CHAPTER 5
Suggestions and Recommendations

This study was undertaken to evaluate tourism development and its impacts on the economy of Kerala. From the findings based on primary and secondary data, certain conclusions are drawn out and certain concrete suggestions are made for improvements in the economic development of Kerala through tourism, especially where inadequacies are found and where immediate attention is needed. The researcher has also pointed out certain specific areas where further research is needed.

5.1 The Study in Retrospect

Development of tourism is now accepted everywhere in the world as one of the major means of developing the economy of the country. Studies and researches, both academic and practical, on tourism development and its manifold impacts have now become highly significant in developed as well as developing countries. This is particularly true in the case of Kerala, where industrial development is seldom possible because of the high density of population and also because of its own peculiarities. Agricultural development is also stagnant in Kerala and the agricultural prices are coming down drastically. The only sector in
the present situation where Kerala can rely upon with confidence is the development of tourism. Indeed Kerala has created a brand name in tourism: ‘God’s own country’.

An efficient and sustainable development of tourism is crucial in ensuring the growth of the economy of Kerala. A serious handicap in the study of the development of tourism and its impacts on the economy of Kerala is the dearth of literature relating to the specific problems of development of tourism in Kerala. Though there have been several studies at the international and national levels covering the development of tourism and its impacts on the economy, there have not been many specific studies with special reference to Kerala. Further, most of the available published materials are either repetitive or peripheral and mostly of general nature. The present study, therefore, strives to bridge this gap by focusing attention on tourism development and its impacts on the economy of Kerala with the following objectives in view:

♦ To review the development of tourism and its impact on the economic development of Kerala.

♦ To identify the major economic development variables related to tourism and to measure the level of variations among the owners and employees of tourism business.

♦ To study the level of variations of the major economic development variables in different tourism developed areas.
To develop predictor equations of economic development with different sets of independent variables selected for the study, i.e., income, employment, infrastructure, local industries, standard of living and regional development.

To rank the opinions of the respondents regarding: i) the facilities that improved most in the tourism developed areas, ii) main hindrances to the development of tourism in the locality, and iii) the means of extending the seasonality of tourism.

To make suggestions and recommendations based on the findings of the study.

With reference to the above objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested.

- There is no significant impact on the economy of Kerala because of the development of tourism.

- There are no significant variations regarding the independent variables i.e., income, employment, infrastructure, local industries, standard of living and regional development selected for the study among different classes.

- There are no significant variations regarding the income variable selected for the study among people of different occupations.

- There is no significant correlation between the independent variables selected for the study and the economic development of Kerala.

- The independent variables can be reduced in number and combined to yield the best predictor equation for the economic development by using appropriate statistical techniques.
The data for the study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary data are collected from different sources like India Government publications, Kerala Government publications, Tourism Department publications, publications from various agencies connected with tourism and other published materials. The primary data are collected through structured interview method from 725 respondents selected on the basis of stratified random sampling method.

The collected primary data are statistically processed, classified and tabulated using appropriate methods. Tables, diagrams and statistical results have been derived with the help of the computer software known as SPSS (Statistical packages for social sciences). The statistical tools used are percentages, means, standard deviations, correlation, coefficients of concordance, multiple regression analysis, ANOVA, SWOT analysis, interval scale, and an economic impact assessment scale (formulated for this study).

5.2 Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and on the basis of the opinions and attitudes of the respondents from the open discussions, the following suggestions are made to develop tourism in Kerala so as to have positive sustainable impacts in the economy of Kerala through tourism development. Serious attention of all concerned, i.e. local people, businessmen, employees, employers, agencies
connected with tourism, department of tourism, the government etc., is invited regarding these suggestions and recommendations.

1. It is obvious that tourism has a tremendous potential in Kerala. The respondents were aware of the past and present employment position and more people, especially from the educated sectors, are coming to the field of tourism. People have changed their occupations to a tourism-related one because it is more profitable and convenient for them. It is, therefore, suggested that more people should be attracted towards tourism-related business.

2. The study reveals that there are no significant variations among different tourist destinations regarding independent variables like income, employment, infrastructure etc. This implies that the state can develop as many tourist destinations as possible. It also implies that the development of any of the classes of tourist centres like beaches, backwaters, etc., will have a favourable as well as considerable impact on the economic development of the state. Whenever different tourist destinations are developed, it will cumulatively contribute to the regional development and in turn, to the development of the state as a whole.

3. In order to develop the different tourist destinations in the state and the travel and tourism industry in the state, there should be different master plans for individual tourist destinations, and there should be a combined
master plan for the state. The master plans for each destination and the master plan for the state should be reviewed periodically.

4. The rankings of the various facilities that developed in various classes revealed that infrastructure facility is the least developed facility in Kerala. Of the infrastructure facilities, road development is the least developed facility. The government and other agencies connected with tourism should take special care in developing infrastructure facilities, especially the roads. In the case of infrastructure facilities the special project of BOT (build, operate and transfer) could be made use of.

Infrastructure development is one of the basic necessities for the development of tourism. Proper and efficient roads, proper sanitation facilities, clean drinking water, uninterrupted power supply, waste disposal facilities, proper telecom and communication facilities, hospitals, proper security measures, street lights, bus services at night, evening counters for banks etc, should be provided or coordinated by the government. There can be a highpower committee for each tourist destination including the representatives of the members of the local bodies, DTPCs, employers and employees, to coordinate different facilities needed for the tourist destination.

5. Tourism is basically a private sector activity. In the development of infrastructure, private sector participation should be encouraged. The role
of the government should be that of a facilitator and there should be private as well as state participation in the field of infrastructure development.

6. Tourism is a multidimensional activity and this industry is interconnected with a number of other sectors in the economy. Hence the state has a prominent role in enacting tourism-friendly legislations. The existing legislations like Rent Control Act, Labour Act, Building Act, Excise Law etc, are to be rationalized and these laws should synchronize with the growth of tourism in the state. For instance, one of the urgent requests of foreign tourists and the businessmen in the field of hotels and restaurants in tourism destinations is the availability of liquor, especially beer. There should be more liberalized distribution of liquor in tourism destinations. Further, rationalization of taxes, abolition of luxury taxes and liberalization of Tourist Trade Registration Bill etc, will be positive gestures towards tourists.

7. In order to have a sustainable development of tourism, the fragile ecology of the state is to be preserved. To conserve the ecology and to reduce the negative impacts of tourism on the environment, scientific studies should be conducted on the ecology of the destinations as well as on their carrying capacities. The development of different destinations should be controlled and regulated on the basis of the master plan of each destination.

Often tourism and environment are in conflict. The rapid, intensive tourist growth, especially in delicate environments, can cause serious harm
to the environment. Hence, it is necessary to identify the environmental impacts of tourism development. Prevention is better than cure, especially, in the case of environment. An environment impact assessment that can forecast the environmental consequences of any proposed tourism development project is to be done for each tourist destination. An environmental impact assessment process is given below.

The environmental impact assessment process

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<th>Proposed Tourism development</th>
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<td>Modifications in the proposed tourism development</td>
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<td>Regular environment monitoring</td>
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8. It is obvious that tourism in Kerala is nature-based. There is an abundant collection of flora and fauna, which is not available in other parts of the world, and hence, a high-level ecology bank should be formed, which should be the custodian of this natural wealth. The natural vegetation and its ecology should be identified, preserved and conserved. Every attempt must be made to ensure the conservation of our rich biodiversity.

9. The study revealed that the supports received by the respondents from government agencies and from the tourism department are not satisfactory. There is delay in getting sanctions, red tapism, accepting of bribes, etc., at the bureaucratic level. Though the department of tourism has succeeded in projecting the tourist attractions of the state, there is an obvious lack of concrete planning and implementation of programmes aimed at the development of tourism in the state. Kerala’s performance in this field will be far more impressive if there is a concerted attempt by the department of tourism towards practical solutions to the problems we face in tourism. We feel that it is necessary to introduce a single window system for clearing tourism projects in Kerala. The process of sanctions should be simplified.

Lack of professionalism is one of the major drawbacks of Kerala tourism. The whole functions of the Department of Tourism and other agencies of the government regarding tourism are to be professionalised. The service of experts and professionals is to be made use of by the department of tourism and other government agencies related to tourism, in
planning, marketing and implementing tourism-related policies. Further, the role of the department of tourism is to be restructured and rationalized.

10. Tourism in Kerala is seasonal and the average tourism season in Kerala is about six months. The study shows that there are ways to extend the tourism season in Kerala. The best way to extend the tourism season in the state is to propagate the unique ayurvedic system of Kerala. Kerala is the only state in India which practices this ancient system of medicine. But in the name of tourism, the genuine ayurvedic medical system is misused by a lot of people. Hence there should be a proper monitoring mechanism. It is recommended that a committee of experts from Department of tourism and Directorate of Indian System of Medicine should control the approval of the ayurvedic centres.

Another way of enhancing the seasonality of tourism in the state is to give a major thrust in developing backwater tourism in the state because the network of canals, rivers and lakes of Kerala can be utilized throughout the year. One of the immediate steps to be taken is to link the waterways from Kovalam to Kasaragod so that there can be an efficient operation of tourist boats. Necessary infrastructure of waterways like boat terminals, jetties, better and varied cruising facilities, introduction of water trains, floating huts, house boats, wayside facilities, fuel pumping stations, sewage disposal facilities, waste disposal system, etc., should be provided
throughout the backwater system. It is necessary to have a master plan for the backwater tourism itself.

In order to step up the seasonality of tourism and for the optimum utilization of the facilities available domestic tourism is to be encouraged. Even at those times when foreign tourists do not come in large numbers, domestic tourists do travel. Hence, if we manage to attract domestic tourists during the off-season period, we can considerably extend the seasonality of tourism.

11. Creation of sufficient human resources of high quality is a must in the field of tourism. Though Kerala has the highest literacy rate and even if many people can speak and understand English, there is shortage of trained personnel in the tourism industry who can cater to the changing needs of national and international tourism. The courses and curriculum of KITTS, which is the state owned institution imparting training to tourism personnel, should be redesigned and improved. An institution of international repute to train quality tourism personnel to manage the tourism industry in the state is a must. Continuous training should be given to various personnel like guides, clerks, information officers, taxi drivers, cooks, waiters, etc. engaged in tourism sector so that they become better adapted to the changing needs of tourism industry.

12. With the help of the District Tourism Promotion Councils scientific gardening and landscaping are to be done in tourist destinations. There is
enough scope for this because of the humid, warm climate of the state. These will create a sense of beauty among the local people and among the tourists.

13. Utmost importance is to be given to the tight and effective security measures. The tourists as well as the businessmen should be provided with maximum security. Enough policemen, lifeguards etc. should be appointed. Security personnel should be equipped with modern equipments. Proper public lighting should also be made available. Another basic need is a safe and approved cloakroom where the tourists can leave their luggage for safe custody.

14. The study revealed that majority of the employers gave an average salary of Rs 2500-5000 to their staff. To maintain skilled, trained staff this salary is inadequate. The government should make necessary legislations to protect the salary and other perquisites of the staff.

15. For a sustained and healthy development of tourism the ‘public-private sector cooperation in tourism’ is necessary especially in a developing economy like that of Kerala. Both public and private sectors should understand and appreciate each other’s role in tourism. There should be an upper hand for the government in coordinating, legislating, planning, and financing functions of tourism development. The government should welcome, encourage and facilitate private sector investment in all sectors of tourism industry. Maximum incentives and investment subsidies should be
given to private entrepreneurs. The Department of Tourism and other agencies of Government in connection with tourism should ensure that proper marketing of tourism potentialities is done on a professional, permanent and continuous basis. Even today many tourists who come to India miss Kerala due to inadequate information and tourism promotion.

16. Every year Department of Tourism and other governmental agencies conduct a number of tourism festivals and melas to attract tourists to Kerala. It is pitiful that, though a huge amount is spent, only a few tourists are attracted. There is misconception, mismanagement, extravagance and wrong timings. The programmes should be chalked out in detail and in time. One of the drawbacks of these programmes is that the programmes are organized in selected towns only. There should be diversification and decentralization regarding the conduct of these programmes. A detailed calendar of such festivals and melas should be prepared with the time and places in advance and wide publicity should be given to it.

17. There should be a ‘cost-benefit analysis of the future projects designed to uplift tourism in Kerala. Only feasible projects should be accepted.

18. The focal points of tourism like attraction, accommodation, transport etc should be simultaneously developed. The development of facilities at some of the tourist destinations is lopsided. Care should be given to the simultaneous development of all the facilities that the tourists require.
19. The adoption of modern information technology by every component of tourism industry like hoteliers, travel agents, resource administrators and promotional bodies would provide a boost to tourism in Kerala. It is high time that Kerala tourism obtained maximum fruits of information technology and the use of hiteck information revolution.

20. Though there is a continuous increase in the plan outlays to tourism in the state plans, the amount and the percentage of plan outlays are not sufficient to tap the ever-increasing demand of tourism in Kerala. Hence it is absolutely essential to increase the expenditure on tourism by the state and by other viable sources.

21. There is a need to create awareness among the people about the modern trends in tourism sector and also about the huge potential of this sector in the economic development of the state. That will attract more people to tourism and will help in the creation of an atmosphere conducive to tourism development.

22. ‘Paying guest facility’ should be introduced and extended to all the tourist destinations. The local people should be made aware of such a source of income and the tourism department should make a directory of the persons willing to make such facilities.

23. During the previous years many impressive projects and programmes were announced for the development of tourism. Most of them are still in their
infancy. The government and the department of tourism should see that once a project is approved it is implemented without delay.

24. A tourism highway from Kovalam to Bekal connecting all the important tourist centres will be a great boost to the industry.

25. We have to promote adventure and youth tourism. We should expand into new areas of adventure, aero and aqua sports.

26. Kerala should think of developing tourism clubs, already formed in colleges, into a serious form. If there is no tourism club formed in the colleges, immediate steps should be taken to form such clubs. Training and orientation programmes can be given through these clubs and it can act as an agency to facilitate youth tourism.

27. The government should take all necessary steps to create a congenial atmosphere for taking up self-employment projects in tourism destinations. It is the duty of the government and the governmental agencies to liberally encourage and substantially assist them. It is essential to update the present packages for self-employment for tourism projects. We have to encourage private investors by providing new schemes to mobilize institutional credit to improve the existing units and to start new units effectively. Governmental agencies must design and implement programmes to tap NRI’s investment in tourism projects.

28. Success of any tourism promotion ultimately depends on the incremental number of tourist arrivals. There should be a renewed interest and
enthusiasm in the travel business with special reference to Kerala. Foreign tourists who visit India should be attracted towards Kerala. For this effective propaganda is to be made all around the world. Those who have visited it once must be inspired to revisit it.

29. A tourism consultancy firm can be started in the state with the involvement of the government, tourism department, trade associations and private agencies in the field of tourism. The objective of the firm should be to identify land and projects, to make feasibility studies, to conduct marketing and operational planning etc.

30. The study reveals that one of the demands of the local people and businessmen is the granting of off-seasonal fares to Kerala by air, rail and sea.

31. Pilgrim tourism has great scope in Kerala. Renowned pilgrim centres like Sabarimala, Guruvayoor, Kaladi, Varkala, Malayattoor etc, should be developed and necessary facilities should be provided for the pilgrims. An integrated pilgrim circuit connecting Guruvayoor, Sabarimala and Kaladi should be formed.

32. Theme-based tour packages keeping the taste and types of the tourists should be developed. For example beach-based, hill-based, heritage-based, religion-based or history-based tour packages can be developed.

33. One of the main complaints of the inhabitants and business people in tourism destinations is about the shortage of land and the high prices of the
available land. The available land is vested in the hands of a few people. Hence it is necessary to make land available for the development of tourism trade. The government should make arrangements for getting sufficient land at affordable prices.

34. We also recommend the amendment of the civil aviation policy of the central government that restricts the entry of foreign airlines. Allowing foreign airlines and increased domestic flights will improve quality, increase competition, improve safety and service, reduce fares and above all attract more foreign tourists to Kerala.

35. Thrust must be given to the unique Kerala tourism products like Yoga, ayurveda, backwaters, naturopathy, adventure sports, water cruises, diverse Kerala cuisines, traditional attire and crafts, etc.

36. Kerala has a very long tradition of classical arts, folk arts and martial arts. Koodiyattam, Nangyar Koothu, Kathakali, Mohiniyattom, Thullal etc. are some of the classical performing arts. There are also folk performing arts like Theyyam, Thira, Mudiyettu, kaduvakali, Velakali, Kakkarussi natakam, Margamkali, Kolkali, Thurvathirakali and so on. The government, with the help of the local bodies and associations, should develop such genuine art forms of Kerala. Wide publicity should be given to such art forms throughout the world.

37. Kerala abounds in plantations, ranging from rubber plantations, and tea plantations to coffee plantations and cardamom plantations. The long
stretches of tea plantations that we have in the high ranges of Munnar, Peerumadu and Wayanadu, the coffee and pepper plantations of Idukki and Wayanadu and the cardamom plantations of Idukki attract both foreign tourists and north Indian tourists. More publicity must be given by the department of tourism to the beautiful plantations of Kerala.

The creation of a congenial and tourism-friendly environment is a prerequisite for the growth of tourism. The tourism industry, through its employment, income generation and infrastructure development, upgrading of the standard of living of the local people and improvement in local industries and regional development, will be able to play a strategic role in accelerating the economic development of Kerala. Kerala can be transformed into an upmarket high quality tourist destination. In the present condition it is the only sector which has the potential to contribute to the socio-economic development of the state.

5.3 Scope for Further Research

The present study on tourism development and its impact on the economic development of Kerala is based on the employers and employees and the local people connected with tourism in Kerala. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the broader aspects and other dimensions of the concept of tourism development. Besides, the specific areas of tourism development connected with the economic development of Kerala, are to be investigated separately, for which the researcher would like to suggest the following areas for further research.
1. The impacts of employment multiplier in different tourist destinations of the state.

2. The impacts of income multiplier in different tourist destinations of the state.

3. The negative impacts of tourism development in the state.

4. A cost-benefit analysis of the tourism development in the state.

It is hoped that the present study would provide a base for further research in the above areas. Systematic studies on the various aspects of tourism development will not only give new insight into tourism but make the public aware of the significance of tourism in any developmental strategy. Kerala being a real tourist paradise, we stand a very good chance of transforming the state into one of the most sought after tourist destinations. As the governmental agencies and the public become more and more aware of the tremendous potential of tourism industry, it is hoped that there will be a more comprehensive planning and more efficient implementation of projects related to tourism. That, in brief, is the ultimate objective of the present study.