with her job in the shop. She, thus, has a source of income, and above that, an engagement in daily life. She is of the opinion that TEPS has played a major role in imparting all kinds of development of the community in which she is a part. She was able to get a financial support, socially she was able to interact and communicate with different people. She considers the job to be a great comfort because after the death of her son she can find a meaning in life besides engaging in work.

▪ **Case 2**

The second respondent of the researcher was Mr. M, aged 26 years. He was the supervisor for accommodation in the Thenmala Ecotourism. He is hailing from Thenmala community. He has completed his plus two from a Higher Secondary school in Aryankavu. After that he completed an AC technician course. On completion of this course he worked in an AC shop for about an year.

When asked about the scope of employment for youth in Thenmala Ecotourism Project Society (TEPS); he said his personal experience of how he got his employment in the Thenmala Ecotourism project. Initially he was engaged as a trainee for about six months. Later, he was taken on contract basis. The contract is generally for a year. Since there was no fresh tender had been invited for renewal of the contract, he is being continuing for the last two years. The initial contractor was only for one year.

To my query with respect to the qualification which was required for this work, he said “I have gained necessary training from a person who is holding a license of National Adventure Foundation (NAF). Obtaining such a license is very a difficult task. This foundation will give training in various adventurous tasks like rock

climbing etc. The person has a license from National Adventure Foundation (NAF). The NAF will give training in Rock climbing & Rappelling, Trekking, Adventure training, Camping etc.”

When enquired about any training provided by TEPS, he says that, “Initially I was appointed here as a trainee for one month, and it was during the consequent six month period that I went for the NAF training.”

About my questions regarding the respondent’s family, he replied. “Our family consists of six members. We are four children to our parents. My father is a Coolie. One of my elder brothers is doing tile works with a local construction contractor. The other elder brother is a driver. My younger brother is studying in twelfth and my mother is a home maker”.

When the researcher enquired about the motivating factors that led him to join TEPS, he says, “I was working in a shop which dealt with works of AC, in Punalur. It was a far from my place. The salary was also meager. And it was during that time I came to know from one of my acquaintance who is working here, that there was a vacancy in Adventure Zone, for the post of an activity trainer. He asked me to enquire rest of the details from the office, if interested. As per his advice I approached TEPS office at Thenmala and enquired about the details and came to know that I was eligible it. Later, I decided to join here for some reasons. First being that, I was offered good salary here when compared to that at the shop. Second, this is near to my home. Next being, I always had a liking for sports since childhood and I was there for the National Cadet Corps (NCC) in school and I felt that this job would be something that I can enjoy also. Since it is a government undertaking project I thought that working here might provide new opportunities for me in the future, unlike as my work in the shop.”

To the researcher query on how he joined the he joined in TEPS, he says, “It was through one of my acquaintance that I came to know about the vacancy here. And once I approached the administrative office, I was informed that it was through the contract basis that they recruited the staff. So later I approached the contractor who had been taking the tender for more than a year, and through that channel I applied for the post. I think it was substitution for someone who left the job, that I was taken. I worked as a trainer for about a year and half and later got transferred to the Culture Zone and at present am working as the supervisor for accommodation.”

When enquired about the nature of the job, he says, “Initially as a trainer, my job was to assist the visitors (tourists) to different activities. There were other trainers also. After that I was appointed here as a supervisor and this comes under the Culture Zone. Here I will have to guide the tourists and provide them the accommodation. There three room boys with whom I work. We as a team have to look after the well-being of the guest. Any of us will have to take them to different activities and Zones and guide them. This usually happens when the tourists for who stays for a number of days.” When asked about the nature of tourist who visits, he says, “The peak time is during the September and during the summer. Both native as well as the foreigners visit the place. We will have to work 24×7 when there are visitors. A family or a visitor will be allotted with a room boy who can assist them.” When enquired about any pay for extra work, he said that it was included in the job description and it was their normal duty to assist the visitors.

When enquired about the transformations that had happened to him as part of his job in TEPS, he says, “After getting the job I feel much relaxed and content, when compared to my job in the shop. Here I have peace of mind that comes with peace of mind. I also enjoyed my job here. We work here as a team, and thus the working environment compared to that in my previous job, is satisfying. Sometime I feel that the atmosphere here is also good and motivating. After getting this job I was able to spare some time for my family also, as I can get home easily.” He also says that the opportunities for youth in the community are increases as a result of the project. Unlike the old days we have good transportation facilities. Also due to the employment opportunities provided, the younger generation can channelize their studies according that supports the scope of employability in this sector. He also said that as a member of the community he was satisfied with the establishment of the project and that it has changed his life in a good turn.

When enquired about any issues as part of the Thenmala ecotourism project he said that there were no any such issues or problems from the part of the tourist to the community members or from the part of the community members to the visitors. He hopes that the community members were very much aware of the traditional mantra of “Adithi Devo Bhava”, which means that every visitor to the place is a guest and that they should be dealt with due hospitality and respect. And he is of the opinion that it might be influenced by the culture and outlook of the community members

also. This can be substantiated as in the case when compared to other tourist places where illegal activities take place. He says that effective supervision from the part of the administration is also one among the factors that has led to the absence of such activities.

- **Case 3**

The third respondent was Ms. G who was a 48 years old lady. She was working in the adventure Zone who is the only female adventure trainer in TEPS. She was one among the first few participants who attended the training conducted by the National Adventure Foundation (NAF). She is residing in a nearby place in Thenmala. She is has been working there for about 15 years. Her family consists of two children who are working.

When enquired about the permanency of her work, she said that she had been working here on contract basis. And she said, “When I contacted with some government officials at Thiruvananthapuram, they said that, once you complete ten years in a job then you will be simultaneously be getting most of the provisions just like that of the permanent employee in any firm”. She also says “if we are not permanent then certain provisions will not be allotted to us”.

When enquired about the waste disposal, especially the plastic wastes, by both the tourists and the community members. She says, “People who come here do not throw any kind of waste, not even a candy wrapper is seen anywhere. Did you see anything on the way? No right? That is because we do keep sign boards everywhere and the people are responsible for their wastes. Initially when they come they are instructed not to throw any waste on the premises; but to dispose it at bins. Due to the presence of monkeys the waste is periodically removed from these bins also. And for the same reason we cannot provide dustbins at every nook and corner”. She also says, “There is no need to compel anyone to do so, which is actually a blessing. I hope that this might be because the people coming here do observe the surroundings and that there is no one disposing of any sort of waste.”

The people were specially instructed not to throw the food wastes in the dustbin as it may be taken and spilled over by the monkeys.

She has two sons both of them working. One of her son is driver to a popular politician. Her mother is also staying with her. She says “At first my family both my sons were a little disappointed about my job here, as they thought that it had a lot of risk within it. At that time I was also a little scared about this since it involved physical activities. But once the training was over my fear had been vanished. But once I started working here, even my family was confident. After all, I was the only one during that time to support the family financially. But this job has rendered a great help for me since this helped me to meet my sons’ education and finally they are also employed. And finally now I am dedicated to this job”.

When enquired about her educational qualification she says, “I completed my 10th and later did not go for further studies. But my educational qualifications were not taken into consideration for the job offer; they looked for physical fitness only. And it is because of only that I was promoted here, by God’s grace. It was really a great support to my family.”

When questioned about the training process she says, “The training was conducted by NAF, under the guidance of an ex-army man. We were there a number of trainees from different places and we were given training on different activities like the rock climbing and other such activities. After the initial training we were given periodic training also; and this mostly were conducted here at Thenamala itself; but now changed to a different place nearby.

When asked about her feelings on the benefits that she had obtained from the Ecotourism Project; she says “In fact it is only because of TEPS that I was employed and because of which I brought up. Also I could provide my children, with required education. First I had a fear of losing the job as I was told that it was on contract basis, but after three years the same contract was extended and hence I could continue here, which was actually a blessing.” And till now it has been the same tender that they are promoting.” She says, “we have been here for years but still we are being given the provisions of the

“Since I have been working here for about 15 years, I had the opportunity to build rapport with many people. As part of training I was able to go to distant places

where I am able to interact with trainees from other places. Thus building relations with others like me also happened because of TEPS. I was able to learn new things from them. For the purpose of interacting with the foreign tourists I put an effort to learn some Basic English that would help me out in dealing with them. Also while interacting with the tourists; observing their ways helped me a lot in changing my attitude towards them. The job helped me a lot in being more assertive and stating straight away my opinions on matters.”

She says, “Apart from my own personal growth, I have been able to sensitize some of other people about job opportunities and thus helping out them in securing a livelihood. They also see me working here and got motivated.”

When enquired about their relationship with other employees and employers of TEPS, she says, “We are all from the community and also there is a good relationship among us. We do support among ourselves. It seems I am the senior most when compared to other workers here. We do recommend our fellow community members to different vacancies that arise to the administration. We also inform those who are in need of the job. Hence I can say that we are all united here.”

▪ **Case 4**

The fourth respondent was Mr. A who is 52 years . He was an ex-army officer. He has been working here for two years. He is working as a supervisor in the Leisure Zone. The work timing is from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. He hails from Thenmala community itself.

He says, “May and September; during Onam is the best season when the tourists visit the palce.”

When enquired about his appointment in TEPS, he says, “Different private agencies take contract from TEPS and by their approach like in my case it was through advertisement of needing an ex-service man I applied for the post and was selected. As far as I was concerned I needed a job which was near to my home also, I chose this one. I did not consider the salary, my only intention was to get employed somewhere near to my home. I cannot sit at home simply which is very suffocating, so I decided to join here. For me I am not concerned with the amount of salary as, I have got pension; just as a support to my pension. I was a subaidar retired and for the

same reason if I go to distant place I will be given the post of a supervisor itself with more amount of salary but what I was looking forward to was a job near to home.”

When enquired about the work nature in Leisure Zone, he says, “I will have to supervise the working of staff; there are four staffs here appointed in different sectors, namely, horticulture, sweeping and security. Also I will have to report to TEPS about the needed maintenance works that has to be carried out.”

When enquired about the objective of setting up of such a spot, he says, “Leisure Zone is basically a garden type where there are different varieties of plants, trees and herbs. Again there is Dam shutter view lake view and the hanging bridge. Its main aim is to instill in people the natural beauty of the nature; it is a mind soothing effect. Even when I am here I feel a sort of peace at mind!”

When questioned about the maintenance of the Zone he says,” We have been doing the maintenance works periodically, but at present if you look you can see that the hanging bridge, one of our main attractions, is being closed for a short period of time as it is broken and walking through it becomes dangerous. And I have sent a report to the administrative office. But just writing a report and submitting doesn’t do anything; the implementation has to be done by those in higher position. To an extent it is due to the unavailability of the required funds. Some says that there is nothing to see in this Zone but the fact is that it has got a value of crores. This is actually a very high initiative. But no one recognizes it. And the reality is that there is no need of any other funds from outside for the sustenance of this ecotourism project; event he salary of the employees are obtained from here itself. There is approximately 2 crore gain per year.

When enquired about the availability of the basic facilities like PHC and schools he says, “There is one PHC at Thenmala. Schools and PHCs are also present in the community. But I am not that sure about the correct number of schools and Anganwadis. Most of us are relying on the water from the dam and at times it is not proper. But it is said that a project by TATA on water supply is being initiated which is part of tourism. It is mainly focused on drinking water. This project is initiated by the government. This is actually a positive initiative from the part of the government.”

When enquired about the waste disposal, he says, “At present the community members to an extent is responsible for the waste disposal in some of the nearby areas of the ecotourism project. This might be because of the structure of their residence, as there are three distinct colonies in the community. As part of reducing the waste disposal, TEPS have planted some arcanots tress as part of beautification of the place, hoping that by seeing it people will not dispose waste. The planting of trees were done as part of a year long project was some fund was provided by the government. The waste that is obtained from the ecotourism sites actually collected and disposed in an incinerator. As far as I consider, panchayat have a major role in waste disposal and I think they are not concerned about it.”

When enquired about the relationship among the staff of TEPS, he says, “We can approach anyone at anytime all are approachable and supportive. There are meetings once in a while at the administrative office where everyone will assemble and discuss the issue. The opinions of each of us are also noted. Also the staffs go for an outing once in a year where every staff is included; which is in fact a positive effect on us where we can actually deepen our relationship with the members.”

He says, “Even though I get only a meager amount of salary, I am happy that I can go back home every day. Also there is no much tension in this job and the work environment is very good and satisfying. Only during the seasons where the numbers of tourists are greater, our team has to put some efforts so as to coordinate the entire system.”

“I personally feel that it is because of TEPS that we have got a well constructed road. As part of the Thenmala dam construction a road was constructed but it was made more accessible only after the establishment of TEPS. At present the government has planned to make it a four line one and renovations are progressing. As part of the ecotourism project the community members irrespective of their educational qualification they are setting up restaurants, souvenir shops and some are even setting up home-stays which are all part of the development of the community as a whole.”

He says, “There is also improvement in the public transportation facilities, as we have accessibility to KSRTC, TNSTC buses through the day. Before, these buses were not here and hence it was difficult to reach even to a nearby town but now it has changed we are able to get transport facilities and all are utilizing the facilities.”

When the researcher enquired about the transformations that had happened in his life, he says, “I feel the only kind of transformation that happened to me is that, I am having a job now, rather than sitting home simply and wasting time. After retiring from the Army I feared about engaging my life in something else, but now I am much relaxed.” On enquiring about his engagement in the job and other activities, he says, “I am happy with the job here, but I feel I would be paid more for the same post elsewhere. It is only because I need to go back home that I chose to come here. But to be open, I don’t have to worry about anything with respect to the job, which is a satisfaction in itself.”

▪ **Focus Group Discussion with the stakeholders of TEPS**

A Focus Group Discussion was undertaken with the stakeholders in TEPS, to explore their views and understand the effect that produced by TEPS on the members as an employee and as a community member. The group consisted of horticultural workers and housekeepers were selected on the basis of their domicile in Thenmala community. The discussion started off with an introduction whereby the facilitator introduced the self; explained the purpose of the study and confidentiality of the information shared. The group comprised of 4 members of whom three were females and one male. The intended outcome of the FGD is to understand the transformation in their lives having associated with TEPS.

The participants were working as horticulture workers and house-keepers. They have been employed here for more than a year. The researcher when enquired about the reason for selecting TEPS as an employment destination realized that all the participants were satisfied with the job and the working environment as a whole. One of the participants Ms. P says,

“I worked as a home nurse and also worked in Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) and finally came here as a house keeper. I could not find

the previous job as satisfying, one of the reasons being the work environment of home nurse was very different and had to work in places far away from home, and occasionally there was change in the working place which I found stressful. But here I find it easy to manage my work at home as the working time is appropriate and my home is near.”

Another participant Ms. R says,

“I was married off to this place as my husband is from this place. My husband was a driver who delivered fish in this community and he was trying hard to meet the ends. It was then that I realized, with only a matriculation certificate I could not earn a job anywhere here, unlike in Venjaramoodu from where I hail. There I can at least get a job in any of the shops, while here there are no such shops like textiles or so. And this was the only available options for me; and now I am working here for seven months; which makes me feel good.”

The next participant Mr. A says

“I needed a job so as to look after my family. And none other than the economic factor that made me take up the job and also since I was a member of this community I was offered the job without any hesitations.”

The participant Ms. S says,

“I needed a job that was risk free and near to my home so that I can look after the home while earning some income as part of the work in horticulture. I could not study after seventh as my family condition was very pathetic and during that time the importance of education was not known. So I feel that this job is actually a blessing for me because by only being a member of this community I was able to get the job, which would have been not possible if it was in any other place.”

On enquiring about the means by which the participants came to TEPS. One of the participants Ms. P says,

“I was working in KTDC after quitting my job as home nurse. I was really disappointed as my job at KTDC offered me less pay unlike as a home

nurse. It was during that time one of my neighbour who is working in 'Adventure Zone' told me about the scope of getting a job here and on further enquiry I was given the job of housekeeping. It might be because of my experience as home nurse that they have appointed only me. I am always thankful to that person who recommended me for this job."

Another participant, Ms. R says,

"I came to know about the job offers put forward to the community members from one of the community members who was active in politics; and thus I got a job here." Another participant Mr. A says, "My friend who is working in the Forest department said that the community members were preferred for the jobs in TEPS and as per that I approached the contractor who took the tender from TEPS; and came to know that there was no vacancy. But after some months he approached me, as there was a vacancy that aroused due to someone who quit their job. And thus I got this job."

When questioned about the transformations that they had as part of their working in TEPS, all of them said that they were all financially empowered as their jobs help to augment the family income. One participant Ms. P reported,

"Before the ecotourism project there was no work for us and those like me who do not have much education were not optimistic about the future. But now we are given priority for the job here and through this our life has been benefitted in many ways. I can also save some money for the future. Because there are many foreigners visiting the place I could learnt some Basic English also. I was also able to get connected to different people from different places and culture."

Another participant reflects on how much infrastructure the project has provided the once forsaken, far flung community,

"It was because of this Thenmala ecotourism project that we are having a good transportation facility. Some years back we couldn't go to any place beyond seven in the evening."

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis is the process in which we move from the raw data that have been collected as part of the research study and use it to provide explanations, understanding and interpretation of the phenomena, people and situation we are studying. Thematic analysis emphasizes on pinpointing, examining and recording patterns or themes within the data available.

PROFILE OF CASES

Personal profile of the participants

Table 1. Table showing profile of TEPS stakeholders

Cases/ Participants	Age	Sex	Education	Number of Family members	Job	Family Status
1	54	F	10	2	Vendor	Middle
2	26	M	Diploma	6	Supervisor	Lower
3	48	F	10	4	Trainer	Lower
4	52	M	Degree	3	Supervisor	Middle
5	28	F	10	4	Horticulture staff	Lower
6	49	F	10	4	Horticulture staff	Lower
7	54	F	7	5	House- keeper	Lower
8	37	M	12	3	Horticulture staff	Lower

The above profile of the respondents gives the reader a basic idea about the socio-economic background of the respondents. The researcher conducted four case studies and a single Focus Group Discussion (FGD); among the participants five were females and three were males. Six respondents were from lower economic background, while two hailed from the middle income group. Seven of the respondents completed schooling and one of the respondent completed till seventh. All of the respondents are working under the Thenamal Ecotourism Project undertaken by the Thenamala Ecotourism Promotion Society (TEPS). Four of the

respondents were Horticulture staffs, two of them respondents were supervisors and one of the respondents was a vendor.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

- What persuaded you to choose TEPS?

The participants were interviewed using an interview guide along various themes. The first being the motive of joining TEPS. During the discussions various themes emerged.

Theme: Family background

Here the researcher tries to explore the family status of the individual community member before getting a job in TEPS. Six of the respondents seemed to hint that they hailed from very low financial and disadvantaged backgrounds. Although the other two respondents hailed from families having comparatively better financial soundness, none in the family had a good earning to meet the basic requirements of the family at the time of interview. Besides, due to their lack of literacy and limited skill sets they had very limited economic opportunities. Hence, there was no stable employment. Given their limited landholding, it was very difficult for sustainable cultivation. Further they were settled in a populous colony area. Starvation and hunger was no uncommon among households especially families where there were aged and illiterate. Some of the families languish in the extreme poverty level and could not afford three meals per day. Thus there was no scope for starting any business or agriculture in the area. Also the scope of even for unskilled labor was limited as it was a remotest area where there were no options like shops.

It was easily accessible for them to get a job in TEPS with the primary education and also because of their domicile in Thenmala community. The ecotourism project gave the community members priority to get employed in productive and meaningful work. This was the case for six of the respondents. Two of the respondents had another reasons to join TEPS. It was mere need of engaging in some activities that led them to get seek the job. Some of the salient statements are mentioned below:

Case 3 says:

“I wanted to teach my sons, give them good food and clothes and also take care of my own aged mother. Since I had only elementary education and could not go far from my home, the only option for me was seeking a job in the Ecotourism project.”

Case 1 says:

“In my home I felt lonely and the thought of his death (son) made me feel more depressed, so I wanted to engage in something. But going far away from my home was not possible. So here working in the shop and meeting new people every day is making me feel good.”

This supports the study, which says that tourism continues to be advocated as an industry to uplift socio-economic status of at-risk communities through real income and creates jobs. This encourages inward investment and strengthening socio-economic status and enhances quality of life (Richard and Hall, 2000).

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

- How did the stakeholder get recruited into TEPS, the induction process and the transformation the stakeholder underwent working with TEPS?

Theme 1: Recruitment into TEPS

During 1998 there was a tender notice issued by the TEPS inviting quotations from the registered contractors for supplying workers. These contractors made enquiry with the panchayat members and other community leaders. They contacted with the public through Kudumbashree and Ayalkoottam units functioned in the locality. Majority of the unskilled workers including the respondents were engaged in this manner.

The trainers especially in the ‘Adventure Zone’ also have been engaged through the contractors. These trainers got a six months training in adventure activities like rock climbing, trekking, cycling, camping and rappelling undertaken by a NGO, National Adventure Foundation whose one of the objectives being to channelize the energies of young women and men, both students and non-students, working and unemployed, with special emphasis on under-privileged sections of the society.

The concept of community based ecotourism and priority for the host community members also initiated the engagement of the individual community members to the job in TEPS.

Case 1 says:

“I was a member of the Kudumbashree unit in my locality and it was through our unit that I got the job. Since then I am working here and now it has been about fifteen years now.”

Case 3 says:

“I am working here as an adventure activities trainer. I had to attend a six months training given by NAF. And now also I go for some training that happens occasionally.”

Case 4 says:

“I was an ex-army and so I could satisfy the requirement of the post for supervisor here in the Leisure Zone, so I didn't have any difficulty.”

Theme 2: Transformation

Sub theme 1: Financial transformation

The researcher found that seven out of eight respondents were satisfied with their job in TEPS and the regular income that they obtain. All the respondents agreed that they were able to contribute financially to their family.

In the FGD a participant says:

“I was a school dropout and had a belief that I'll never be able to attain a regular job and regular income; but my job here is a blessing for me.”

Case 1 says:

“Apart from this job, I am providing home stay facilities which is also a source of income to my family.”

Weaver (2000) says that ecotourism provides job opportunity for local people and the migration of young people becomes less.

Sub-theme 2: Social transformation

The researcher found that the community members have developed a broadened view about different communities and their way of life. The researcher could analyze that four out of eight respondents had attained visible and positive influences in their social life; especially due to their interaction with the visitors including the foreign tourists.

Case 3 says:

“My job necessitates training from National Adventure Foundation, which facilitates contacts with others from different places.”

During the Focus Group Discussion, the response of a participant was

“I learned some basic spoken English so that I can interact with the foreign tourists.”

A study advocates the role of ecotourism in community upliftment; which states that “tourism stimulates cultural activities and leads to improved understanding of each other and better relations between the tourists and the hosts”. Ecotourism act as a tool for initiating upliftment of the community especially in the villages (Shrivastav, 2010).

These findings are in congruence with the studies which states that the positive attitude towards ecotourism is fostered and the residents living in or adjacent to the protected area should be receiving economic and social benefits or compensations which will support or compliment their livelihoods (Lindberg & Enriquez, 1994).

Sub-theme 3: Infrastructural development

The researcher found out with respect to the Thenmala Ecotourism Project that successful implementation of ecotourism depends on the development of a stable infrastructure. Here it includes good transport systems, telecommunication systems, peace and security etc. Different government department are involved in the developmental process of the infrastructure such as, Forest Department and the Irrigation department.

Case 1 says:

“It is after this Ecotourism Project that we got a good transportation facility. During those times, there was no taxi or other emergency service. It was very difficult for us to go anywhere since we did not have our own vehicle.”

Case 4 says:

“I personally feel that it is because of TEPS that we have got a well constructed road. As part of the Thenmala dam construction a road was constructed but it was made more accessible only after the establishment of TEPS”.

A study shows that the significance of ecotourism specifically with respect to employment sector, infrastructural facilities and poverty eradication (Immanuel and Ahammed Dur, 2007)

Thus, eco tourism is one of the income generating recourses in Kerala as in the case of rest of the country. It helps to create opportunities of employment, infrastructural development of the area, economic advancement, socio- cultural transformation of local community and so on. In view of the various positive implications of ecotourism, promotion of it is an imperative rather than an option as far as Kerala is considered.

CHAPTER VI
FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND
CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is a nature bound and ecologically sustainable travel activities by which local populace are mostly benefitted. It is quality tourism without damaging natural, social and cultural environment. It is in fact, motivated by spirit of inquiry, love of beauty and search for nature.

Ecotourism can bring sustained socio-economic gains to the local community. Its impacts are capable of changing the quality of life of the host community members. The wealth and other incidental transformations that ecotourism brings to the area can be shared between the local population. The present study titled “**Thenmala Ecotourism Project and Community Empowerment: An Evaluation Study**” attempts to understand the socio-economic influence of the Thenmala Ecotourism Project in the life local community members. The study is qualitative in nature and adopts a Multiple Case Study design. Eight stakeholders of the TEPS purposively selected were interviewed and subject to focus group discussions to assess the stakeholder’s motivation to be part of TEPS, the recruitment and induction process, besides the transformation the stakeholder undergoes working with TEPS. An interview guides were used to conduct Focus Group Discussions and In-depth Interviews. Below given are the findings:

FINDINGS

Major findings of the study are:

- The living conditions of the respondents were pathetic during the period prior to their joining in TEPS.
- It influenced the livelihood of the individual community members. The financial and social dimensions of all the respondents were positively influenced.
- All the respondents were positive and agreed upon the fact that TEPS brings employment opportunities to the community members.
- The community members are given priority in employment opportunities which comes under the TEPS. Majority of the workers both skilled and unskilled were from the host community of Thenmala.

- The transformation that happened to the individual community members was positive. All the respondents agreed that their family status improved through their job in TEPS; thereby the quality of life.
- The community members witnessed infrastructural transformations which include roads, transportation, home stays, water supply, communication; as a result of the initiation of the Thenmala Ecotourism Project.
- The stakeholders of the TEPS are enjoying the benefits of waste management.
- The stakeholders got opportunity to acquaintance with different social and cultural aspects of the visitors and consequent benefits, such as language accessibility.

SUGGESTIONS

- The stakeholders, who are now employed on contract basis, should be given the status of regular employees.
- Awareness and training may be given to the community members on social entrepreneurship so as to enhance their socio-economic realms; thereby development in a more sustainable manner.
- As a social work intervention the host community members can be given awareness and trained in certain therapies like Forest Therapy, Ecotherapy for improving the individuals mental or physical health.

CONCLUSION

‘Thenmala Ecotourism Project and Community Empowerment: An Evaluation Study’ is a study on the influence in the socio-economic life of the host community of the Thenmala Ecotourism Project. The findings of the study indicate the Thenmala Ecotourism Promotion Society (TEPS) influences to a great deal in the social life and financial conditions of the stakeholders of TEPS. The people of the host community along with the entire population of the locality are enjoying the benefits of this project. Like most of the ecotourism projects all over the world which provides the socio-economic advancement to the host community, Thenmala ecotourism project in Kerala also provides such benefits to its stakeholders. Some of the main aspects this study focuses on the areas where they are empowered. The living conditions of the respondents were pathetic during the period prior to their joining in TEPS. It

influenced the livelihood of the individual community members. The financial and social dimensions of all the respondents were positively influenced.

All the respondents were agreed upon the fact that TEPS brings employment opportunities to the community members. The community members are given priority in employment opportunities which comes under the TEPS. Majority of the workers both skilled and unskilled were from the host community of Thenmala. The transformation that happened to the individual community members was positive. All the respondents agreed that their family status improved through their job in TEPS; thereby the quality of life. The community members witnessed infrastructural transformations which include roads, transportation, home stays, water supply, communication; as a result of the initiation of the Thenmala Ecotourism Project. The stakeholders of the TEPS are enjoying the benefits of waste management. The stakeholders got opportunity to acquaintance with different social and cultural aspects of the visitors and consequent benefits, such as language accessibility.

CHAPTER VII
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND APPENDIXES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Drakopoulou, A, 2008, "Tourism Certification and Community-Based Ecotourism as Tools for Promoting Sustainability in the Greek Tourism Sector - the Example of Zagori, Unpublished MSc Thesis, Lund (Sweden), Lunds University

Giampiccoli, A. and J. Nauright, 2010, "Problems and Prospects for Community-Based Tourism in the New South Africa: The 2010 FIFA World Cup and Beyond," African Historical Review,

Giampiccoli, A and J. Nauright, 2010, "Problems and Prospects for Community-Based Tourism in the New South Africa: The 2010 FIFA World Cup and Beyond," African Historical Review, Vol.42, No.1, 42-62

Gould, L. A., 2004 Ecotourism and Sustainable Community Development, Unpublished M. Sc Thesis, Brandon (Canada), Brandon University

Hasan, F., 2002, "Ecotourism in Bangladesh", ECOCLUB, Vol.43, No.2, 19-24

Hawkins, D. and M. Khan, 2001, Ecotourism Opportunities for Developing Countries: Global Tourism, UK, Butterworth Heinemann

Kutay, K., 1989, "Ecotourism and Adventure Travel," Tourism and Ecology: The Impact of Travel

Kutay, K., 1989, "Ecotourism and Adventure Travel," Tourism and Ecology: The Impact of Travel on a Fragile Earth, Vol.2, No.1, 3-7

Indberg, K., J. Enriquez and K. Sproule, 1996, "Ecotourism Questioned: Case Studies from Belize," Annals of Tourism Research, Vol.23, No.3, 543-562
Indberg, K., J. Enriquez and K. Sproule, 1996, "Ecotourism Questioned: Case Studies from Belize," Annals of Tourism Research, Vol.23, No.3, 543-562

Lindberg, K., J. Enriquez and K. Sproule, 1996, "Ecotourism Questioned: Case Studies from

Belize," Annals of Tourism Research, Vol.23, No.3, 543-562

Lindberg, K., J. Enriquez and K. Sproule, 1996, "Ecotourism Questioned: Case Studies from Belize," Annals of Tourism Research, Vol. 23, No.3, 543-562

Reid, W., 1992, "Sustainable Development: Lessons from Success," Environment, Vol.31, No.4, 7-35

Richards, G. and D. Hall, 2003, "The Community: A Sustainable Concept in Tourism Development, Tourism and Sustainable Community Development, Vol.1, No.1, 1-14

Scheyvens, R., 1999, "Ecotourism and the Empowerment of Local Communities," *Tourism Management*, Vol.22, No.1, 245-249

Weaver, D., 1999, "Magnitude of Ecotourism in Costa Rica and Kenya," *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol.26, No.4, 792-816

Campbell, L. M. (1999), Ecotourism in rural developing communities, in *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 26, no. 3, p. 534-553.

Kiss, A. (2004), Is community-based ecotourism a good use of biodiversity conservation funds., in *TRENDS in Ecology and Evolution*, vol. 19, no. 5, p. 232-237.

Ogutu, Z. A. (2002), The impact of ecotourism on livelihood and natural resource management in Eselenkei, Amboseli ecosystem, Kenya, in *Land Degradation & Development*, vol. 13, p. 251-256.

Stronza, A. (2007), The economic promise of ecotourism for conservation, in *Journal of Ecotourism*, vol. 6, no. 3, p. 210-230.

Beeton, S. (2001). Book Review: Ecotourism: Impacts, potentials and possibilities. In Stephen Wearing and John Neil (Eds.), *ButterworthHeinemann*, Oxford, 1999, *Tourism Management*, 22 (5), 576-578

Hall, C. M. (2000). *Tourism planning: Policies, processes and relationships* (1st ed.). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Epler Wood, M. (2001). Ecotourism and sustainable development. *UNEP Industry and Environment*, 10-14.

Bachrach, P. & Botwinick, A. (1992). *Power and empowerment: A radical theory on participatory democracy*. Temple University Press, Philadelphia.

Reid, D. G., Mair, H., George, W. (2004). Community tourism planning: A selfassessment instrument. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 31(3), 623-639.

Scheyvens, R. (2002). *Tourism for development - Empowering communities* (1st ed.), Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Weaver, D.B. (ed.): "The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism" 2001, CABI Publishing, USA

Wood.Hey .P, (1990): Truth and Beauty in hand space-Trends in landscape and Leisure, *Land Space Australia* 12 (1) 43-47 .

Wood, M.E, "Ecotourism and Sustainable Development" in *Industry and Environment*, vol 24 (3-4), July- December, 2001. pp-10-13

Prabha Shastri Ranade, Ecotourism Perspectives and Experience. The Icfai University Press, Hyderabad (2008) pp 31-75

Friedmann, J. (1992). Empowerment. Cambridge MA: Blackwell.

Epler Wood, M. (2002). Ecotourism: Principles, practices and policies for sustainability. Paris: United Nations Environment Programme, Division of Technology, Industry and Economics and the International Ecotourism Society.

Boo, E. (1992) The ecotourism boom: planning for development and management. WHN Technical Paper Series Paper 2, World Wildlife Fund

Vinodan, A and Manalel James. "Local Economic Benefits of Ecotourism: A Case Study on Parambikulam Tiger Reserve in Kerala, India". SAJTH 4. 2 July (2011).

P, R Shini. "Initiatives and Implementation of Ecotourism in Kerala: A Study with Special Reference to Munnar, Kerala". PhD thesis. Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. Tirunelveli, 2008. Online.

Dev, Shini. "A Study on the Quality of Service at Thenmala Ecotourism Destination". The Green Portal. Vol.2. No.2. (2005)

A, Stronza., and F, Pegas., (2008). Ecotourism and Conservation: Two Cases from Brazil and Peru. Human Dimensions of Wildlife, 13:263-279.

Brandon, K., (1996). Ecotourism and Conservation: A Review of Key Issues. Washington: The World Bank.

Rebert, R.H., and C, Alejandro Santos., (2005). Tourists' and Locals' Preferences Toward Ecotourism Development in the Maya Biosphere Reserve, Guatemala. Environment, Development and Sustainability 7:303-318.

Vijayakumar.B (1993) Sustainable Development of Ecotourism in Kerala-PhD Thesis, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram).

Mehta, Jain N (2003) Problems and Prospects of Ecotourism in Nepal (online). Available www.angelfire.com

G. Poyamoli, "Eco-Cultural Tourism in Indian Islands: Some Implications". The Green Portal Tourism Journal, Vol.4, No.1, 2007, PP 16- 25.

K.G. Mohanlal, "Ecotourism in Kerala". South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS), Vol.18, No.1 (July-Dec 2007) PP 104-105

Thomas,Noyal, Ecotourism Unique Natural Heritage. Kerala Calling, Vol.10, No.12 (April), 26-29.

P.P. Shrivastva, "Eco-Tourism: A Tool for Community Upliftment". Yojana, May 2010, PP 26-28.

Usha Bande, "Eco-Tourism and Mountains". Yojana Vol.24 No.15, August 2002, PP 20-24

G.S. Batra, Chawla, A.S, Tourism Management-A Global Perspective. Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi (1994) PP 10-40.

Aggarwal Prateek, International Tourism. Reference Press, Delhi (1991) PP 60- 74.

A.K. Bhatia, Tourism Development - Principles and Practices. Sterling Publishers Private Ltd., New Delhi (1995) PP 79-110.

Aneja Puneet, "Tourism Growth in India". Kurukshetra, Vol.17, No.9, June 2005, PP 11-14

Creswell, J. W. (2013). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

APPENDIXES

TOOL FOR DATA COLLECTION

RESEARCH TOOL

As this is a qualitative research the researcher decided to conduct a semi-structured in depth interview using a semi-structured interview guide. Data was collected from four respondents and the interview was done on the basis of the research questions.

Name of the respondent

Age

Sex

Educational Qualification

Family status

Number of Family members

Job description

Working time

Can you tell me why you chose to join TEPS?

What was the previous job that you were engaged in before the ecotourism project?

What is the kind of job related activities that you are encouraged in TEPS?

How the TEPS impacted your livelihood?

Do you have any other source of income?

Do you have accessibility to basic facilities and other infrastructure?

Have you experienced any social changes after joining TEPS?

How did your financial situation changed after engaging with TEPS?

Focus Group Discussion

1. Welcome participants
2. Introduce yourself
3. Explain Purpose:

The researcher is conducting a series of discussion with the stakeholders of TEPS who are from the community in Thenmala to learn from each other about:

- What was the motivation for the stakeholder to be part of TEPS?
- How did the stakeholder get recruited into TEPS, the induction process and the transformation the stakeholder underwent working with TEPS?

4. Explain the researcher's role:

In the coming hour, I will be asking questions. I am interested to listen to all points of view and I will not be participating in the discussion.

5. Ensure Confidentiality:

The researcher kindly asks the group to respect the confidentiality of each other and not to say who said what. If one would like to tell the researcher a relevant story from the community, ensure them that they do not reveal the names of the people concerned, or any detail that might reveal their identities.

6. Begin with introductions
7. Continue the discussion
8. Ask for feedback
9. Summarize the key points.