

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature relating to the current study on '**An Analysis of Ecotourism experience and Future Behavioural Intention With Specific reference to Periyar Tiger Reserve In Kerala**' is analysed under the following heads:

2.1 Significance of tourism;

2.2 Definition of ecotourism;

2.3 Benefits from ecotourism;

2.4 Motivation for ecotourism;

2.5 Ecotourism experience;

2.6 Ecotourist satisfaction;

2.7 Future behavioral intention in ecotourism destinations and

2.8 Specific studies relating to visitor satisfaction at Periyar Tiger Reserve

2.1 Significance of tourism

The economic significance of tourism can be adjudged from its contribution towards economic parameters like Gross Domestic Product, employment etc. Tourism also provides high potential for self-employment in variety of ancillaries, which are utilized by tourists such as horticulture, handicrafts and home stays. According to Burkart and Medlik (1976), tourism develops overall development of destination. In order to enhance the tourist arrivals, infrastructure is developed and this provides the residents with a higher standard of public transport, shopping and entertainment facilities than they would be able to support otherwise. The provisions of employment, income and amenities for the resident population are, thus, the three main beneficial effects of tourism.

Wanhill (1983) through a cointegration and causality analysis between tourism and economic growth in Mauritius, found that tourism was one of the major contributors to the country's economic growth. Sinclair and Stabler (1997) stated that an injection of tourist revenues can have a significant impact on economies, especially in developing economies. The economic contribution of tourism in terms of Gross Domestic Product, in both absolute and relative terms, along with the changes over time are widely found in tourism literature, (Archer and Fletcher (1996); Bicak and Altinary (1996); Evenson (1998); Sharpley (2001); WTTC (2006)). Sinclair (1998), Dieke (2004) and Lee and Chien (2008) empirically investigated the causal relationships among real Gross Domestic Product, tourism development variables and the real exchange rate using unit root tests and co-integration tests. The results suggested that the causality between tourism and economic growth is bidirectional.

According to Sharpley and Telfer (2002), tourism generates a range of benefits that contribute to economic growth as long as it is planned and managed so as to minimize social and environmental impacts. Balaguer and Cantavella Jorda (2002) examined the role of tourism's long run economic development in Spain. The hypothesis of tourism led economic growth was confirmed by applying cointegration and causality tests. In a comparative study of 143 countries, Brau, Lanza, and Pigliaru (2003) found that many developing countries have started to consider tourism as an important and integral part of their economic growth and development strategies as it serves as a source of scarce financial resources, job creation, foreign exchange earnings and technical assistance.

The study conducted in Latin American countries by Eugenio-Martin et al. (2004) to investigate the relationship between tourism and economic growth for the period 1985-1998 using panel data approach found that tourism contributes for economic growth in the case of developing countries. Eugenio-Martin et al. (2004) by investigating the relationship between tourism and economic growth for Latin American Countries from 1985 to 1998 using panel data, have underscored the fact that the tourism sector is conducive to economic growth in medium and low-income countries. Using convergence approach based on Barro and Sala-i-Martin (1992)

type analysis as the analytical framework, Proenca and Soukiazis (2005) examined the impact of tourism on the per capita income growth of Portuguese regions. The study concluded that tourism can be considered as an alternative solution for enhancing regional growth in Portugal. According to them, an increase in accommodation capacity induces an increase in per capita income. If there is 1 percent increase in accommodation capacity in tourism sector that induces 0.01 percent increase in per capita income.

The empirical results by Kim et al. (2006) indicated long-run equilibrium relationship and a bidirectional causality between tourism expansion and economic development in Taiwan using a Granger causality test and cointegration approach. The study of Fayissa et al. (2007) using a panel data of 42 African countries from 1995 to 2004 to explore the potential contribution of tourism to economic growth and development within the conventional neoclassical framework, found that receipts from the tourism industry significantly contributed both to the current level of Gross Domestic Product and the economic growth of sub-Saharan African Countries as do investments in physical and human form.

Aramberri (2009) opined that tourist expenditure induces lot of changes in the, economy. It enhances income, demand, production and consumption. Apart from its direct contribution to the economy like agriculture, horticulture, poultry, handicrafts, construction, etc., several items of tourist expenditure induce a chain of transactions in various other sectors. Each such transaction calls for the supply of some kind of goods and services. The additional consumption demand, thus emanating from tourist expenditure, will not only induce more employment, but also generate a further multiplier effect through a successive chain of transportation. As a result of this twin set of multiplier effect—indirect and induced – additional income and employment opportunities are generated through each successive transaction. Narayan et al. (2010) by using panel data for the four Pacific Island countries to test the long-run relationship between real GDP and real tourism exports noted that a one percent increase in tourism exports increases Gross Domestic Product by 0 .72 percent in the long run and by 0.24 percent in the short run.

Ekanayake and Long (2012) concluded that tourism is a driver of growth in developing countries and consequently, Governments in these countries should focus their economic policies on fostering the implementation of tourism activity within their territories. In the view, of Molina and Pablo (2013), tourism, like any other economic activity is known for its economic contribution ;Tourism is an economic activity with potential to stimulate, global economic growth, due to its complementarily with other economic activities, its contribution to Gross Domestic Product, job creation, foreign exchange generation, etc. The study of Makochekanwa (2013), investigating the impact of tourism on development in three Southern African countries on the basis of data from the hotel sector observed that tourism was more labour intensive in low labour cost countries. The study found that tourism's contribution to employment was second to agricultural sector and this indicates the potential of the sector towards economic development. In the view of Fernandez (2014) economic relevance of tourism has been construed through multipliers which aim at economic revitalization, improvement of balance of payments of nations, employment generation and in turn poverty reduction.

2.2 Definition of ecotourism

The term ecotourism has been traced back to the work of Hetzer (1965), who used it to explain the intricate relationship between tourists and the environments and cultures in which they interact. Ceballos-Lascuráin was the first to coin the phrase in the early 1980s.

Laarman and Durst (1987) in their early reference to ecotourism, defined it as a nature tourism in which the traveller is drawn to a destination because of his or her interest in one or more features of that destination's natural history. The visit combines education, recreation, and often adventure. According to Boo (1990), Eagles (1992) and Wight (1993) ecotourism is called nature tourism, alternative tourism, cultural tourism, soft tourism, adventure tourism, responsible tourism or green tourism

According to International Ecotourism Society (1990) “Ecotourism is responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and sustains the wellbeing of the local people”. Ryel and Grasse (1991) defined ecotourism as purposeful travel that creates an understanding of cultural and natural history, while safeguarding the integrity of the ecosystem and producing economic benefits that encourage conservation. According to Wheller (1991), the actors in an ecotourism system are visitors, natural areas and their managers including both public and private areas, communities, businesses, including various combinations of local businesses, in-bound operators, outbound operators, hotel and other accommodation providers, restaurants and other food providers, Government and Non Governmental organizations.

The Australian National Ecotourism Association (1992) defined ecotourism as a nature based tourism that involves education and interpretation of the natural environment and is managed to be ecologically sustainable

In the view of Eagles (1992) and Wight (1993), Ayala (1995), ecotourism is nature based, advancing conservation and sustainable development. A subsequent definition by Laarman and Durst (1993) identifies a conceptual difference between ecotourism and nature tourism. In recognising the difficulties in defining nature tourism, they establish both a narrow and broad scope to its definition. In a narrow sense, it refers to operators running nature-oriented tours; however, broadly it applies to tourism’s use of natural resources including beaches and country landscapes.

According to Wallace and Pierce (1996), ecotourism is travel to relatively undisturbed natural areas for study, enjoyment, or volunteer assistance. It is travel that concerns itself with the flora, fauna, geology, and ecosystems of an area, as well as the people (caretakers) who live nearby, their needs, their culture and their relationship to the land. He suggested that tourism may be said to be true ecotourism if it addresses six principles:

- It entails a type of use that minimizes negative impacts to the environment and to local people.

- It increases the awareness and understanding of an area's natural and cultural systems and the subsequent involvement of visitors in issues affecting those systems.
- It contributes to the conservation and management of legally protected and other natural areas.
- It maximises the early and long-term participation of local people in the decision-making process that determines the kind and amount of tourism that should occur.
- It directs economic and other benefits to local people that complement rather than overwhelm or replace traditional practices (farming, fishing, social systems, etc., and
- It provides special opportunities for local people and nature tourism employees to utilize and visit natural areas and learn about wonders that other visitors come to see.

Goodwin (1996) noted that nature tourism encompasses all forms of tourism-mass tourism, adventure tourism, low-impact tourism, which use natural resources in a wild or undeveloped form-including species, habitat, landscape, scenery and salt and fresh-water features. Ecotourism is low impact nature tourism which contributes to the maintenance of species and habitats either directly through a contribution to conservation and/or indirectly by providing revenue to the local community sufficient for local people to value and therefore protect, their wildlife heritage area as a source of income. Some of the key variables or principles that separate ecotourism from it's more broad-based nature counterpart include an educative component and a sustainability component (Blamey, 1995) and the ethical nature of the experience (Kutay (1989) and Wight (1993), Hawkes and Williams (1993).

Ecotourism is a sustainable form of natural resource-based tourism. It focuses primarily on experiencing and learning about nature, it's landscape, flora, fauna and their habitats, as well as cultural artefacts from the locality (Dowling, 1997).

Fennell (2001) identified 85 definitions of ecotourism and main variables for ecotourism definition adopted by various organizations, enterprise and nations. These are interest in nature, contribution to conservation, reliance on parks and protected areas for ecotourism, benefit to local people, education and study, low impact, sustainable, enjoyment, culture, adventure, conservation, ethics and sustainability.

In the view of Gerry (2001) Briassoulis (2002), Catibog-Sinha and Wen (2008), Mlynarczyk (2002), Drzewiecki (2001) and Kiper (2011), natural and cultural landscape values form a basis for ecotourism. These values are geographical position, microclimatic conditions, existence of water, natural beauties, existence of natural vegetation, existence of wildlife, surface features, geomorphologic local food, festivals and pageants, traditional agricultural structure, local handicrafts, regional dress culture, historical events and people, heritage appeals, architectural variety, traditional music and folk dance, artistic activities and so on. Ecotourism destinations are always environmentally sensitive because ecotourism activities directly involve various environmental phenomena including bird watching, trekking, mountaineering, horse riding and elephant riding within the forest wilderness trail, staying in natural caves, studying about flora and fauna, simple bush walking, fishing etc.

Rahman (2010) noted that ecotourism always incorporates various activities in nature but it may include cultural activities, too. Ecotourism is an important educational component, it is a chance to learn respect for nature, for the local culture, and for some it is a chance for self-reflection being inspired by the beauty of the surroundings. According to Weaver (2010), ecotourism is envisioned as a tool for both conservation and sustainable development—especially in areas where local people are asked to forgo the consumptive use of resources for others. Sharma and Prakash (2014) noted that ecotourism is described as one part of a broader nature-based tourism which is defined as tourism focused principally on natural resources such as relatively undisturbed parks and natural areas, wetlands, wildlife reserves and other areas of protected flora, fauna, and habitats’.

Most conceptual definition of ecotourism can be reduced to the following: ecotourism is both nature based and sustainable. The definition clarifies the descriptive and the prescriptive components of ecotourism concept. The nature component is descriptive or positive because it simply describes the activity location and associated consumer motivations. The sustainable component is prescriptive or normative because it neglects what people want the activity to be. Sustainability incorporates environmental, experiential, sociocultural and economic dimensions.

Kusler (1991) classified ecotourists into three main groups, namely:

- Do-it-yourself ecotourists: This group comprises the largest percentage of all ecotourists. These individuals stay in a variety of different types of accommodations and have the mobility to visit any number of settings. Their experience, therefore, is marked by a high degree of flexibility.
- Ecotourists on tours: This group expects a high degree of organisation within their tour, and travel to exotic destinations.
- School groups or scientific groups: This group often become involved in scientific research of an organisation or individual, often stay in the same region for extensive periods of time and are willing to endure harsher site conditions than other ecotourists.

Conversely, Lindberg (1991) emphasised the importance of dedication and time as a function of defining different types of ecotourists,

He identified four basic types. They are:

- Hard-core nature tourists: They comprise of scientific researchers or members of tours specifically designed for education, removal of litter, or similar purposes;
- Dedicated nature tourists: They comprise of people who take trips specifically to see protected areas and who want to understand local natural and cultural history;

- Mainstream nature tourists: They comprise of people who visit the Amazon, the Rwandan gorilla park or other destinations primarily to take an unusual trip; and
- Casual nature tourists. People who experience nature incidentally as part of a broader trip.

In the view of Wight (1993); Weiler and Richins (1995) and Diamantis (1999) ecotourists, can be viewed as soft to hard, with respect to degree of interest in nature, degree of physical challenge, difficulty or comfort, occasional or frequent.

2.3 Benefits of ecotourism

In the view of Eagles, Ballantine (1994) ecotourism provides opportunities for jobs linked with pro conservation and responsible behavior along with tangible economic benefits emanating from the natural areas. According to Lindberg and Enriquez(1994), Laarman and Gregersen (1996), Van Sickle and Eagles(1998) tourism generates Government revenues through different types of taxes ranging from general to business like service tax, occupancy, departure taxes etc.

Pearce and Wilson (1995), Puczko and Ratz (2000) and Lindberg (1991) noted that local economic benefit from ecotourism has been documented in the form of increased employment opportunities and income generation. In the view of Brandon (1996), the suggested benefits of ecotourism include increased foreign exchange receipts, infrastructure development, job creation, new markets for locally produced goods, increased Government revenues through fees and taxes paid by visitors and protection of natural areas that might otherwise be converted to alternative uses. At some ecotourism destinations, residents benefit from revenue sharing programmes that provide cash payments or funding for community projects such as wells or schools.

According to Schultis et al. (2011), tourism activities enhance employment opportunities, livelihood opportunities and the financial health for the local communities at the destination. Wakuru Magigi and Haji Ramadhani (2013) in their study focused on local communities participation in the tourism industry in

Bwejuu Village in Zanzibar, and analysed the economic benefits derived which contributes towards poverty reduction. The study noted that, ecotourism played an important part in enhancing local communities' livelihoods in terms of employment creation, leisure, income generation, increased Government revenues, schooling, health, house construction and household consumption. Further, ecotourism encourages protection and conservation of natural areas and resources to reduce pressure on remaining natural areas and resources and ecotourism provides local residents with opportunities to escape from poverty and improve their quality of life by enhancing local participation. Ecotourism also aids in building relevant infrastructure and improved access of public and visitors on conservation of natural areas.

2.4 Motivations for ecotourism

Eagles (1992) examined types of motivation for group of tour ecotourists, including attractions (related to desired features/attractions of the destination) and social factors (related to opinions on personal goals and interaction with others). As per the study the motivations that were significantly more important to group ecotourists include wilderness and undisturbed nature, lakes and streams, mountains, national or provincial parks, experiencing new lifestyles, and meet people with similar interests.

According to Crossley and Lee (1994) and Wight (1996) motivations that differentiate ecotourists from more mass travelers include uncrowded locations, learning about wildlife, nature, Community benefits, viewing plants and animals, physical challenge etc., According to Charters (1996), nearly half the travelling public has an underlying disposition towards nature and learning as part of their vacation.

In Australia, Tourism Queensland surveyed residents and found that 'consumers' interest in ecotourism lies along a spectrum based on a number of elements. These elements were taking vacations in natural locations, positive attitude towards nature and nature-based tourism. (Ecotrends, 1999).

According to Minciu (2004), ecotourists are motivated by intellectual, interpersonal, challenge and relaxation aspects. According to Minciu et al. (2012) ecotourists visiting protected areas are motivated by the wish to spend leisure time in a clean, quiet, less crowded nature and participate in various activities at the protected area including adventure, climbing, hiking, nature photography, bird and animal watching, knowledge, learning, etc. According to Alaeddinoglu et al. (2013) the main motivational factors of ecotourists are exploring nature, visiting historical sites, experiencing new things and learning about local culture. In the view of Christiansen (2016) the main motivation of ecotourist is the desire to visit new places and spend time with family and friends, as well as contact with nature.

2.5 Ecotourism experience

According to Wight (1996), Luzar et al. (1998) and Holden (2005) personality of the tourists and experience surrounding environment enhances the experience of nature based tourists. Satisfaction of visitors and ecotourism experience has been emphasised by Newsome et al. (2002). According to them, satisfaction of visitors with ecotourism experience is essential to long term viability of ecotourism industry and hence ecotourism experience should match or exceed the realistic expectation of the visitor.

The link between ecotourist experience and socio-demographic characteristics was emphasised in the study of Cottrell (2003), Ormsby et al. (2004). According to Higham and Carr (2003) and Ormsby et al. (2004), experience encountered by ecotourists at national parks and protected areas are mixed and also diverse. Two prominent experiences include adventure excitement and the emergence of learning. According to Gossling (2006), self-fulfilment and experience at the destination is very important for tourists travelling to national parks and protected areas.

The empirical findings of an exploratory qualitative study by Kim Lian Chan and Tom Baum (2007) tried to examine ecotourists' perceptions of ecotourism experiences in Sabah. As per the study, positive and negative experiences were identified from an analysis of the expressive dimensions of their service

experience. The findings showed that the ecotourists' experience is multidimensional and the respondents placed particular emphasis on the ecotourism activities in which they were physically engaged and the natural environment in which they were located. They have identified positive and negative verbal expressive dimensions and functional/utilitarian aspects as follows:

Table 1 represents the identified positive verbal expressive dimensions describing ecotourism experience

Table 1
Identified positive verbal expressive dimensions describing ecotourism experience

Positive verbal expressive Dimensions (Affective/Emotional Aspects)	Functional / Utilitarian Aspects
<p>Hedonic (Excitement, enjoyment, memorable) Excitement, enjoyment, memorable experiences related to the wildlife, natural environment, riverboat cruise, experience of jungle walk.</p>	<p>Wildlife, Natural Environment Riverboat cruise trips, Jungle Walks</p>
<p>Interactive(Meeting people, being part of the process, having choice) Being part of the process to see and spot wildlife and to fulfill wants and needs, Positive interactions between guests and the lodge staff, guides and group members, Opportunity to meet other people- staff and group members.</p>	<p>Wildlife Staff Guides Group Members</p>
<p>Novelty (doing something new, new experience, Something new, unique and different experiences which had never been before, first time to see wildlife in the wild, lifetime experiences)</p>	<p>Wildlife</p>

(Contd.)

Positive verbal expressive Dimensions (Affective/Emotional Aspects)	Functional / Utilitarian Aspects
<p>Comfort (physical comfort, relaxation)</p> <p>Physical relaxation in the natural environment and lodge. Experiencing the peaceful tranquility of the natural environment. Riverboat cruise trip offered relaxation and physical comfort</p>	<p>Wildlife , Natural Environment Riverboat cruise trips</p>
<p>Stimulation(Educational and informative, challenging)</p> <p>Information and knowledge gained from knowledgeable and experienced guides. Learning experience and an understanding of the natural environment as valuable education. Challenging experiences to complete the jungle walk in risky conditions</p>	<p>Guides Jungle Walks</p>
<p>Personal safety</p> <p>Personal safety into and outside the boat by boatmen, riverboat cruise safety</p>	<p>Boatmen Riverboat cruise trips</p>

Source: Kim Lian Chan and Tom Baum (2007)

Table 2 represents the identified negative expressive dimensions describing ecotourism experience.

Table 2

Identified negative expressive dimensions describing ecotourism experience

Negative verbal expressive dimensions	Functional/utilitarian Aspects
Don't want/don't like/hate	Noise, fumes from boat engines
Uncomfortable/unpleasant	Mosquito bites
Negative things/negative experiences/frustration/distraction/decrease in satisfaction	Fumes from boat engines, Riverboat operations - boat congestion
Feeling sad/unhappy/frustration/disappointment	Not able to see specific types of wildlife, Short duration of riverboat cruises, Poor sanitation condition of public toilet facilities, Poor maintenance of bedrooms, Disappearance of forest.

Source: Kim Lian Chan and Tom Baum (2007)

According to Powell and Ham (2008), during the ecotourism experience, well designed interpretation can enhance the knowledge of visitors towards local areas and enhance the need for conservation of resources. Baral et al. (2012) developed a scale for evaluating ecotourism by visitors in the context of protected area. The study had assessed the rate of satisfaction of ecotourists with ecotourism experience. The assessment was done using the variables: gender, age, education, Income, prior visit to the area, use of guide and perception of safety. They had concluded that visitors' age, prior visits to the area, perception of safety at the destination and utilisation of guiding services significantly influenced visitors' evaluation. However, the visitors' ecotourism evaluation was not related to their level of satisfaction associated with their visits and repeat visitors had exhibited more negative opinions about the ecotourism outcomes.

2.6 Ecotourist Satisfaction

Pizam and Riechel (1978) tested tourists' satisfaction with an expectation-disconfirmation paradigm and found that ecotourists' satisfaction was influenced by physical and biological characteristics, as well as accessibility and usability of the sites. According to Geva and Goldman (1992), a tour guide's quality was an important variable in tourists' satisfaction. According to Wight (1996), the guide's ability and/or interpretation and eco-experience programs are other important factors for satisfaction. If performance exceeds expectations, satisfaction is more and if performance is less than expectation, then satisfaction is less. Satisfaction is "an emotional state of mind after exposure to opportunity" which occurs through interaction with destination. Destinations with higher performances are more likely to have higher tourist satisfaction (Baker and Crompton, 2000). In their view satisfaction of the tourist depends on tourist's assessment of a destination which includes the quality of services offered at the destination. Other factors influencing ecotourism satisfaction also depends on the presence of animals and plants as important factors (Hvenegaard and Dearden (1998) and Juric (2002).

According to Reynolds and Braithwie (2001) the satisfaction of ecotourists' is influenced by physical attributes including tangible and intangible factors of the tourism site including facilities, design and weather. In their view, there are other factors like the guide's interpretation and role, variety and uniqueness of eco-experiences in determining ecotourists' satisfaction. Ecotourist satisfaction and its role as a predictor of ecotourism destinations' sustainability was identified by Weaver (2005) and Baral, Stern and Bhattarai (2008).

The overall experience of the tourists at a particular destination is called tourist satisfaction. The satisfaction derived is on the basis of their expectations from a destination, which ,they must have developed through their contacts, past experiences, through travel agents etc, and their experience at the destination as such (Bowen and Makens, 2006).

Chan and Baum (2007) have identified the following determinants of satisfaction for ecotourists such as eco-tourism activities, site service staff and the quality of information on wildlife and local culture. According to Görnert (2007), Canadian and German ecotourists were satisfied with the nature, recreation and infrastructure of the site. Tourists' themselves, through their feelings, combined with other factors such as climate and group interaction, can affect their judgment of the destination's performance and satisfaction. Friendly and quality services, lodging amenities, family / friends togetherness affect the tourists overall satisfaction with the destination (Meng, 2008). Some of the empirical research findings indicate tourist satisfaction as a good indicator of intentions to revisit and recommend to others (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

In the view of Chen, Lehto, and Choi (2009), image of the particular destination, the assimilation effect caused by the experience and emotional connections with the destination alongwith the cognition and affect are capable of influencing satisfaction and future behavioural intention.

Barala, Sterna, and Hammett (2012) have highlighted the importance of guiding services in ecotourism satisfaction. The evaluation of ecotourist satisfaction by using ECOSERV, developed by Khan (2003) unfolds six dimensions namely

eco-tangibles, assurance, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and tangibles (Shuib et al. (2012) and Razali et al. (2012). According to Torres Sovero et al. (2012), satisfactory and dissatisfactory levels towards an ecotourism destination are related to tourists' characteristic such as socioeconomic, demographic and cultural factors and their motivations. Therefore, the elements of tourist characteristics can be used as subjective variables to measure the tourists' satisfaction.

According to Romão, Neuts, Nijkamp, and Shikida (2014), satisfaction with the landscape, wildlife and boating experiences are important determinants of satisfaction and capable of influencing the decision to even repeat their visit or to recommend the destination to friends and family. They have analysed the determinants of trip choice, satisfaction and loyalty using structural equation modelling, in the context of ecotourism destination, Shiretoko Peninsula, Japan. The study has identified the relationship between loyalty and future choice to the destination through satisfaction, which depends on the mismatch between their expectations and experience. Wang (2015) had studied the determinants of satisfaction in the context of ecotourism- Taijiang National Park, Taiwan. The study had emphasised on the differences in the perception of ecotourists and their level of satisfaction towards ecotourism among visitors from different backgrounds.

2.7 Future behavioural intention in ecotourism destinations

Pearce (1988) had stated that tourists who were satisfied, recommended the sites and also revisited them. However, unsatisfied tourists did not recommend sites, nor revisit them and had later on spread negative word-of-mouth about these destinations. According to Mazursky (1989), the intention to recommend and revisit a site is influenced by tourists' satisfaction. Satisfied tourists revisited sites and produced more tourists.

The milestone of general interpretation of behavioral intentions was established by Zeithaml et al., (1996). The researchers suggest that favorable behavioral intentions are associated with service providers ability to get it's customers

to say positive things about them, recommend them to other customers, remain loyal to them, spend more with them, and pay price premiums.

The degree of tourist's loyalty to a destination is reflected in their intentions to revisit the destinations and their willingness to recommend it. (Oppermann 2000). The ecotourists' satisfaction significantly influenced the intention of recommendation (Mazursky (1989) and Whipple and Thach (1998), Baker and Crompton (2000)). According to Baker and Crompton (2000), the higher the satisfaction tourists had, the more they intended to revisit a site and promote it by word-of-mouth.

The factors influencing motivation of tourists are found to be influencing the future behavioral intention. They are Destination image, perceived quality, perceived value and satisfaction (Chen and Tsai, 2007)

Zabkar et al. (2010) established a complex relationship between destination attributes and satisfaction. According to them there is a complex relationship between main constructs and behavioral intention; destination attributes affect perceived quality which in turn affects satisfaction and this influences the repeat visit intention. The study confirmed the relationship and suggested the possibility of perceived value as a mediator between perceived quality and behavioral intention.

Emir and Kozak (2011) built a theoretical framework of future behavioral intention based on multiple variables such as the number of previous visits, tourist's overall satisfaction and tourists' satisfaction with destination-based attributes. On the basis of empirical data he found that future intentions were influenced more by satisfaction than by past experience of visiting that destination. Thus if a customer has visited a destination and is satisfied, he is likely to visit that destination again, owing to the satisfaction derived from the previous trip. As such, satisfaction is construed as a mediating variable between service quality, destination image and loyalty. However recent research suggests that the relationship between satisfaction and intentional loyalty may have several mediators (Homburg and Giering, 2001).

Pereda (2002) opined that sociodemographic and psychological profile are the determinants of future behavioural intention. Lee (2007) had developed an ecotourism behavioural model of National Forest Recreation areas in Taiwan and identified satisfaction as mediating variable. Hartley et al. (2009) have studied the motives of visiting ecotourism destinations and its influence on future behavioural intention in the context of Australia. Rahman et al. (2009) had analysed the significance of loyalty of customer and role of customer loyalty in repeat business through positive word of mouth in the context of ecotourism industry.

Rivera and Croes (2010) have evaluated the impact of price, value, satisfaction, quality and performance on the ecotourists' loyalty towards the destination- Galapagos Islands using path analysis. In their view, ecotourists are not likely to return to the destination and the ecotourists' loyalty is reflected by their willingness to recommend and not by revisitation.

According to Naidoo (2011) decisions regarding re-visitation to an ecotourism destination depends on level of satisfaction that the ecotourist experienced during their first visit to the destination. Roh and Kim (2011), had identified factors influencing ecotourists' satisfaction in the context of Upto Wetland, Korea and had concluded that performance factors of physical attributes, eco-interpretation, eco-experience and usability have an influence on satisfaction and satisfaction significantly influences the intention to revisit and recommend. Arowosafe et al. (2014), had studied tourist satisfaction at ecotourism destination, Ghana and had concluded that tourist satisfaction at a tourist attraction is the main reason for revisitation.

According to Ezebilo (2014), ecotourists choice of an ecotourism destination are influenced by factors such as family, friends, societal values, preferences, safety and promotions related to destination. Some of the studies in this context have examined the relationship between ecotourist' satisfaction and loyalty. Hoang et al. (2016) have attempted to examine the importance of destination loyalty in the context of ecotourism destination and have evaluated the role of tourist behaviour in influencing loyalty in the context of Mekong Delta,

Vietnam. The study has attributed destination loyalty as a tool for sustainable growth of destination and has highlighted the role of loyalty in establishing competitive edge derived through ecotourist' satisfaction.

2.8 Specific Studies relating to Periyar Tiger Reserve

Santhosh Thampi (2005) examined eco tourism in Periyar Tiger Reserve in Kerala. He tried to review eco development project in Periyar Tiger Reserve on the basis of ecotourism principles like nature based, ecological sustainability, scope of education and interpretation, benefits to the local people etc. He noted that the project has laid the foundation for a welfare fund for the 22 trackers with families. A major part of the earnings from the bamboo rafting program went to the community development fund from which the members earn a monthly wage of Rs.3500. It has benefitted 40000 people of 5540 families. As such, it provided for alternative source of income to local communities which live in and around protected areas, thus decreasing their dependence on forest resources and increasing their commitment in keeping the forest intact.

According to Bharadwaj (2008), ecocodevelopment activities in Periyar Tiger Reserve has resulted in the overall increase of income for the participating community by 24 percent specifically benefitting the user group eco development committees that went up by 70 percent.

According to Saji and Narayanan (2010), from the ecological perspective, Periyar Tiger Reserve is viewed by many as a critical test of the State's ability to preserve a fragile ecosystem in which nature and human live together so intensely. Also from tourism perspective, Periyar Tiger Reserve represents a similar critical test of the State's ability to host global tourism without a highly fragile ecosystem. They have noted that the ecotourism project was successful in achieving community engagement in tourism. However it was a failure in preventing the gradual degradation of authentic culture and uniqueness of traditional lifestyle of tribal settlement. They reported that the kind of development and urbanisation that has taken place in and around the park area

was threatening the ecological integrity of the area. The study concluded that the engagement of community tourism had a manifold impact on sustainable development of destination.

Chaudhari (2013) reported that in Periyar Tiger Reserve, employment of forest guards has been a source of income. Ecotourism activities like green walk and tribal heritage tour have been a significant source of income for many tribal communities.

Mathews (2014) tried to analyse the visitor satisfaction and community empowerment in Periyar Tiger Reserve. The study also tried to find the trends of tourist arrivals and revenue earnings. The study was based on primary data collected from both tourists and local community members in the vicinity of Periyar Tiger Reserve. As per the study, there was an increase of total day visitors from 425.22 thousand in 2005 to 480.40 thousand in 2010 showing a growth of 11.48 percent. Total revenue of Rs. 690.27 lakhs was registered from all the 15 ecotourism programmes from 2004-05 to 2010-11 from Periyar Tiger Reserve. The year 2010 witnessed a growth of 31.12 percent of tourism revenue generated directly and indirectly and 33.09 percent of the foreign exchange earnings generated directly. The study noted that , majority of tourists belonged to the age group of 21 to 40 years and male tourists have outnumbered the females .Majority of them have regular monthly income and 40 percent were working in the corporate firms. The significant factors identified for visitor satisfaction were hospitality services, basic amenities, disaster preparedness and value added services. With regard to visitor satisfaction, there were no difference of experience between foreign and domestic tourist respondents in basic facilities, basic amenities, disaster preparedness and value added services. The study identified seven critical factors for satisfaction as reasonable entry fee ticket, friendliness of employee, affordable room and food tariff, convenience to reach, community interations, exhibition of local arts and crafts and friendly behaviour of the people. The major problems identified were insufficient hotel rooms, non adherence to the green globe, insufficient number of roads and shortage of manpower for carrying out the conservation measures and regulating

the ecotourism activities in Periyar Tiger Reserve. The study recommended measures relating to carrying capacity management, visitor management, preservation of wildlife habitat, transport and communication network, qualitative improvement of facilities, strengthening the disaster preparedness, enriching and preserving social and cultural values and conservation measures involving collaboration and participation.

Mathew and Vijay Kuriakose (2015) tried to examine ecotourism experience in Periyar Tiger Reserve. The study was based on secondary data compiled from the Department of Kerala tourism and field level enquiry from local community tourism officials, tourism service providers and self help groups. They have stated that responsible tourism in Periyar Tiger Reserve had initiated homestead organic farming in 612 households and many self help groups started new micro enterprises by producing processed foods, paper bags, value added goods etc., As per the study, 68 percent of tribal people were getting economic benefit and 63 percent of the residents have benefitted from ecotourism activities in Periyar Tiger Reserve.

An indepth review of existing studies indicated that while the literature on tourism is growing, few studies are so far trying to explain the significance of ecotourism experience. Although future behavioural intention studies are found in ecotourism domain, the link between ecotourism experience and future behavioural intention still lacks empirical evidence. Hence the current study on **“An Analysis of Ecotourism Experience and Future Behavioural Intention with Specific Reference to Periyar Tiger Reserve in Kerala”** is expected to fill up the research gap.