CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

4.1 Benchmarking

Due to the involvement of many sectors, subsectors, components and sub components, measuring the performance of tourist destination is a complex task. Performance measures have been defined as a set of interrelated variables (Xiang, Kothari, Hu and Fesenmaier, 2007). Kozak (2002) observed that price is not an independent economic measure controlled by destination authorities or organizations because there is a close relationship between exchange rates changes in level of prices, especially for international tourist destinations. At the same time, both financial and non-financial measures have been considered indispensable to the evaluation of destination performance (Xiang, Kothari, Hu and Fesenmaier, 2007). Kozak (2002) pointed that many performance areas exhibit multi-dimensional characteristics. Visitor’s satisfaction level have been operationalized as a range of factor variables including accommodation services, infrastructure, local transportation, hospitality, airport service, hygiene and sanitation, price and language of communication. Kozak (2002) observed that a third factor which makes it difficult to develop commonly accepted performance measures is the idiosyncrasy of tourist destinations; each destination may have distinct community values and individual characteristics as well as unique characteristics and vision (Xiang, Kothari, Hu and Fesenmaier, 2007). Karolf and Ostblom (1993) states that anything that can be measured can be benchmarked, such as all aspects of the organization’s behavior and performance such as goods, services, processes, staffing, support systems, capital, and value for money (Kozak, 2004). Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, (1995) suggests two categories of performance measures named as “qualitative” and “quantitative”. The
outcome of these measures might be used in carrying out internal, external or generic benchmarking (Kozak, 2004). McNair & Leibfreid, (1992); Zairi, (1992) suggests that organizations should first begin with internal benchmarking followed by external benchmarking and generic benchmarking for product or service positioning (Kozak, 2004). Parasuraman, Berry & Zeithaml, (1992); Fornell, (1992) observed that in the service industry, the measurement methods could be based on the number of complaints, the rated satisfaction level, refunds, incomplete orders, and repeat visits (Kozak, 2004). Internal benchmarking could be the assessment of percentage changes in means scores of quantitative variables, for example, percentage change in economic variables of tourism such as the level of income, the number of tourists, and the occupancy rate as well as customer perception, satisfaction and complaints in comparison with previous period (Kozak, 2004). In terms of potential use of measures in destination benchmarking, quantitative measures can only indicate where gaps exist but are unable to provide any insight why the selected areas perform well or poorly (Kozak, 2004). This is what the use of qualitative measures aims to achieve. For instance, any problem with a low level of satisfaction with cleanliness could pinpoint the potential reason and arrive at the conclusion that the responsible facility needs to be improved (Kozak, 2004). It seems probable that there is also a potential link between both measures. Improvement in qualitative measures may lead to improvement in quantitative measures, such as the impact of the increased satisfaction over the number of tourist arrivals or increased tourist expenditure (Kozak, 2004).
4.2 Tourist Satisfaction

Kozak (2002) investigated the findings of past tourism benchmarking research and confirmed the existence of differences in tourists’ motivation, satisfaction, expenditure and the number of previous visits. Therefore, it is suggested undertaking a separate benchmarking exercise for each national group. This type of analysis may assist authorities to establish their positioning strategies and explore their core competencies for each group (Kozak & Nield, 2001).

Bigne, Andreu and Gnoth (2005) suggested that a cognitive-affective views have been influenced by the individual’s cognitive judgments and emotions derived from the consumption experience (Bosque & Martin, 2008) and these views are important to measure as the tourist site is considered as a source of pleasure, enjoyment and other emotional states (Bosque & Martin, 2008). According to this method there are eighteen cognitive images that will affect customer satisfaction in a tourist destination (1) Variety of fauna and flora (may differ based on the destination type) (2) Beautiful landscape (3) beautiful natural park (4) Pleasant weather (5) Attractive beaches (6) Hospitable people (7) Opportunity for adventure (8) Peaceful place (9) Place to rest (10) Cultural attractions (11) Interesting cultural activities (12) Nice to learn about local custom (13) Rich and varied gastronomy (14) Easy accessibility (15) Shopping facilities (16) Quality accommodation (17) Good value for money (18) Safe place and in the affective image there are four classifications (a) Sleepy- arousing (b) Distressing- relaxing (c) Gloomy-exiting (d) Unpleasant- pleasant (Bosque & Martin, 2008). Another viewpoint is that a positive host-guest relation is important to enhance tourist satisfaction, in this method the possible disturbance from the host communities are measured to understand the level of
“harassment” which leads to the possible dissatisfaction to the tourist during their visits. The sources of harassment noted in this satisfaction study are mostly from the frontline services sectors and indirectly by exploiters such as drug peddlers and beggars (Kozak, 2007). Kano (1984) developed a three factor structure of tourist satisfaction. Based on this model, quality attributes may be grouped into three categories, each of which exerts a different impact on customer satisfaction (Matthias and Weiermair, 2004). Basic factors may be defined as minimum requirements that cause dissatisfaction if not fulfilled but do not lead to customer satisfaction if fulfilled or exceeded; a negative performance with these attributes has a greater impact on overall satisfaction than positive performance. The fulfillment of basic requirement is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for satisfaction. Hence, basic factors are completely expected. The tourist regards them as prerequisites; they are taken for granted. Excitement factors are the factors that increase customer satisfaction if delivered but do not cause dissatisfaction if they are not delivered. Excitement factors surprise the tourists and generate delight. Performance factors lead to satisfaction if performance is high and lead to dissatisfaction if performance is low. In this case, the attribute performance’s overall satisfaction relationship is somewhat linear and symmetric. The basic idea of this model has as of late been well adopted in current tourism research (Matzler, Pechlaner, and Siller 2001; Matthias and Weiermair, 2004). The model implies that basic factors establish a market entry threshold. If they are delivered at a satisfactory level, an increase of their performance does, however, not lead to an increase in tourist satisfaction. Performance factors are typically directly connected to customers’ explicit need and desires. Therefore, destination must at least be competitive with regard to performance factors.
On the other hand, excitement factors are unexpected and will surprise the tourists. As they generate delight, a destination should try to excel in these attributes (Matthias and Weiermair, 2004). One of the first scales developed to identify factors of tourist satisfaction by Pizam et al., (1978) was done by using a factor-analytic approach based on data obtained from identified eight factors of tourist satisfaction: Beach opportunities, cost, hospitality, eating and drinking facilities, accommodation facilities, environment and the extent of commercialization (Bindu, Rajendran, & Prakash, 2008).

Expectancy –Disconfirmation model is another method commonly used in measuring tourist satisfaction. This method is explained in the Expectation Disconfirmation Paradigm (EDP) based on the equity theory the satisfaction results from the comparison between consumer inputs and outputs (Equity theory) (Yuksel & Yuksel, 2001). This model suggests expectation and disconfirmation are correlated as without expectation disconfirmation cannot occur (Yuksel & Yuksel, 2001). This model suggests the tourist’s rating of a particular service based on how much importance the guest is given to a particular tourist service. Based on Lieper’s (1990) system theory tourist satisfaction is the totality of traveler’s satisfaction with each aspect of the whole system. This measurement consists of (a) Satisfaction with pre trip services including travel agent, hotel reservation, knowledge of the service providers, cost of the trip etc. (b) Satisfaction with services at the tourist destination such as richness of experience, problem free destination, check in time, cost of services etc. and (c) Satisfaction with transit route services that ensure the problem free travel (flight services, ticket agents, bus drivers, transfer etc.) based on this theory any dissatisfaction experience with any of these service aspects is likely to decrease a traveller’s satisfaction. The whole service areas are
measured in 5 point Likert scale. But this measurement is not very important in measuring destination competitiveness as the tourist generally separates the quality of service from their point of origin and tourist destination and moreover benchmarking a tourist destination is based on competitiveness. Destination authorities have less control on the quality of services at the traveller generating region and tourists have a logical preference for changing the service at the origin point if they found the services are poor.

According to Oliver et al., (1993) emotions such as dissonance, associated with service encounter play an important role in defining satisfaction and predicting future behavior intention (McMullan & O'Neill, 2010). In this model, emotion and dissonance in visitor satisfaction are measured. Yuksel (2001) suggests that customer satisfaction measures should include components such as equity, attribution, value-percept, dissonance, contrast, comparison level, evaluative congruity and quality (McMullan & O'Neill, 2010). There are four scales designed to measure tourist satisfaction, they are (1) Cognitive Emotional Satisfaction (ESS) scale, (2) Cognitive Product Satisfaction (CPS) scale and Cognitive Service Satisfaction (CSS) scale and Cognitive Dissonance Scale (CDS) (McMullan & O'Neill, 2010). Oliver et al., (1999) describes emotion as characterized by tourists developing an unfavorable or favorable attitude towards the product or service that develop cumulatively through satisfying experiences reflecting pleasure, satisfaction and commitment during their visit, which is measured by Cognitive Dissonance (McMullan & O'Neill, 2010). Cognitive product and cognitive service satisfaction are occur after the purchase decision in tourism after the package purchase and this is measured by major supportive services at the tourist destination such as accommodation, organized tours etc. and service satisfaction is measured mainly by the
physical condition of the place, cleanliness, safety access etc. Another method used is SERVQUAL (Service Quality) IPA (Important-Performance Analysis) developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) that focuses on notion of perceived quality (Hudson & Hudson, 2004) measuring the difference between consumers’ expectation and perceptions of service. However, using SERVQUAL has its own limitation for measuring destination performance as the instrument is designed for measuring various attributes and the performance such as product or a destination and the dimensions change when customers estimate product services example being the service differences in a bank or a department store. (Hudson & Hudson, 2004). Another instrument to measure tourist satisfaction is HOLSAT (Holiday Satisfaction) this tool used to identify the key attributes of the holiday satisfaction element which produces holiday satisfaction (Tribe & Snaith, 1998) and is first tested in Varadero, Cuba. Satisfaction is viewed from the relationship of performance of holiday attributes against expectations of the performance of that attributes (Tribe & Snaith, 1998). Therefore HOLSAT is used to analyze the gap of expectation and performance. A factor-cluster approach can be used to measure tourist satisfaction in a tourist destination; this instrument aims to evaluate (a) satisfaction in tourist destination and (b) general travel arrangement preferences (Andriotis, Agiomirgianakis, & Mhiotis, 2007).

“Each destination may have different attributes. Tourists satisfied in one destination may differ from those satisfied in other destinations based on destination’s specific attributes. As a result, a collective satisfaction scale cannot be used across destinations” (Andriotis, Agiomirgianakis, & Mhiotis, 2007, p. 223).
As per the literature review, it is important to measure the satisfaction level of tourists in various cognitive levels. Since the tourist satisfaction is fragmented in emotional level, service level, product level and dissonance level, the following conceptual framework is formulated.

![Conceptual Framework for Tourist Satisfaction Index (TSI)](image)

**Figure 4.1** Conceptual Framework for Tourist Satisfaction Index (TSI)

### 4.2.1 Constructs

**4.2.1.1 Emotional Satisfaction Scale (ESS)**

According to Dick and Basu (1994) Cognitive Emotional Satisfaction encompasses feeling of the tourist when visiting a tourist destination (McMullan & O'Neill, 2010). The items included in this scale represent the visitors feeling about the place. The responses are measured on a five point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (McMullan & O'Neill, 2010).
4.2.1.2 Cognitive Product Satisfaction Scale (CPS)

According to Fallon and Schofield (2003) Cognitive Product Satisfaction Scale representing tourism product dimensions of tourism related activities which eventually measure tourist’s consumption experience on major tourism products Cognitive Product Satisfaction measures in five point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (McMullan & O'Neill, 2010).

4.2.1.3 Cognitive Service Satisfaction Scale (CSS)

Cognitive service satisfaction scale represents tourist’s service dimensions, which measures tourist’s experience on different services in the tourist destination. Cognitive Service satisfaction measures in five point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (McMullan & O'Neill, 2010).

4.2.1.4 Cognitive Dissonance Scale (CDS)

Cognitive Dissonance scale represents the mixture of favorable and unfavorable statements on which respondents were asked to rate their point of agreement or disagreement. Cognitive Dissonance of tourist satisfaction measures in five point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (McMullan & O'Neill, 2010).

4.3 Community Impact Assessment (CIA)

Tourism is perceived as an industry which creates extradisciplinary benefits to other sectors, particularly in developing and underdeveloped countries, tourism is considered a tool for economic transformation and in rural areas tourism can support to turn a poor
society into a self-sufficient one. Therefore it is not sufficient to consider only tourist satisfaction as a measure for destination performance evaluation for benchmarking.

Most studies have considered employment as a measure of dependency (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf & Vogt, 2005). A study conducted by Haralambopoulos and Pizam (1996) described that residents are categorized into those who were directly dependent on tourism and those who were not. The former were found to perceive the industry in a more positive light in terms employment opportunities, personal income, tax revenues and standard of living.

4.3.1 Social Exchange Theory

“In the examination of attitudes, researchers recognized that residents’ attitude toward tourism are not simply the reflections of residents’ knowledge about tourism impact but also influenced by residents’ values and personality” (Wang & Pfister, 2008, p.85). According to Anderek et al. (2005) social exchange theory has been frequently adopted in tourism studies as a theoretical framework for developing and understanding of residents’ attitude toward tourism (Wang & Pfister, 2008). Emerson (1976) observed that using social exchange theory offers a framework for examining the position an individual actor may take contingent upon a rewarding action from others (Wang & Pfister, 2008). “A basic tenet set is that locals are likely to participate in an exchange if they believe that they are likely to gain benefits without incurring unacceptable costs” (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004) and “benefits are essentially in value domains, and in tourism, economic and non-economic values domain may influence an attitude toward tourism” (Wang & Pfister, 2008 p.85). Non-economic value domains need to focus on the nature
of conducting factors in the creation of value domains in which tourism is an emergent economic activity” (Wang & Pfister, 2008, p.85). “Even when the practice of exchange engaged by residents is regarded as a pure economic activity, the non-economic value domains or benefits in the exchange process cannot be ignored” (Wang & Pfister, 2008, p.85). The theory further elaborate that residents are likely to support development as long as they believe that the expected benefits exceed costs. Based on this theory six exogenous constructs can be developed they are (a) Economic benefit (b) Economic cost (c) Social benefits (d) Social costs (e) Cultural benefits (f) Cultural costs (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Most of the studies significantly pointed that the relationship between perceived economic benefits and community attitude reported positive relationship. (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). The social benefits are also studied in different tourist destinations and some of these studies highlighted that Harrison (1992) suggested tourism provides new opportunities and instigate social exchange, in another study by Brunt & Courtney (1999) tourism creates new opportunities for locals such as new shopping and recreation alternatives and Pizam (1978) suggested the improving standards of roads and other public facilities (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Concerning the cultural benefits, according to Esman (1984) tourism increases pride and cultural identity, cohesion, and exchange of ideas, and increases the knowledge of the culture in a particular community. Based on the study by Kousis (1989), tourism creates opportunity for cultural exchange and revitalization of faded tradition, increases quality of life, and Besculides et al., (2002) observed that tourism improves the image of the community. Sharply (1994) noted that host community may change into the tradition of generation country due to the fusion of different culture at the tourist destination and according to Tosun (2002) tourism causes
socio cultural gaps due to socio cultural differences particularly in purchasing power (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Another method adapted to measure community impact is Sustainable Tourism – Tourism Attitude Scale (SUS-TAS), this tool is developed solely to measure perceptions of positive or negative impacts of tourism. “The SUS-TAS explicitly integrates five sustainable criteria such as (a) Economic benefits (b) Socio-cultural impacts of tourism (c) Community-based benefits, (d) Visitor satisfaction, and (e) Environmental sustainability” (Sirakaya & Choi, 2005). Another instrument identified is Community Tourism Self-Assessment Instrument (CTSI) (Reid, Mair, & George, 2004). “CTSI is designated to measure residents’ feelings about, and readiness for, tourism in the locals as well as to generate dialogue about development more generally” (Reid, Mair, & George, 2004, p. 626).

Based on the above facts the framework of CIA consists of the constructs Economic Benefit, Economic Cost, Social Benefit, Social Cost, Cultural Benefits, Cultural Costs and Expectation of the Tourists. Which fragmented into six constructs such as Conservation Effort (CE), Social Issues (SI), Social Image (SIM), Social Service (SS), Economic Condition (EC) and Community Expectation (EX). The conceptual framework is illustrated in the following figure.
4.3.2 Constructs

4.3.2.1 Economic Condition (EC)

4.3.2.1.1 Perceived economic benefits of tourism development

Emerson (1962) and Homans (1991) suggested that community groups engaged in exchange transaction are keen to support tourism development. Community tourism is treated by the resident community as a means of income that support the community. Community generally reported positive attitudes regarding tourism and economic improvement (Vogt & Andereck, 2000).
4.3.2.1.2 Perceived economic costs of tourism

Tourism is considered to be destructive to community life (Reid, Mair, & George, 2004). Issues that consist of increased price of goods and services, crime rates, traffic issues and noise (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Based on the social exchange theory, O’ Leary (1976) found locals who utilize the resource base view impacts negatively due to the belief that tourism may create sometimes unacceptable cost to the community even though tourism act as a tool for economic gain, an imbalance in development can cause social annoyance and vice versa social acceptance and support (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004).

4.3.2.2 Social Issues (SI)

4.3.2.2.1 Perceived socio-cultural costs of tourism

Development of tourism and tourist’s presence deteriorated the quality of life of destination community, overuse of resources and exploitation through mass sales eventually causing crowd (Sirakaya & Choi, 2005). The continuous host-guest encounter may cause unacceptable cost for the destination community.

4.3.2.2.2 Perceived social and cultural benefits

Tourists and tourism development supports the communities native culture, provide better infrastructure access in the native area and improved standard of public facilities (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Good establishment of synergy between community and tourists with cultural exchange through understanding and positive impact of cultural
identity (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004) will enrich the socio-cultural status of the destination community.

4.3.2.3 Social Image (SIM)

4.3.2.3.1 Community attachment

Proud of being a member and level of satisfaction of one being a member of community during tourism development (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004) is an essential indicator for social sustainability. This is contextual and frequently the results vary in one destination to another. In a developed economy social image overrules social benefits of tourism development. In a developing economy, the context is reverse and social benefit particularly economic benefit overrules the social image as destination community considers income from tourism as the primary focus of tourism development.

4.3.2.4 Social Services (SS)

Most of the tourism related infrastructures are shared services. Local community can use these infrastructures for their normal life. However, destination community reacts positively or negatively based on the level of access to these shared services in their day today life (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004)

4.3.2.5 Conservation Effort (CE)

Conservation Effort deals with impact of tourism on the sensitive areas of the destination community. There is the possibility that local development policy become focused on meeting the needs of the tourists, often without regard for environment, local culture and heritage. If tourism development supports to conserve it, there will be a positive
receptivity that can be observed in the destination community (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005).

4.3.2.6 Community Expectation (CE)

4.3.2.6.1 Community support for tourism development

This construct explains the receptivity of local community to support or oppose tourism development in their local areas.

4.3.3 Scale

Both Tourist Satisfaction Survey (TSS) and Community Impact Assessment (CIA) measured by the instrument using a 5 point Likert scale provide a tool to assess the similarities and differences among the participants on each of the items (Reid, Mair, & George, 2004). The score ranging from 1 with strongly disagree at the lower end and 5 strongly agree at the higher end (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004).

4.3.4 Sampling Area

In order to collect samples for Tourist Satisfaction Survey (TSS) and Community Impact Assessment (CIA), questionnaires are distributed in the most prominent tourist districts of Kerala, they are Ernakulam, Thiruvananthapuram and Alappuzha. These are three districts receiving 75 percent of the total tourist arrival in Kerala. The remaining eleven districts contribute only 25 percent of the total tourist arrivals in Kerala. Destination communities in these destinations are also engaged in various Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
4.3.5 Profile of the Sampling Areas

4.3.5.1 Ernakulam

Accouted for highest number of international tourist arrivals in Kerala, which as per the latest arrival record comes to 239364 in 2011. This district has better tourist infrastructure than other districts. There are fifty one classified hotels ranging from 5 stars to 2 stars. The district has 61 approved homestays and 9 approved Grihasthali units, 19 classified health centers. Ernakulam has a mixture of nature, cultural, heritage, pilgrimage and the most authentic “Kettuvallam” houseboats attractions.

4.3.5.2 Thiruvananthapuram

The capital district of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram has 41 classified hotels ranging from 5 stars to 2 stars, 33 approved homestays, and two approved Grihasthali units and 23 classified Ayurvedic centers. Thiruvananthapuram is also a district with holistic tourism resources consisting of internationally recognized beaches, natural resources pilgrimage centers, fishing harbor with living cultures and heritage buildings.

4.3.5.3 Alappuzha

Located at the southern part of Kerala, Alappuzha has seventeen classified hotels ranging from 5 stars to 2 stars, 47 approved homestays, 11 approved Grihasthali units and 6 classified Ayurvedic health centers. With abundant natural beauty, Alappuzha is known as the paddy bowl of Kerala, The district is known as the “Venice of the East” for its spectacular backwaters, coir industries and beaches.
4.3.6 Sampling Period

In order to collect the best sample, December and January 2011 has been chosen as the sampling period. According to the international tourist arrival statistics, the best arrival responses recorded in the month of December and January. In Ernakulum it is recorded that 277675 international tourists visited in 2011 and in Thiruvananthapuram 204049 and Alappuzha 41977 respectively (Kerala Tourism Statistics, 2011).

4.3.7 Stakeholders Perspectives

Various attributes from supply chain and different Destination management Organizations (DMO) need to be identified and destination stakeholders must be considered in benchmarking tourist destination (Rodriguez & Diasz, 2007).

There are two areas identified based on the role of tour operators

a. Tour Operators Perception on the development of tourism in Kerala
b. Tour Operators initiative for responsible tourism development in Kerala, particularly in educating the tourists

4.3.8 Tour Operators Perception on Tourism Development in Kerala

4.3.8.1 Issues of tour operation

Owing to the high rate of external influences on tour operation in Kerala, including hartal make working tough for tour operators, and these issues further create problems in all supply chains such as hotels, restaurants and airline schedules.
4.3.8.2 Comparative benefits and profits

Tour operation is a highly skilled service but due to the above mentioned issues, low benefits and profits from the tour operation business cause the operators to compromise on many service aspects and this further decreased remuneration to the employers resulting in lack of motivation, all of which can affect service satisfaction and ethical services.

4.3.8.3 Support of public sector

As a service industry, tour operators are the ambassadors of any country’s tourism development as they create the first and last images of tourism receptivity and as such the public sector support is extremely important for the success of tourism business in Kerala. This question deals with the effective synergy between department of tourism and private sector tour operation businesses.

4.3.8.4 Man power

In Kerala, Many institutions including Universities are conducting tourism programmes ranging from Diploma to Masters and PhD. The efficient manpower recruitment is the indication of training effectiveness in academic institutions.

4.3.8.5 The prospects of tour operation business in Kerala

Kerala tourism is in an exploring stage of development, statistics shows that there is a steady growth of tourism in the past few years. This promises the stability of the industry in the coming years. Therefore, it is important to identify the key costs and the benefits and anticipated responses in the future tour operation business.
4.3.8.6 Tour operators recommendation

Since the tour operators are the frontliners and most experienced people on the pros and cons of tourism development, the answer to this question reflects on the recommendation of tour operators for the successful development of tourism in Kerala.

4.3.8.7 Synergy in the supply chain

The supply chain comprises of suppliers of all goods and services that go into the delivery of tourism products to the tourists. The impact of the supply chain management by a tour operator comes from the impact of all components of the products they sell (Richard & Xavier, 2004). A superior synergy helps in the sustainable business operation leading to mutual benefits among tourism business sectors and tourist satisfaction.

4.3.9 Managerial Action

Kerala tourism policy 2011 significantly highlighted the synergy of public, private and community partnerships in tourism development. This is one of the best formulae established to develop sustainable tourism in any tourist destination. The main objective of this session of the study is to analyse the effectiveness of Kerala tourism policy based on the vision, mission and objectives of how well the policy is aligned with two major performance core components of destination performance they are (a) Visitor satisfaction and (b) Community (social) impact. These two areas are clearly explained in the vision, mission and objectives of Kerala Tourism Policy document 2007 and 2012.
4.3.9.1 Set A: Previous Kerala tourism policy initiatives

Major tourism policy initiatives extracted from the Kerala tourism policy. The main variables of Kerala tourism policy 2007 is as follows and implementation effectiveness of these initiatives are used to conduct the open ended interview.

Table 4.1

Kerala tourism policy 2007 thrust areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Public sectors addressed well on the unemployment issues through tourism in Kerala in the past years.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Public sectors initiatives in improving quality visitor experience quality in the past years.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Public sectors initiatives in improving basic infrastructure at tourist destination.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Public sectors initiatives in effective waste management and cleanliness in tourist destination.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Public sectors initiatives in offering unique tourist experience in Kerala tourism (House Boats and Ayurveda) in the past years.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Public sectors initiatives in facilitation on arrival (immigration, customs, convenient transfers etc.) in the past years.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Public sectors initiatives in providing memorable tourist experience in the past years.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Public sectors initiatives in marketing and promotion of tourism in the past years.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Public sectors initiatives in improving the quality of accommodation and stay in the past years.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note. Thrust areas of tourism policy 2007 for interview

4.3.9.3 Set B: Confidence on Kerala Tourism Policy 2012

Kerala tourism introduced its comprehensive draft tourism policy in 2011 and launched the final tourism policy in June 2012. This part is in continuation of the previous Kerala Tourism Policy and based on the new 2012 Kerala tourism policy and this interview session focuses on the confidence of tour operators on the effective implementation of Kerala Tourism Policy 2012.

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tourism becomes a vibrant and significant contributor to the sustainable development of the state Kerala.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>State delivers world-class, yet local visitor experience</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tourism sector attracts investment, which will be sensitive to natural environment.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community’s benefits from tourism and value its contribution.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kerala is positioned as a visible global brand in tourism.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Our market share is increased within and outside India.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kerala becomes a quality human resource provider for the state.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Public sector ensures quality visitor experience.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Public sector focus on benefits for the community from tourism.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Public sector creates a good environment for investment.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Public sector taking innovate step for Kerala as a visible global brand in domestic and international market.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Public sector makes effort to develop quality human resources in tourism and hospitality.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kerala Clean Toilet (KCT) campaign.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Control waste disposal in major tourist destination in Kerala.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tourist Information Centre at all major destinations.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Hope on Hope off services in Thiruvananthapuram, Alappuzha, Fort Kochi, Kochi Backwaters and Munnar.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Access for disabled at the destination.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Lifesaving Volunteers (Beach, Backwater, Rivers, Lakes and Ponds).</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Tourist Warden (Help tourists).</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Contingency Response Cell (Destination).</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Exemption of tourism from hartals.</td>
<td>Kerala Tourism Policy 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Thrust areas of Kerala tourism policy for interview
4.3.10 Hypothesis

Figure 4.3 Tourist Satisfaction Index (TSI) Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant relationship between tourist’s Cognitive emotional satisfaction and tourist cognitive dissonance

H2: There is a significant relationship between tourist’s Cognitive product satisfaction and tourist’s cognitive dissonance

H3: There is a significant relationship between tourist’s Cognitive service satisfaction and tourist’s cognitive dissonance

H4. There is a significant relationship between tourists Cognitive Emotional Satisfaction and Cognitive Product Satisfaction

H5. There is a significant relationship between tourist’s Cognitive Emotional Satisfaction and Cognitive Service Satisfaction

H6. There is a significant relationship between tourists’ Cognitive Product Satisfaction and Cognitive Service Satisfaction
Figure 4.4. Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Hypothesis

H1. There is a significant relationship between Conservation Effort of the tourist destination and Community tourism experience

H2. There is a significant relationship between Social Issues and Community tourism experience

H3. There is a significant relationship between Social Image and Community tourism experience

H4. There is a significant relationship between Community Social service and community tourism experience

H5. There is a significant relationship between Economic Condition of tourism and community tourism experience

H6. There is a significant relationship between Conservation Effort and Social Issues

H7. There is a significant relationship between Conservation Effort and Social Image.

H8. There is a significant relationship between Conservation Effort and Social Service

H9. There is a significant relationship between Conservation Effort and Economic Condition

H10. There is a significant relationship between Social Issues and Social Image

H11. There is a significant relationship between Social Issues and Social Service

H12. There is a significant relationship between Social Issues and Economic Condition

H13. There is a significant relationship between Social Image and Social Service

H14. There is a significant relationship between Social Service and Economic Condition
Table 4.3

*Destination Performance Evaluation Model for Destination Benchmarking*

![Diagram of Destination Performance Evaluation Model](image)

*Note: Conceptual framework for Destination Performance Evaluation for Benchmarking*
4.3.11 Research Questions

1. Kerala tourism brand is internationally recognised, yet lacking in tourist arrivals matching its reputation. What are the major problems pertaining to the development of Kerala tourism?

Kerala tourism or “God’s own country” is an international brand, Kerala’s model of development is one of the rarest in the world economy. There are many tourist destinations in the world that lends for a comparative study with Kerala (example Malaysia) on the basis of the similarity of tourism resources and development. Still, Kerala’s tourist arrivals is comparatively lower than the other countries having a similar profile. The current phenomenon reflects that Kerala tourism faces some internal issues in terms of benchmarking internationally. Based on the benchmarking studies the issues can be related to some of the core components of performance.

2. What is the current position of performance index of core components of Kerala tourism in order to position the performance of Kerala tourism?

Internal benchmarking is important to evaluate internal performance of core components of tourism such as (a) Tourist Satisfaction (b) Community impact (c) Economic performance of Kerala (d) Policy practice related issues (e) Stakeholders perspectives. To benchmark Kerala tourism internally there is need to understand the internal performance of these components and the evaluation of the scores of these core components which will help to identify the current status.
3. Does Kerala Tourism’s internal performance meet the required international tourism development standard?

This research question is leading to extract an international benchmarking standard of Kerala tourism by identifying the performance of internal benchmarking. This will help to understand the performance comparison, gap identification and appreciation of some of the good practices, which will eventually help to rectify the tourism development issues of Kerala tourism.

4.3.12 Data Collection

This research adopted both primary and secondary data collection.

Kozak (2001) observed that the length of stay in a tourist destination may influence the perception of the place, therefore for reliability, those samples are the best which were collected the tourist who had been on holiday for at least two days in the tourist destination (Bosque & Martin, 2008). A total of 500 samples will be collected from the three prominent tourist destination of Kerala such as Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulum and Alappuzha, the selection is based on the tourist demand and as the number of tourist arrivals are the highest in these districts. Each district will be equally sampled with hundred international tourists with random sampling method. The survey will be conducted in the month of December 2011 as this is the peak season of international arrivals in these districts.

For community impact assessment, the survey will be conducted in the destination community in three geographical areas of Kerala. The selection is based on the
priority given by Department of Tourism government of Kerala for responsible community tourism development which was initiated in the year 2007 by State Level Responsible Tourism Committee (SLRTC). A total of 300 samples will be taken by using structured questionnaire equally distributed in the three geographical regions of Kerala.

Open ended interview will be conducted with Senior Managers of reputed travel and tour companies from Cochin. A total of 12 senior executives were interviewed.

4.3.13 Sources of the Study

The study consists of innumerable primary and secondary sources.

4.3.13.1 Primary sources

Samples collected using structured questioners distributed in the three most popular tourist districts of Kerala such as Cochin, Thiruvananthapuram and Alappuzha during the peak season (December – January 2010). A total 530 questionnaires were distributed for Tourism Satisfaction Index (TSI) and 445 usable questionnaires used for analyzing the data. In the case of Community Impact Assessment (CIA) a total of 310 questionnaires were distributed in the same districts and 295 usable questionnaires were used for data analysis.

Interviewing techniques were mainly used for tour operator’s initiatives by conducting 12 interview with tour operators in the senior management position
(Pseudonyms as ABC and D) from the Ernakulum district using open ended questions.

4.3.13.2 Secondary sources

Research papers from reputed journals such as Annals of tourism research, Journal of hospitality and tourism research, Journal of vacation marketing, Benchmarking: An international journal, The researcher, European journal of tourism research, Journal of quality assurance in hospitality and tourism, Journal of urban studies, Journal of travel research, Managing service quality, Journal of alternative perspectives in social sciences were used to conduct the study. Kerala tourism policy documents, report and statistics from the Kerala government statistics division, brochures, folders and CD ROM from Department of Tourism State Government of Kerala has been used for destination information. Printed books by both national and international publishers, and enormous websites also were used to gather information to complete the research.

4.3.14 Tools and Technique

4.3.14.1 Quantitative method

Survey results were received from the questionnaires exported to the AMOS Statistics 20. This software is the latest version of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). AMOS is a general purpose statistical software package used for analyzing numeric data and for producing graphical representations of data.
4.3.14.2 Qualitative method

Content analysis is used to analyze the data. Content Analysis is a statistical method that involves categorizing some aspects of people’s behavior and counting the number of times such behaviour appears. Content analysis is a method that can be used with either qualitative or quantitative data in an inductive or deductive way (Alegre & Jaume, 2009). According to Cole (1988) content analysis is a method using also analyzing written, verbal or visual messages. Sandelowski (1995) stated that content analysis is a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena (Alegre & Jaume, 2009). A structured open ended interview was conducted for analyzing the Kerala tourism policy implementation effectiveness. Tour operators are the frontline sectors which always witness the happenings of the tourism industry. Four tour companies have selected to conduct the interview from the central part of Kerala, they are pseudonyms (ABS and D) for confidentiality reason.

Once completed, all the interview comments were analyzed using the constant comparison method. According to Goetz and LeCompte (1981, p. 58) this method “combines inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of all social incidents observed. As social phenomena are recorded and classified, they are also compared across categories”. It is at this point that relationship discovery begins with the analysis of initial data. This process undergoes continuous refinement throughout the data collection and analysis process, continuously feeding back into the process of category coding (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000). To undertake the constant comparison method three levels of
coding were used; open, axial and reflective coding. The first stage of coding (open coding) consists of breaking down the initial data into smaller more meaningful codes. The second stage (axial coding) then takes initial codes and arranges them into categories or themes (McEwan & Jones, 2000). While the third and final stage of the grounded theory analytical process (selective coding) is the process of integrating, interpreting, and refining the theory (McCaslin & Scott, 2003). During the selective coding phase we develop the storyline and interpret the emerging theory.

4.3.15 Reliability and Validity Test

Reliability is the degree to which the observed variables are measures of the true value and is error free. More reliable measures will show greater consistency than less reliable measures (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Internal consistency is measured using Cronbach’s Alpha for both Tourist Satisfaction Index (TSI) and Community Impact Analysis (CIA). Cronbach’s alpha is one of the most commonly used indicators for internal consistency. There are different views on the use of constructs using Cronbach’s alpha value. Ideally the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of scale should be above 0.6.

Table 4.4

*Cronbach’s Alpha for Tourist Satisfaction Index (TSI)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cognitive Emotional Satisfaction</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cognitive Product Satisfaction Scale</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cognitive Service Satisfaction Scale</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cognitive Dissonance Scale</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.806</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note. Reliability test for Tourist Satisfaction Index (TSI)

Table 5.2 shows the reliability scores of Tourist Satisfaction Index (TSI). There are four constructs observed for internal consistency measures. In the Cognitive Emotional Satisfaction (ESS) variable there are 9 variables observed and the alpha (α) score is (.717) which is greater than alpha (α) (.6). For the construct Cognitive Product Satisfaction (CPS), there are 11 variables observed and the alpha (α) score is (.854) which is greater than the ideal score of (.6). For the construct Cognitive Service Satisfaction Scale (CSS), there are 16 variables are observed and the alpha (α) score is (.721) which is greater than alpha (α) (.6) and for the construct Cognitive Dissonance Scale,  four variables are observed with an alpha (α) score of (.806) which is above (.6). Based on the Cronbach’s Alpha values for Tourist Satisfaction all the four constructs have an alpha (α) value above (.6) which measures the good internal consistency of the observed variables.

Table 4.5

*Cronbach’s Alpha for Community Impact Assessment (CIA)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Number of variables</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Conservation Effort</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Social Image</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Economic Condition</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Social Issues</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.908</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Reliability test for Community Impact Assessment

Table 5.1 shows the reliability scores of Community Impact Assessment (CIA). There are five constructs observed for internal consistency measures. The conservation effort score of (.869) is greater than the ideal score (.6). For the construct social image there variables
are observed and the alpha (α) score is (.267) which is very much lower than acceptable score of (.6). For the construct Social Services, there are five variables observed and the alpha (α) score is (.751) which is above (.7) and for the construct Economic Condition four variables are observed with an alpha (α) score of (.630) which is above (.6) and for the construct social issues seven variables are observed, the alpha (α) score for this item is (.908). Based on the Cronbach’s Alpha values, except the construct social image all other constructs have an acceptable alpha (α) value above (.6). Therefore, social image will not be considered for measuring the Community Impact Assessment (CIA).