

A Study On Tourist Behavioural Traits At Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary Ecotourism Destination In Badradri Kothagudem District, Telangana

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a global leisure activity and it is an integral part of social, cultural and physical development in all developing countries. It has significantly potential to contribute to the socio-economic aspirations of people living standards in tourist destinations. Travelling to nature-based tourist destinations with broad mindset to understand the local community people culture and as well as social & environmental issues is core activity of responsible tourism. Measuring tourist's responsible practices at ecotourism destinations is considered as a key indicator and exercise of assuring responsible tourism. The tourists need to abide local rules and regulations and avoid damaging the natural environment by exhibiting environmentally responsible behavior. This research paper emphasizes the tourist behavioral traits in Kinnerasani wildlife sanctuary ecotourism destination in Badradri Kothagudem district of Telangana for sustainable destination development.

Key Words: Tourism, Tourist Behavioral Traits, Ecotourism, Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary, Sustainable Destination Development.

INTRODUCTION:

The tourism industry has grown significantly in recent years and it is now considered as one of the World's largest industries. Ecotourism is a form of tourism involving visiting fragile, pristine, and relatively undisturbed natural areas, intended as a low impact and often small-scale alternative to standard commercial mass tourism. It means responsible travel to natural areas to appreciate the cultural and natural history of the environment, taking care not to disturb the integrity of the eco system, while creating economic opportunities that make conservation and protection of natural resources advantageous to the local community people. Ecotourism destinations are intended to offer tourists and visitors an insight into the impact of human beings on the environment and to foster a greater appreciation of natural habitats. Ecotourism emphasizes the natural conservation of a tourist destination and therefore builds on the environmental consciousness of tourists. In tourism industry, the responsible tourism focuses on assessing and monitoring the environmental, social, and economic impacts of tourism, maintain and encouraging natural, economic, social and cultural diversity and avoiding waste and over consumption, and promoting the sustainable use of local resources. According to (Sharply & Telfer, 2002; Swarbrooke, 1999, and Wood & House, 1992), a

responsible tourist prefers a trip which is least harmful to the environment, least disturbing for the local community people and their cultures of the destinations.

A Wildlife Sanctuary is an area where animal habitats and their surroundings are protected by the Forest department authorities from threats and disturbances. They aim at providing a comfortable living to the animals. The main objective of establishing a wildlife sanctuary is to educate humans as to how to treat the animals for their peaceful living standards in forests. India has beautiful wildlife sanctuaries, with dense forests, large rivers, high and beautiful mountains. The Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 was enacted, leading to a significant increase in the number of sanctuaries. The formal establishment of wildlife sanctuaries began in the mid-20th century, with Nanda Devi Sanctuary, Uttarakhand state in 1982, primarily created to protect its ecosystem. Today, in our country over 573 wildlife sanctuaries, not only focus on protecting specific species but also prioritize over all biodiversity conservation. The integration of these sanctuaries into global conservation initiatives has enhanced their effectiveness, underscoring their crucial role in preserving India's rich biodiversity and natural heritage.

Wildlife sanctuaries serve as key ecotourism destinations by facilitating responsible travel to natural areas that support wildlife conservation and community wellbeing. They provide opportunities to observe animals in their natural habitats, promoting understanding and appreciation of wildlife while minimizing environmental impact. Ecotourism encompasses the wildlife viewing and birds watching are the concern activities in wildlife sanctuaries. The Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary is an asset to nature lovers and tourists, situated in Badradri Kothagudem district of Telangana. The wealth and variety of flora and fauna is marvelous in this ecotourism destination. This sanctuary is considered as one of the best wildlife cum ecotourism destinations of Telangana. This research made an attempt to assess, the tourists behavioral traits during their visit to this ecotourism destination. This research paper is brought into light the salient features of ecotourism destination and tourist behavioral traits. The uniqueness of this research paper is that, it is one of the first attempts that investigate the responsible oriented tourist behavioral practices at this ecotourism destination.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The aim of the responsible tourism is to mitigate tourism activity impacts that greatly benefit the host communities, enhance better working conditions, ensure the participation of the local community, preserving and promoting the sustainable environment and cultural resources (Leslie, 2012). Responsible tourism is defined as 'tourism that promotes responsibility to the environment through its sustainable use, responsibility to involve local communities in the tourism industry; responsibility for the safety and security of visitors and responsible government, employers, employees, unions and local communities' (DEAT, 1996, 4 cited in Merwe and Wocke, 2007,1). Responsible tourists are those who meet and make interaction with various people, native customs, and other visitors, explore authenticity by exercising cognitive and emotional effort, leave no negative impact on the local natural and cultural resources, contributes to the local economy, and respect and promote local resources (Shahzala, 2016). The involvement of local communities is particularly crucial to the success of tourism development and the implementation of responsible tourism and the resident's

attitude may directly affect the development of the tourism industry (Ling, Jakpar, Johari, Myint, & Rani, 2011). Martinez, Perez, and Rodriguez del Bosque (2013), suggested that tourists responsible practices may come from social responsibility and an ethical dimension focusing on the local perspective.

The responsible behavioral traits make tourists act responsibly during their visit to any destination. Dr. E. Siva Nagi Reddy (2001), has mentioned about the unique features of this Wildlife Sanctuary in his book Andhra Pradesh Tourism, Vanarulu-Avakashalu. Dr. P. Siva Shankara Reddy (2002) and Dr. D. Satyanarayana (2014), has highlighted the flora and fauna and ecotourism destination in their books 'Perspective of Tourism in Andhra Pradesh' and Telangana lo Kotha Vihara Sthalalu. According to their views, this Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the prime ecotourism destinations in Telangana.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary ecotourism destination.
2. To analyze the fulfillment of tourist's expectations.
3. To find out different tourist's behavioral traits.

METHODOLOGY:

This research paper was developed with the support of both Primary and Secondary data sources on the grounds of quantitative research method. This research work is basically exploratory in nature. The primary data was collected by using the structure questionnaire from 320 tourists. The respondents were identified in three months of destination research through a method of convenience sample method. The researchers was approached the tourists with the support of open-ended questionnaire to gain more insights into this study. Randomization was incorporated into the times of the days and days of the week to avoid bias in data collection. To assess the responsible tourist's behavioral practices, this study used 11 behavioral traits which are designed by a five-point Likert scale, where, 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree with statements. The researchers have also taken the support of descriptive statistical tools such as Percentage and Chi-square Test in the research. The secondary data was collected from News Papers, Journals, Government Reports, Magazines, Conference Proceedings, and Books.

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY:

The Kinnerasani sanctuary is situated in Badradri Kothagudem district of Telangana. This sanctuary is part of Paloncha revenue division, located at Dandakaranaya forests, lying on the river bank of River Godavari. The name Kinnerasani is derived from Kinnerasani River which bisects the sanctuary and ultimately drains into Godavari. The terrain of the sanctuary is undulating with hillocks and valleys supporting luxuriant dry mixed teak forests with a variety of wildlife. It includes the big reservoir Kinnerasani. The temperature in the area ranges between 15°C-45°C maximum. The rainfall in the area is about 900mm mostly from southwest monsoon. The Kennersani Pallavagu and many streams could flow through the sanctuary with a number of perennial springs known as **Togus** forms the main sources. The terrain is undulating with altitude ranging from 95 mts to 559 mts above mean sea level.

Map-1



Area: 656 Sq. Kms with 220 Sq.kms of core area extending over forest Division of Paloncha

Latitude and Longitude: Latitude: 17°19' to 18°9'2" (N), Longitude: 81° (E).

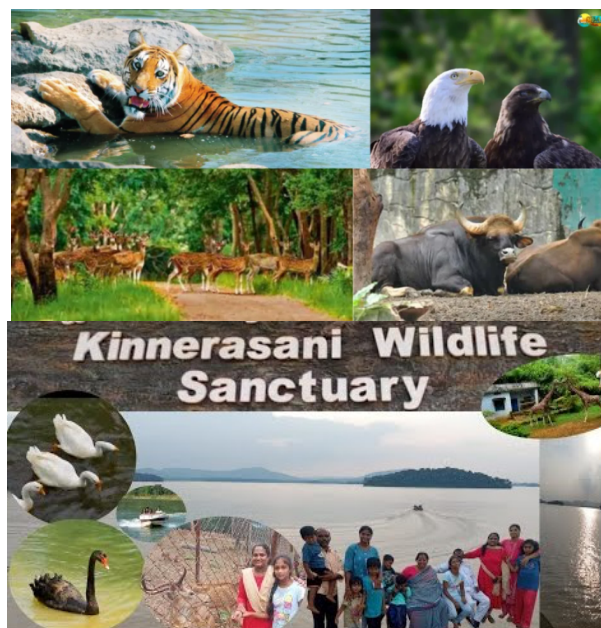
Date and year of Notification: O.MS.No.47F & RD (For III), dated 24.01.1977, under section 18 of Wildlife Protection Act 1972.

Source: Andhra Pradesh Wildlife Booklet, 2010, Dept. of Forest, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh.

Wildlife:

The Sanctuary is rich in Biodiversity due to the topography. The main fauna species found in the sanctuary are *Tiger, Panther, Gaur, Black buck, Deers, Jackals, Cheetals, Chinkaras, Sambar, Wild dog, Chowsingha, Hyenas, Reptiles like Python, Cobra, Krait, Vipers* etc. and number of species of birds are recorded. The Forest Department has introduced 33 Crocodiles at reservoir in 1980 and they have now increased to a few hundreds.

Images of the Sanctuary



Source: Self taken Photographs

This sanctuary is under the maintenance of Palvantha division of forest department. There is the entry fee of Rs. 20/- for tourists and visitors. The forest authorities have setup a nice Wild Animal's Museum and Environment Education Centre for the tourist and visitor

awareness on responsible practices. In this center, there is an exhibition hall displaying exhibits explaining intricate problems of wildlife conservation. The sanctuary timings are morning 9.00 A.M to evening 5.00 P.M. The forest authorities have fixed the Do's and Don'ts' sign boards in the park for the tourist to remind the responsible practices in the sanctuary. The best time to visit this sanctuary is in between October to April every year.

ECOTOURISM SCENARIO IN THE SANCTUARY:

There is a rich ecotourism scenario in Kinnerasani wildlife sanctuary, which is a treasure trove of great biodiversity at Yanambailu in Palvancha mandal of Badradri Kothagudem district. This natural setting also embraces a variety of ecological habitats and various animals and plant species, essential for the development of ecotourism. Nestled in the lap of nature, the sanctuary derives its name from the Kinnerasani River, lifeline for farmers. The scenic surrounding of the reservoir bounded by lush green vegetation offer an enchanting view to the visitors. The following are the few main ecotourism activities in the wildlife sanctuary. Keeping in view the nature glory and scenic beauty of the sanctuary, the district administration organizes boating facility for the tourists and one day special package tour. By availing this facility, the good number of tourists and visitors has been visiting this wildlife sanctuary around the year.

The Forest Department officials have been organizing the environment awareness rallies on the occasion of World Environment Day in the entire district and conducting the competitions among the school and college students on ecotourism, climate change, and biodiversity. To bring the good awareness on ecotourism features in wildlife sanctuary among the students, some NGO's in the district have been organizing the special programs like painting competitions, essay writing and elocution competitions in different schools and colleges on the occasion of World Tourism Day and National Tourism Day. The Forest Department officials have been organizing the special awareness programs like Inspiring Lectures by eminent environmentalists and Professors on DO's and DONT's and responsible touristic practices in Wildlife Sanctuary. Today this wildlife sanctuary became a main picnic spot for several people, schools and colleges. The pleasant environment has been attracting the good number of nature lovers around the year.

PROFILE OF TOURISTS:

The tourists profile particulars are presented in below table 1. This research has done the research between October to December months, 2025. The researcher has collected the data from the tourists during these three months' time with the support of open-ended questionnaire.

Table – 1
Profile of Tourists

SL. No.	Particulars	No. of Tourists	%
1	Gender:		

	Male	194	61%
	Female	126	39%
	Total	320	100%
2	Age:		
	10-20	38	12%
	21-30	84	26%
	31-40	92	29%
	41-50	53	17%
	51-60	45	14%
	60 Yr Above	08	02%
	Total	320	100%
3	Education		
	Literate	273	85%
	Illiterate	47	15%
	Total	320	100%
4	Occupation		
	Students	68	21%
	Private Employees	46	15%
	Govt. Employees	83	26%
	Business	94	29%
	Any Other	29	09%
	Total	320	100%
5	Monthly Income		
	Below Rs. 30,000/-	85	26%
	Rs. 31,000/- to Rs. 60,000/-	110	34%
	Rs. 61,000/-to Rs. 1,00,000/-	74	23%
	Rs. 1,00,000 Above	51	16%
	Total	320	100%
6	Preferred		

	Tourist Place		
	Natural	233	73%
	Man Made	87	27%
	Total	320	100%
7	Hobbies		
	Travelling	179	56%
	Playing	38	12%
	Social Media Browsing	103	32%
	Total	320	100%

Source: Primary Data

As per the above table, there are 61 percent of male tourists, 29 percent of visitors hail from 31-40 age group, over 85 percent of tourists are literates, 29 percent of tourists are in business, the highest tourist's monthly income between Rs. 31,000/- to Rs. 60,000/-, and such tourists are in 34 percent, most of the tourists (73%) prefer to travel to natural places as their destination choice, and about 56% of tourists' hobby is travelling.

MOTIVATING FACTORS:

Travel is an activity essentially driven by motivational forces. It is the global integrating network of biological and cultural forces which gives value and direction to travel choices, behavior and experience. The researchers have brought into light the behind motivational factors to visit this ecotourism destinations as mentioned in the below table 2.

Table – 2
Motivating Factors for Tourist Arrivals

SL No	Motivating Factors	For Tourist Arrivals & their Frequency	%
01	Easy Accessibility	39	12%
02	Regular Promotional Activities & Advertisements	42	13%
03	Amenities & Facilities	16	05%
04	Brand Name	48	15%
05	Peaceful Landscape	36	11%
06	Cleanliness in Surroundings	44	14%
07	Stress Buster Experience	62	19%
08	Destination Attractive Features	33	10%
	Total	320	100

Source: Primary Data

As per the above table data, the majority of the tourists (19%) have opined that this

ecotourism destination could provide the stress buster experience, which attracts large number of tourists.

FULFILMENT OF TOURIST EXPECTATIONS AT ECOTOURISM DESTINATION:

The majority reasons for tourists to be taking up a trip are to have fun. A fun-filled tour happens when there is a clear agenda for the travel. The expectations of the tourists thus fulfilled and they return from the tour with complete satisfaction and fulfillment of their expectations. The researchers have investigated through their research how best this ecotourism destination is fulfilling the expectations of tourists during their visit.

Table – 3
Fulfillment of Tourists Expectations at Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary
Ecotourism Destination

SL No	Expectations	Visitor Frequency	%
01	Quality Road Connectivity	15	05%
02	Safe Destination Reaching	17	05%
03	Informative Do's & Don't Sign Boards at the Destination	23	07%
04	Stress Free Experiences	25	08%
05	Pleasant Environment	22	07%
06	Satisfy's Tourist Expectations	61	19%
07	Upto the Mark Amenities & Facilities	29	09%
08	Availability of Wash Rooms	23	07%
09	Pleasant Personalized Experiences	22	07%
10	Safety Measures	28	09%
11	Mobile Connectivity Signal Towers	27	08%
12	Wide Promotional Activities	16	05%
13	Canteen and Hotel Facility	12	04%
	Total	320	100

Source: Primary Data

According to the above table, majority of tourists (19%) have opined that this ecotourism destination could satisfy's the tourist expectations.

ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOURAL TRAITS:

The researcher has brought into light the tourist behavioral traits towards environmental protective practices with the support of five-point Likert scale, where, 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree with statements, mentioned in the below table number 4.

Table – 4
Descriptive Statistical Data on Tourists Environmental Behavioral Traits (EBT)

EBT	Frequency and Percentage						Mean	SD	CV
		SD	D	N	A	SA			
I respect the environmental safeguarding practices	F	52	86	72	58	52	2.88	1.332	1.775
	%	16.3	29.1	20.9	17.4	16.3			
I use bin for waste plastics and others	F	0	4	10	47	25	4.08	.770	.593
	%	0	4.7	11.6	54.7	29.1			
I use the usual tourist path	F	4	3	9	15	55	4.33	1.100	1.210
	%	4.7	3.5	10.5	17.4	64.0			
I do not create noise	F	3	4	15	27	37	4.06	1.056	1.114
	%	3.5	4.7	17.4	31.4	43.0			
I do not buy souvenirs made from any elements of local animals and plants	F	42	21	15	5	3	1.91	1.102	1.215
	%	48.8	24.4	17.4	5.8	3.8			

Source: Primary Data

Only 33.7 percent of the tourists (16.3 Strongly Agree + 17.4 Agree) have opined that they give huge respect to environmental safeguarding practices, keeping in view the significance of ecological and wildlife protective responsibilities. Besides, it is also found that 83.8% (54.7 Strongly Agree + 29.1 Agree) of the tourists have used litter bins for placing unused plastics and other items. This research founds that there is a significant number of tourists arrivals, 81.4 (17.4 Strongly Agree + 64.0 Agree) visiting this ecotourism destination, used the usual path. It is also found that over 74.4% of tourists have involved in not making noise at the ecotourism destination to experience the beautiful nature, birds and butterfly presence and movements. Besides, it is also found that a smaller number of the tourists (9.6%) have ensured that they did not buy any souvenirs made from any elements of local animals and plants.

DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTIONAL BEHAVIOURAL TRAITS:

The researchers have brought into light the tourist behavioral traits towards development and promotional environmental protective practices with the support of five-point Likert scale, where, 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree with statements, mentioned in the below table number 5.

Table – 5
Descriptive Statistical Data on Tourist Development and Promotional Behavioral Traits (DPBT's)

DPBT	Frequency and Percentage						Mean	SD	CV
		SD	D	N	A	SA			
I post destination beauty	F	64	62	53	82	59	3.71	1.126	1.267

via social media	%	7.0	5.8	22.1	39.5	25.6			
I request someone not to destroy the beauty of this ecotourism destination	F	2	4	18	29	33	4.01	1.000	1.000
	%	2.3	4.7	20.9	33.7	38.4			
I volunteer for the conservation of destination environment	F	2	6	11	42	25	3.95	.957	.915
	%	2.3	7.0	12.8	48.8	29.1			
I make positive word of mouth about destination	F	2	3	14	25	42	4.19	.988	.977
	%	2.3	3.5	16.3	29.1	48.8			

Source: Primary Data

The research finds a satisfactory oriented performance in case of development and promotional behavior of the tourist visiting this ecotourism destination. It is clearly visible that, more than 65 percent of the tourists have involved in destination development and promotional activities by posting certain beautiful videos in social media. It is also found that more than 70 percent of tourists request others not to engage in such activities that lead to destroying the natural beauty of this ecotourism destination and 78 percent of the tourists promoted volunteering and engaged in the activities to preserve the environment of this ecotourism destination. Around 62 percent of the tourists promote positive word of mouth about this destination.

LEGAL AND ETHICAL BEHAVIORAL TRAITS:

The researcher has brought into light the tourists' behavioral traits towards ethical environmental protective practices with the support of five-point Likert scale, where, 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree with statements, mentioned in the below table number 6.

Table – 6

Descriptive Statistical Data on Tourists Legal and Ethical Behavioral Traits (LEBT's)

LEBT	Frequency and Percentage						Mean	SD	CV
		SD	D	N	A	SA			
In case of emergency, I like to take help from tourist police or security guard	F	12	31	76	94	107	4.19	.901	.812
	%	1.2	4.7	11.6	39.5	43.0			
I obey the local customs and laws	F	4	1	4	30	47	4.34	.978	.956
	%	4.7	1.2	4.7	34.9	54.7			

Source: Primary Data

The study finds a significant percentage of tourists obey the legal and ethical behavior during their visit to this ecotourism destination. More than 80 percent of the respondents prefer

taking help from security guard, tourist police, in case of emergency and 89.6 percent of respondents support following local customs and laws.

DISCUSSION:

The study found a positive relationship between the practices of environmental behavioral traits (EBT) and the responsible tourist behavioral traits, which also found in different previous studies, Eichelberger et al., (2021), Caruana et al, (2014). So, the environmentally responsible behavior has a great contribution on environmental sustainability (Su and Swanson, 2017; Eichelberger et al, 2021). This study also found that the practice of development and promotional, and legal and ethical behavioral traits have a positive relationship with responsible tourists behavioral traits and these are also consistent the previous studies i.e., Budiarta et al., (2018), Weeden, (2014), Lea, (1993); Said, (2018), Shahzadal, (2016), and Chafe, (2005); Thus, the findings of the study validate the previous arguments of different studies.

However, this study has some significant limitations; therefore, the findings of the study should be used cautiously. In this regard, the study grounds implications for the current literature and practice. The study enriches the current arguments of the relating to the responsible tourist behavioral traits and its determinants such as environmental behavioral traits (EBT); development and promotional behavioral traits (DPBT), and legal and ethical behavioral traits (LEBT) that have examined in this study. However, the future researcher can extend the arguments of the study by conducting similar studies in different contexts.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS:

In the research, it is found the issue of district administration low monitoring and improper management at this ecotourism destination, which was pointed out by most of the tourists.

This research paper suggests the formulation and implementation of a master plan for the sustainable ecotourism development of this destination. Because formulation and implementation of tourism master plan is prioritized as key to tourism development. Secondly, this research suggests application of innovative technologies in promoting, administering, and managing this destination. As tourism is an information-intensive industry, the effectiveness of technological applications such as social media as a tool for tourism destination promotion and administration. Finally, this paper suggests controlling number of tourists in order to ensure quality tourism, environmental conservation, and destination development.

CONCLUSION:

This study investigates a detailed understanding regarding how responsibly tourist behavioral traits during their visit to Kinnerasani wildlife sanctuary ecotourism destination of Badradri Kothagudem in Telangana. The study considered that tourist have been truly following the Do's and Don'ts in strict manner and it was found a number of recognized behavioral traits, which are categorized under *environment, development and promotional, and legal, and ethical* have executed systematically. From

the statistical results, it is evident that these three tests were exists a positive significant relationship between responsible tourist behavioral traits and behavioral themes such as environmental behavioral traits (EBT); development and promotional behavioral traits (DPBT), and legal and ethical behavioral traits (LEBT). The Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary is an asset to Badradri Kothagudam district and as well as to Telangana in connection with the true tourist behavioral traits towards the development of sustainable tourism.

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