INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the biggest and fastest growing industries in the world. It is travel for recreational, leisure or business purposes. Tourism has been a major social phenomenon of societies all over the world.\(^1\) It is driven by the natural urge of every human being for new experiences, and the desire to be both educated and entertained. The motivations for tourism also include religious and business interests; the spread of education has fostered a desire to know more about different parts of the globe. Tourism education increasingly relies on case studies to develop managerial skills and understand the tourism industry. Students and people often debate complex situations with different viewpoints, social, environmental, political situation, and attractive tourist places.

The importance of Tourism, as an instrument of economic development and employment generation, particularly in remote and backward areas, has been well recognized the world over. It is a large service industry globally in terms of gross revenue as well as foreign exchange earnings.\(^2\) Tourism can play an important and effective role in achieving the growth with equity – an objective which we have set for ourselves. Tourism has the potential to grow at a high rate and ensure consequential development of the infrastructure of the destinations. It has the capacity to capitalize on the country’s success in the services sector and provides sustainable models of growth.

---


Tourism sector stimulates other economic sectors like agriculture, horticulture, poultry, handicrafts, transport, construction, etc. through its backward and forward linkages and cross-sectoral synergies. Expenditure on tourism induces a chain of transactions requiring supply of goods and services from the related sectors. The consumption demand, emanating from tourist expenditure also induces more employment and generates a multiplier effect on the economy. India’s performance in tourism sector has been quite impressive.4

Tourism in India has come into its own as a brand – ‘India Tourism’.5 The creation of tourism products like heliport tourism, medical tourism, wellness tourism, adventure tourism, cruise tourism and caravan tourism has served to widen the net of this sector. A major step has been the issuing of guidelines to State Governments/Union Territory administrations for development of tourism infrastructure that is world class. Tourism world-wide is a vindication of the Ministry’s creative abilities to project Indian tourism as the world brand as also the stand that publicity is an important tool for development.6

Today tourism is perceived as a contributor for peace and development, image building, mixing people and culture, development of international relation,

---

infrastructure development, achieving sustainable patterns of environment up-
gradation, upliftment of the society and global integration.  

**Concept and Definitions**

One of the earliest definitions of tourism was provided by the Austrian Economist Herman V. Shellard in 1910, who defined it as, "sum total of operators, mainly of an economic nature, which directly relate to the entry, stay and movement of foreigners inside and outside a certain country, city or a region." In 1994 Theobald suggested that etymologically, the word tour is derived from the Latin, 'tornare' and the Greek, 'tornos', meaning 'a lathe or circle; the movement around a central point or axis'. This meaning changed in modern English to represent 'one's turn'. The suffix –ism is defined as 'an action or process; typical behavior or quality', while the suffix, –ist denotes 'one that performs a given action'. When the word tour and the suffixes –ism and –ist are combined, they suggest the action of movement around a circle. One can argue that a circle represents a starting point, which ultimately returns back to its beginning. Therefore, like a circle, a tour represents a journey in that it is a round-trip, i.e., the act of leaving and then returning to the original starting point, and therefore, one who takes such a journey can be called a tourist.

---

7 Bhatia, A.K., *op.cit.*, p. 3.
In 1942, Hunriker and Krapf defined tourists as people who travel "the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, insofar as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity." According to L.J. Lickonish “Tourism embraces all movements of people outside their community for all purpose except migration or regular daily works. The most frequent reason for this movement is for holiday but it will also include, for example attendance at conference and movement on sporadic or infrequent business purpose". In 1976, the Tourism Society of England defined that "Tourism is the temporary, short-term movement of people to destination outside the places where they normally live and work and their activities during the stay at each destination. It includes movements for all purposes.”

In 1981, the International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism defined “Tourism in terms of particular activities selected by choice and undertaken outside the home ”. In 1994, the United Nations classified three forms of tourism in its Recommendations on Tourism Statistics: Domestic tourism, involves residents of a particular country travelling only within that country. Inbound tourism, involves non-residents travelling with in a country. Outbound tourism, involves residents travelling in another country.

---

A brief history of tourism

The concept of travel and tourism is as old as civilization itself. An overview of tourism’s historical development is required in order to fully appreciate today’s modern tourism environment and to understand the challenges of the globalized economy. Most historians of tourism have tended to focus on Europe, from the Greeks and Romans, to the railway and Thomas Cook in the UK. However, it is important to recognise that tourism has existed in other regions of the world for centuries.16

The history of tourism cannot be easily traced; back in the ancient years, as ancient world empires grew in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the infrastructure necessary for travel such as land routes and water ways was created and vehicles and other means for travel were developed. During the Egyptian dynasties, travel for both business and pleasure began to flourish, and hospitality centres were built along major routes and in the cities to accommodate travellers travelling between central government posts and outlying territories.17 At the height of the Assyrian empire, the means of travel were improved, the roads were improved, and markers were established to indicate distances and directions. Later, the Persians made further improvement in the road systems and developed four-wheeled carriages for transportation.18

16 Pran Seth, Successful Tourism Management, New Delhi, 2001, p.34.
17 Mario D. Souza, op.cit, p.2.
18 Shay Kumar, K.K., Tourism Management, New Delhi, 1997, p.12.
It is often thought that the beginnings of tourism date back to ancient Greece and Rome because we have evidence of tourism, from these eras, in terms of travel and tourism writing, for example. The earliest recorded tourism in Greece tended to be specialist in nature and related to religious practice; people visited religious festivals and consulted oracles. They also attended sporting events like the Olympic Games which began in 776 B.C, but even these had a religious significance.¹⁹

The early Greeks advanced tourism developments in two particular areas. First, through the development of a coin currency, replacing the need for travellers to carry goods to barter at their final destination for other goods and services. Secondly, the Greek language spread throughout the Mediterranean area, communication possible as one travelled. During the prosperous age of the Roman Empire, the ruling patrician class enjoyed their leisure during the periods of relative peace. Like the Greeks before them, they observed their own athletic and religious events and travelled to these cities. Sightseeing was also popular with the wealthy Romans; their most popular choice of tourist destination was Greece. Romans also toured Egypt to see the Sphinx and the Pyramids. Alexandria was a cosmopolitan oasis for Roman aristocracy, since many nationalities were represented there including Egyptians, Greeks, Jews, Ethiopians, Indians, and Syrians. In addition, the Romans developed extensively the concept of ‘spa therapy’ ²⁰ and bequeathed it to


²⁰ The term spa therapy is associated with water treatment. Spa towns or spa resorts typically offer various health treatments.
the rest of the world. Until the 17th century, spa therapy was combined with relaxation, entertainment and the development of pleasant social activities. However, the spa therapy, although a form of tourism, had very few conceptual and practical similarities with what denote today the words holidays and tourism.21

Thomas Cook has been the so called ‘father of the tourist trade’, since, on July 5th 1841, he arranged to take a group of about 500 members of his local ‘Temperance Society’ from Leicester London Road railway station to a rally in ‘Loughborough’, eleven miles away, having arranged with the rail company to charge one shilling per person that included rail tickets and food for this train journey. When industrialization across Europe gave rise to an affluent middle class with an increasing amount of free time, tourism began to take shape as an international industry. However, for the most part of the 19th century it has been expensive and limited to a small number of destinations. When in the 1960’s a growing number of people had disposable incomes and the desire for ‘something new’, reasonably priced commercial aircrafts and airplanes made international travel easier; and with this mass tourism had arrived.

Background of the study

Kanyakumari District is the second smallest of the 32 districts of Tamil Nadu State. The district takes its name from the Goddess of Kanyakumari Bhagavathi Amman. Kanyakumari District is situated in the southern tip of the Indian

21 Pran Seth, *op.cit.*, p.35.
sub continent. The administrative capital of the district is Nagercoil, which is 20 km from Kanyakumari town. The district has the best literacy rate in the state and is considered the best educated district in the Indian State of Tamil Nadu by the HRD Ministry. It is the third most developed district in the state and is leading in most of the parameters.

The district is a major tourist attraction in India and one of the hot spots in Asia, with year-round tourist traffic at Kanyakumari town and several important tourist spots like Padmanabhapuram Palace and 35 more hot spots, while seasonal in 15 other tourist spots. Some tourist spots are familiar some are not familiar. This research work attempts to present all tourist spots of Kanyakumari District.

**Aim of the study**

The present work, ‘Tourist Attractions in Kanyakumari District: A Study’ is an attempt to study the importance of tourist attractions in Kanyakumari district, and its development. The primary aim of the study is to display the tourism potential of Kanyakumari District and to trace the salient features of fairs and festivals of Kanyakumari District. Precisely, the aim of the present study is as follows;

1. To present a brief survey of Kanyakumari District.
2. To review the evolution of tourism, plans, and programmes related to this industry.
3. To list out the tourist attractions of Kanyakumari District.
4. To inquire the role of tourism on the socio-economic growth of this district.
5. To make the public as well as the officials aware of the tourism potential of the district.
6. To highlight the importance of tourist attractions.
7. To trace hidden tourist attractions of this district.
8. To find brief details of fairs and festivals of Kanyakumari District.
9. To enquire the role of fairs and festivals in the development of tourism.
10. To suggest the role of government in further development.
11. To display the perception of tourists.
12. To offer suggestion to the development of tourist attractions and
13. To assess the present position of tourism and analyze the problems faced by the local residents.

Purpose

There are a number of literaries available for the study of Kanyakumari District, but there is no systematic study available for the Tourist attractions of Kanyakumari district. The present study is an attempt to fill the gap.

Scope of the study

The study highlights the tourist attractions of Kanyakumari District. It presents the brief survey of Kanyakumari District and lists out the tourist attractions of Kanyakumari District. It traces hidden tourist attractions of this district and enquires the role of fairs and festivals in the development of tourism in this district.
It displays the perception of tourists, and offers suggestion to the development of tourist attractions.

**Hypothesis**

Tourist spots and fairs and festivals in Kanyakumari District attract a large number of tourists from all over the world, is still an emerging discipline and hence any academic or research work done on it will enrich the existing stock of knowledge on the subject. Even though the attractions of this district are well known, other unknown places with scenic beauty are yet to be explored. This study will focus the disclosed and undisclosed attractions with authoritative and authentic information.

**Methodology**

The research method employed in organizing the present study is historical method that is an orderly and relevant narration of events, highlighting the hidden attractions in Kanyakumari District. Authentic and descriptive methodology is used in this research.

**Review of Literature**

This section reviews the literature on the topic ‘Tourist attractions in Kanyakumari District: A Study’. The work of Tennyson analyses the Vijayanagar style of Padmanabhapuram palace. The works of A. Sreedhara Menon deal with the
stone sculptures. The studies of M. Gopala Krishnan deal with the tunnel feet of the monument in Padmanabhapuram.

The work of T. Pichimoorthy reveals about the Temple sculptures. The work of S. Padmanabhan describes the inscriptions in Chitharal and Hindu temples of Kanyakumari District. The work of C.M. Agur describes the origin of churches and church history of Travancore. The works of C. Bhaskara explain the temple and culture of Tamilians. It is also a valuable source of identifying Tamil culture. The works of M. Immanuval evaluate the architects of Kanyakumari District. C. Prathab Singh describes the of Kanyakumari in his book.

The works of K.K.Pillai reveal the features of Suchindram Temple. The writings of S. Nadarajan describe Mondicadu and Mondaikattamman history. Mrs. Akshara Pooja’s studies reveal the Kollemeodu temple. The works of R. Ponnu narrate the history of Aiyavalizhi and Vaikunda pathi. The works of Joy Gnanadhasan reveals the Forgotten History of this State. J.M.Villayarayan narrates the details of Kottar Diocese. Dr. Bright Devasahayam writes about the history of Kumari Catholic Churches. The work of R. Muthu Kumar describes the Tourist Pilgrims of Kanyakamari. Dr. Seak Thampai has published a book on ‘Islam in Kanyakumari District’. The works of T.K.Velu Pillai reveals the details of Travancore State. The work of R. Vasu Deva Poduval describes the Padmanabhapuram Palace. From the details presented it is evident that there is no
systematic study available for the ‘Tourist Attractions in Kanyakumari District: A Study’. The present study is an attempt to fill the gap.

Sources

Primary Sources

The study is largely based on the primary and secondary sources. The primary sources were collected from the archaeological and archival departments of Tamil Nadu and Kerala besides from the archives of the Collector’s Office, Taluk Offices, the Governmental Orders (G.O.), Registers, Memorandum and Settlement, Inscriptions, Sculptures, Copper plates, Coins, Correspondence and Circulars. They highlight the hidden monuments, preservation and the importance of tourism in Kanyakumari District.

Besides the above sources, the information collected by personal interviews with certain prominent persons closely related to this source was also very helpful to complete the work because they are closely related to the historical monuments and tourist spots. They narrated their experience without any bias and prejudice. An extensive field study has been undertaken to identify the areas.

Secondary Source

The published works found available in various libraries like Nesamony Memorial Christian College, Marthandam, Scott Christian College, Nagercoil,
District Central Library, Trivandrum, Kerala State Archives, Trivandrum, serve as secondary sources for this study.

**Design of Study**

The present study is divided into six chapters with an introduction and conclusion. The first chapter deals with the Brief Survey of Kanyakumari District. This chapter presents the geographical features, important historical forts and palaces and its architecture, and also the hidden monuments, which are destroyed or partially destructed either due to the fall of the ruling empire or due to some natural calamities in Kanyakumari District.

The second chapter explains the temple attractions of Kanyakumari District. This chapter mentions the historical temples, familiar temples and hidden familiar temples of Kanyakumari District.

The third chapter explains the Churches and Islamic religious centers of Kanyakumari district. This chapter presents the old churches, churches of historical importance, old Dhargas and familiar Islamic masques in Kanyakumari District.

The fourth chapter entitled ‘Forts, Palaces and Memorials of Kanyakumari District’ presents the ancient Forts and Palaces of Travancore King’s and Memorials of eminent personalities of the District.
The fifth chapter explains the scenic and entertainment attractions of Kanyakumari District. This chapter mentions the famous waterfalls, dams, beaches and entertainment attraction of Kanyakumari District.

The sixth chapter narrates the fairs and festivals of Kanyakumari District. This chapter mentions the fairs, Hindu festivals, Christian festivals, Muslim festivals, and other festivals, viz, its origin, historical background and its importance in tourism development in Kanyakumari District.

The concluding chapter emphasizes the need to preserve the demolished monuments, and highlights the hidden monuments in Kanyakumari District. Government should preserve the historical monuments, and take action to develop the tourist attractions of Kanyakumari District.