

"COMPARING CULTURALLY SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MODELS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF KERALA AND GOA"

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ABSTRACT

Cultural sustainability in the context of tourism has gained notable prominence, emphasizing the significance of preserving and promoting local traditions, heritage, and communities while simultaneously addressing the needs of tourists. Kerala and Goa, known for their unique cultural identities and allure to tourists, stand as valuable case studies, showcasing distinct approaches toward achieving cultural sustainability.

This research methodically scrutinizes the policies, practices, and consequential impacts employed by Kerala and Goa to foster culturally sustainable tourism. It delves into the intricate dynamics of how these states harmonize the preservation of their distinctive cultural assets with the ever-evolving demands of the tourism industry. Moreover, this study conducts an evaluation of the social, economic, and environmental repercussions stemming from these models, thereby offering an assessment of their overall effectiveness.

The findings derived from this comprehensive analysis provide critical insights into the challenges, successes, and essential lessons drawn from the cultural sustainability initiatives undertaken in Kerala and Goa. By virtue of the comparisons made between these two regions, this study aims to offer invaluable insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and researchers who are dedicated to advancing culturally sustainable tourism practices that concurrently benefit local communities and tourists."

Keywords: *Kerala ,Goa , Culture sustainability, Tourism*

Introduction

Tourism, encompassing a broad spectrum of activities where individuals explore different environments beyond their usual surroundings, primarily driven by leisure or business motives, has historically played a vital role in generating income for host nations. India, known for its rich heritage, has been a destination for ancient and historical travelers throughout its history. However, several factors like geographical distance, unexplored territories, lengthy journeys, and limited transportation options restricted the number of travelers.

Nonetheless, the travel landscape has undergone a remarkable transformation with the introduction of air travel, advancements in geographical mapping, and improved accessibility to remote areas. This has led to a significant increase in global tourism, making India an even more attractive destination for travelers from around the world.

Tourism motivations can be distilled into several distinct categories. Firstly, many individuals embark on journeys to reconnect with family and friends living in distant places. Secondly, some undertake travels driven by religious obligations and a quest for spiritual enlightenment, often including self-discovery as an objective. Moreover, travel can serve as a temporary escape from the routines of daily life, providing a break from the ordinary.

However, for the majority, the primary impetus behind travel is the desire to encounter natural marvels and experiences not readily accessible in their homeland. The desire to experience and enjoy what is missing or uncommon in one's own surroundings goes beyond just seeking out sunny beaches or picturesque mountains. For instance, the concept of 'rain tourism' for Arabian tourists and 'medical tourism' for individuals who do not have access to comprehensive healthcare coverage in their home countries both illustrate the quest for experiences and services that are not readily accessible in their local environments. Conversely, there are also less desirable activities, such as gambling in Las Vegas or engaging in illicit behaviors like pedophilia, drug-seeking, and sex tourism, which represent the negative facets of seeking the unfamiliar or unattainable.

Benefits of Tourism

Tourism is a focal point of government promotion worldwide due to its perceived role in wealth creation at both national and local levels. Many developing nations have come to rely on tourism as a significant source of foreign exchange income (Sharpley 2002). Additionally, it is often seen as a lifeline for the maintenance and conservation of historical heritage sites and monuments that might otherwise deteriorate rapidly (Fraser Coast 2005). Moreover, tourism acts as a robust source of employment and income for local communities. Essentially, the gauge of success in the development of tourism in a specific area depends on whether the overall benefits in terms of social, environmental, and economic factors outweigh the accompanying costs, as emphasized by Sharpley in 2002.

Moreover, tourism triggers a 'multiplier effect,' wherein each dollar spent in the local economy circulates and gets reinvested, thereby promoting economic expansion. It provides an opportunity for economic diversification in financially challenged economies, reducing dependence on traditional sectors like agriculture, fishing, or mining (Fraser Coast 2005). Furthermore, when tourists arrive, it often encourages existing businesses to grow, improve their amenities, and, in some instances (especially in areas with limited regulation), increase their prices for the same products or services, as noted by Kumar in 1999. The development of tourism typically brings about enhanced infrastructure, including improved roads, transportation networks, and communication systems, which can benefit both locals and visitors. Moreover, because a small portion of tourists might decide to make their travel destinations their permanent homes, this can lead to the expansion of residential areas, as highlighted by Fraser Coast in 2005 and Daijiworld in 2006.

From an environmental standpoint, tourism is often considered a more sustainable economic activity, as it does not typically necessitate substantial investments in machinery or pollutant-cleaning systems. From a socio-cultural perspective, tourism promotes interaction between residents and individuals from different cultures, encouraging the exchange of ideas and intercultural understanding within the community. This has the potential to drive social progress and enrich the local culture, as noted by Liu in 2003. Some argue that the respect and

interest shown by tourists in indigenous traditions and practices can inspire local communities to preserve their distinct customs, traditions, and cultural identity, as observed by Tourism Queensland in 2006.

Negative Consequences of Tourism

Despite the optimism surrounding the advantages of tourism and its role in fostering economic progress, there has been a surge in apprehension regarding the unregulated facets of tourism development in recent decades. The detrimental repercussions of tourism have been extensively documented, shedding light on a range of significant concerns. These concerns can be conveniently classified into environmental, economic, socio-cultural, and ethical-legal issues, which are detailed as follows.

Environmental Issues:

The emphasis on profit by private businesses, occasionally overlooking environmental concerns, is a widely acknowledged issue. Nevertheless, when government officials in developing nations collaborate with big corporations, it can result in substantial environmental challenges. For instance, the rapid expansion of hotels, often facilitated by financial influence and corrupt bureaucracy, can lead to the overuse of limited resources like water and beach access. There are also conflicts arising from attempts to convert cultivated areas into tourism-related developments (Seth 2006). India faces a pressing issue with declining forest cover, and some prominent hotel chains frequently violate coastal regulatory zone regulations in Indian coastal areas. Amenities like showers, swimming pools, and watering lawns in these tourist facilities often lead to the depletion of groundwater resources, as highlighted by Tourism Concern in 2008.

Waste management is another critical environmental concern. Non-biodegradable waste generated by tourists and tourism businesses, including plastic packaging, is challenging to remove from delicate areas, resulting in unsightly piles of rubbish in pristine locations (Tourism Concern 2008). Even in natural reserves, zoos, and wildlife parks, an excessive influx of tourists has been demonstrated to disturb the breeding and feeding behaviors of animals, including formidable species such as lions and gorillas, as outlined by Ryan in 2003.

Economic Challenges:

Despite the optimistic claims made by tourism authorities, numerous researchers have pointed out that tourism in rural areas cannot be seen as a panacea for economic underdevelopment. At best, it serves as a supplementary source of income for regions that already have a thriving economy, rather than being the primary driver of rural development (Hall 2006; Richards 2006). The displacement of rural farmers caused by tourism-related land encroachments frequently compels them to join the tourism industry, leading formerly proud landowners to take on roles such as hotel clerks or taxi drivers. Some experts caution that mass tourism can harm local entrepreneurs and hoteliers who must compete with well-established multinational corporations, rather than enhancing the local economy (Tourism Concern 2008). Additionally, tourism can lead to localized inflation when foreign tourists' higher spending power increases the cost of limited resources, as is often observed in tourist-heavy cities.

Another economic issue is that the foreign currency generated by tourism often ends up returning to multinational corporations that own significant tourist-related businesses, such as airlines, upscale hotels, and high-end recreational facilities, as noted by Nicholson-Lord in 2002. Even in cases where multinational corporations are not directly involved, the advantages typically concentrate in the hands of elite and politically well-connected local or national enterprises, intensifying economic disparities.

The promise of increased employment opportunities also has its downsides. Many who are employed in the tourism sector are subject to seasonal layoffs during the off-season, especially in places like Goa during the monsoon season, and even in upscale hotels and resorts. Job opportunities also shrink dramatically during crises, such as the fear of diseases like SARS and Bird flu, terrorism threats (leading to travel advisories from foreign governments), and internal conflicts. These factors can lead to a rapid reduction in tourist arrivals, resulting in a sudden loss of employment opportunities. The issue of job opportunities for local residents can also lead to tension. In certain instances, children and teenagers, such as masseurs, silver jewelry vendors, and wicker basket sellers on beaches in destinations like Goa and Kerala, are engaged in prolonged work hours and are susceptible to exploitation, including the threat of exploitation by pedophiles, as highlighted by Odone in 2002.

Socio – cultural issues

Unrestrained tourism's societal repercussions are a major source of worry. According to several research (Ochrym 1990; Edwin and James 1980; Seth 2006), there is a direct link between rising tourist numbers and rising crime rates in specific areas. The widely held belief that there is a persistent relationship between tourism and crime must be acknowledged, nevertheless (Pizam 1982). Another notable concern revolves around the adverse impacts of widespread gambling on local communities. Research conducted on the gambling situation in Thailand and Cambodia, for example, indicates that various forms of gambling contribute to as much as 40% of the local economy and have significant financial consequences, particularly for young people. These studies provide backing for the closure of casinos due to their association with a range of illegal activities, including the drug trade and prostitution, as observed by Sophirom in 2003.

A related cultural issue is that tourism can have a strong impact on diluting local cultures, leading to the erosion of indigenous customs and traditions in favor of a standardized, globalized tourist culture. This cultural erosion occurs because many facilities at popular destinations are standardized to cater to tourists' desire for familiarity, even in foreign settings (UN Environment Programme 2002). For example, an Israeli tourist may travel extensive distances to reach Goa for its sun and sand but may continue to seek out Jewish cuisine, creating a demand for such food. While this may not pose a significant challenge in cultures accommodating diverse cuisines, it can lead to conflicts when tourists' preferences directly clash with the ethos of the destination. For instance, what if a substantial number of tourists seek access to alcohol in Saudi Arabia or beef hamburgers in the temple city of Madurai? Would this underground supply not contradict the existing cultural values of the destination and potentially transform entrepreneurs into opportunists seeking to profit from the situation? Furthermore, how do we address the socio-ethical dilemma faced by those who, despite personal reservations, engage in activities they find morally objectionable within their own cultural framework due to competitive business pressures?

Ethical and Legal Considerations:

Another ethical issue is the concept of "staged authenticity," in which cultural traditions and customs are meticulously choreographed and presented as rehearsed spectacles for tourists, as pointed out by Nicholson-Lord in 2002. At times, festivals and religious rituals undergo alterations and adaptations to accommodate the preferences and sensitivities of tourists, leading to the emergence of what can be termed as a "revised expression of cultural identity" (UN Environment Programme 2002). In many cases, tourists seek only a superficial and brief encounter with local cultural elements, without a genuine desire to deeply immerse themselves or gain a profound understanding. This results in a neatly packaged 'cultural experience' that tourists can easily share with others, often without a comprehensive appreciation of the culture itself.

In local communities, what is regarded as sacred and deeply cherished can rapidly transition into a marketable commodity, driven by the allure of financial gain and aspirations for upward mobility. This process, often referred to as 'commodification' and 'museumization,' involves packaging local art forms and cultures for consumption by tourists, often disregarding the spiritual and aesthetic values held dear by practitioners, as pointed out by Kerala Tourism Watch in 2008. Some social researchers and non-governmental organizations boldly categorize this phenomenon as a form of neo-colonialism, as noted by the International Bicycle Fund in 1995.

Tourists, with their wealth, status, and leisure, can easily overpower vulnerable locals, leading to a sense of discontent and a diminished regard for their own cultural values, as discussed by Sawkar et al. in 1998. However, these same tourists often overlook the finer nuances and subtleties of local life, which encompass elements such as familial love, community bonds, spiritual wisdom, mythology, and cultural heritage, as highlighted by Nicholson-Lord in 2002.

In places inundated with affluent tourists, the pursuit of profit becomes a dominant force, with every stakeholder, from taxi drivers to hotel employees, striving to maximize their earnings. Along many coastal areas, nearly every household often transforms into a commercial hub, continually offering various goods and services for sale.

THE DISCUSSION ON SUSTAINABLE AND ALTERNATIVE TOURISM

First introduced to the public eye by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature in 1980, numerous present-day leaders in the tourism sector perceive sustainable tourism as a holistic strategy that encompasses the economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions linked to tourism endeavors (Edgell Sr. 2006). This holistic perspective is seen as a way to avoid many of the pitfalls associated with unchecked tourism development.

Although sustainable tourism initially emerged alongside a growing global environmental awareness, it rapidly expanded to include a broader range of considerations, including poverty alleviation, responsible technology use, and cross-cultural issues. To achieve sustainability in tourism, several guiding principles were proposed:

- 1) Mitigating conflicts among stakeholders in the tourism industry.
- 2) Ensuring the long-term sustainability of resources.
- 3) Establishing limits on uncontrolled growth.
- 4) Prioritizing visitor satisfaction.

5) Recognizing the value of tourism as a means of development (Fennell 2005).

Other researchers have delineated the fundamental objectives of sustainable tourism. These encompass improving the immediate and long-term quality of life for local communities, meeting the increasing demands of tourists, and safeguarding the natural environment to facilitate the attainment of these objectives (Liu 2003). In recent years, two overarching approaches to establishing sustainable tourism have emerged. The first is the macro approach, which utilizes environmental balance sheets to assess the overall sustainability of a region. The second is the micro approach, which employs comprehensive cost-benefit analyses of individual projects to gauge their sustainability (Garrod and Fyall 1998). There has also been a discourse regarding the imposition of definite limits on the growth of tourism, determined by the carrying capacity of regional tourism systems, in order to prevent uncontrolled and disorderly expansion (Wearing and Neil 1999). Nonetheless, the determination of carrying capacities across various dimensions of sustainable tourism, including economic, socio-cultural, and environmental sustainability, remains a complex and subjective undertaking. Despite the commendable nature of these sustainability standards, they often seem idealistic. The precise methods and metrics for achieving and quantifying sustainability remain elusive. Many proposed strategies and tools for this purpose, championed by enthusiastic practitioners and authors, tend to oversimplify the issue (Liu 2003).

Methodology of this Comparative Study:

In this study, a combination of inconspicuous observations of activities within the respective regions and informal, open-ended interviews were employed. The author conducted multiple visits to both Goa and Kerala to gather these observations and findings. This research provides a contrasting and comparative analysis of the fundamental principles of tourism development practiced in these two regions.

While some tourist activities, such as visits to spice gardens, may exhibit slight variations compared to other parts of Kerala (particularly beach tourism), there is no substantial reason to question the cultural representation of Tekkady as a source of insights into tourism as practiced in Kerala.

Regarding Goa, the author resided and worked in the region for more than a decade and also spent significant time as a tourist in various parts of Goa. Given that the primary focus of this study centered on the socio-economic sustainability aspect, the issues and observations primarily relate to the social context. Environmental concerns, such as coastal regulatory zones, encroachment on agricultural land, pollution, and water-related issues, which have garnered significant attention in Kerala and Goa over the past decade, were not extensively examined in this research.

Comparative Insights into Tourism Philosophies in Kerala and Goa

Historical Background of Goa and Kerala:

Goa, a region that has been an integral part of India since ancient times, underwent a period of Portuguese colonial rule that commenced in the 16th century AD. In contrast to the British colonial rulers, the Portuguese authorities were predominantly of the Roman Catholic faith, and during the initial centuries of their governance, they actively promoted extensive proselytization efforts. Presently, Goa is a state with a Hindu majority; however, the proportion of the Christian population is significantly higher in comparison to other parts of India. Diverging from the British colonial approach, certain Portuguese rulers encouraged intermarriage between their male settlers and local women. This led to the emergence of a unique fusion of Euro-Christian culture, coexisting harmoniously with the substantial Hindu population in the region. Alcohol consumption is relatively prevalent among Goan Christians, and women are not averse to enjoying beverages such as wine and gin. In the year 2000, there were approximately 3,000 bars and liquor-serving establishments serving a population of roughly 1.35 million, as reported by Dhupdale, Motghare, et al. in 2006. Despite the presence of these establishments, alcohol dependency is generally discouraged. Ballroom dancing is a customary feature of celebrations and special events among Christians, including weddings. Additionally, the Konkani drama form known as 'Tiatr' enjoys popularity in Goa, particularly in its villages. Goan women, particularly Christians, tend to be self-reliant and encouraged to pursue employment opportunities. With its extensive 125-kilometer coastline, Goa boasts numerous beaches that appeal to a wide spectrum of tourists, ranging from budget-conscious backpackers to affluent visitors frequenting 5-star resorts. While most Goans possess varying levels of fluency in English and Hindi, their primary language is Konkani. Goan Hindus are also proficient in Marathi. Some Western culinary and fashion influences, coupled with Goa's distinctive cultural attributes, have at times perpetuated stereotypes about Goa and its residents, which have not always been well-received by the local populace (Couto 2008).

Kerala, believed to have been created by Parasurama according to mythology through the throw of his axe, was officially established as a modern state in 1956 by merging three princely states. While Kerala shares a general Dravidian-South Indian cultural heritage, it possesses unique characteristics that set it apart. With an extensive coastline, a significant portion of its population consists of Christians, who trace their conversion back to the first century AD through St. Thomas, one of Christ's disciples. Kerala is known for its non-vegetarian and seafood cuisine. Kerala stands out politically, often electing communist leadership to govern the state, setting it apart from other South Indian states. It is frequently recognized as one of India's most developed states, characterized by high literacy rates and robust human development indicators. Malayalam is the primary language spoken in Kerala, with English being widely understood. However, proficiency in English or Hindi is less common, especially in non-urban areas. Kerala also has a sizable Muslim population, and all three communities coexist harmoniously. Non-vegetarian cuisine is prevalent, but Malayali food remains incomplete without South Indian staples such as Idli, Dosa, and Sambhar. In terms of attire, many Malayalis continue to wear lungis, while women typically opt for saris or salwar suits. Muslim women often wear black Muslim pardahs and head scarves, although many leave their faces unveiled. Idukki is renowned for its cardamom plantations, with Tekkady being a part of this region. Tekkady, known for its pleasant climate and lush greenery, serves as a hill station and boasts a lake where boating excursions are particularly popular. Although they share some food ingredients, such as seafood, rice, coconut, and cashew nuts, their preparation techniques and flavors are notably distinct. Football as a sport and a significant Christian presence are areas of similarity between the two states.

The Hippie Movement and Goa's Tourism Image

The hippie movement played a notable role in introducing Goa to the global tourism scene. Goa's cosmopolitan and accepting culture, along with its beautiful beaches, attracted a large number of hippies. With hippies came the culture of drugs and trance music. Interestingly, the government did little to actively promote this hippie influx; they mainly facilitated their arrival. During the 1970s, some beaches even embraced nudism, although it is now illegal. Local authorities often turned a blind eye to this to encourage tourism and currency inflow.

Conversely, the hippies embraced the local Goan lifestyle, relishing Goan cuisine and opting for modest accommodations.. They formed lasting friendships with many locals and became repeat visitors to Goa. Unlike more upscale tourists, the hippies did not strain local resources significantly. Their presence contributed to Goa's image as a destination of freedom and sensuality. It was perpetuated by the marketing of Goa as a tourist destination, which included elements like liquor, drugs, beaches, and a permissive culture. Even though it was not explicitly mentioned, this image was widely accepted as a representation of Goa. Hindi movies from the '70s and '80s further reinforced this image by portraying Goan women as sexually available and Goan men as heavy drinkers. Official tourism departments initially did little to challenge this stereotype. Their silence was seen by many as an implicit acceptance of this image, mainly because they lacked alternative strategies for tourism development.

Tourism History and Image of Kerala

Kerala, despite its longer coastline compared to Goa, entered the tourism industry later. The state's rich cultural traditions in traditional dance, music, and festivals initially attracted tourists. Unlike Goa, Kerala's tourism image was not formed by default; it was a result of deliberate planning by government authorities.

Recognizing the limitations of relying solely on beach tourism, despite Kerala having a coastline nearly five times longer than Goa, officials strategically diversified the tourism offerings. This encompassed beach tourism, natural medicine tourism (including ayurvedic and naturopathy treatments), backwater and boating tourism, hill station and spice garden tourism, wildlife and jungle tourism, and, to some extent, cultural tourism. Their marketing efforts deliberately underplayed the emphasis on sensuality and sensual imagery. Advertisements seldom featured models in swimwear, although there has been a gradual shift in recent times with some adopting a more provocative tone.

Regulation and Public Sentiment

In Kerala, the management of beach tourism involved employing two distinct strategies. Firstly, authorities in Kerala implemented stricter regulations and made their disapproval of tourists engaging in partial or full nudism on the beaches clear, often reinforced by the presence of police officials. The conservative local culture also played a role, as many beachgoers adjusted their attire due to the disapproving glances they received from the locals.

Furthermore, numerous beach resorts in Kerala were intentionally positioned in remote and secluded locations, making them less accessible to the local population. Beaches that attracted large numbers of tourists,

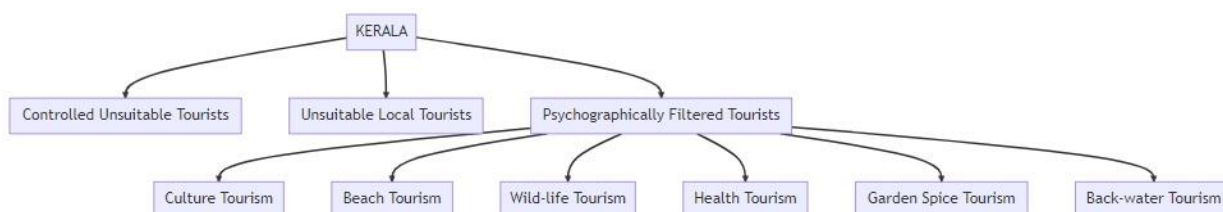
blending with local communities, were relatively scarce. Popular local beaches, such as the one in Kozhikode, were intentionally kept separate from mainstream foreign tourist circuits.

In Goa, which had been a tourist destination for years, the police took a more hands-off approach to tourists and their behavior. Some experts recommended an increase in police presence, including more women constables, to enhance security and deter crime. Policing methods differed significantly between the two states. In Goa, the police force was accustomed to tourism and often displayed leniency toward activities like rave parties, nudism, and drug use. In some cases, law enforcement officers used drug possession and instances of sexual misconduct as excuses to extort money from foreign tourists. As mentioned earlier, the local public in Goa tended to adopt a non-interfering attitude toward drug use, alcohol consumption, and sexual permissiveness among Western tourists, a trend that began in the late '60s and '70s. Certain non-governmental organizations, referred to as "fake NGOs" in Figure 3, exploited environmental concerns as a pretext to illicitly raise funds from tourism ventures.

Before becoming accustomed to the dynamics of beach tourism and the associated issues such as drug-related problems and undesirable behavior, these officers are frequently reassigned to inland areas. This practice of rotating police personnel, which includes those exposed to the challenges of coastal tourism and others from non-tourist regions, helps maintain a relatively corruption-free police force in relation to tourism-related problems.

Replicating this situation in Goa is challenging because the entire state, including its entire police force, regularly encounters a substantial influx of tourists. Kerala's multifaceted tourism strategy ensures the attraction of various types of tourists. Some come for natural health and rejuvenation, while others are drawn to backwater tourism. There are those interested in wildlife, jungle adventures, and many who seek a diverse experience encompassing Kerala's rich cultural heritage, religious festivals, and its unique spicy seafood cuisine. Travelers solely focused on beaches and sunshine tend to gravitate towards destinations like Goa. To describe the overall tourism inflow into Kerala (refer to Figure1 below).

Fig 1.



Kerala represents the state itself and the entry point for all tourists.

Controlled Unsuitable Tourists: Tourists whose behaviors might not align with Kerala's cultural and social norms.

Unsuitable Local Tourists: Local tourists who might not be the target audience for certain tourism campaigns or areas.

Psycho graphically Filtered Tourists: The ideal tourists that Kerala aims to attract. They are further interested in:

Culture Tourism: Experiencing Kerala's cultural heritage.

Beach Tourism: Visiting Kerala's beaches.

Wild-life Tourism: Exploring Kerala's wildlife and natural reserves.

Health Tourism: Seeking natural health and rejuvenation treatments.

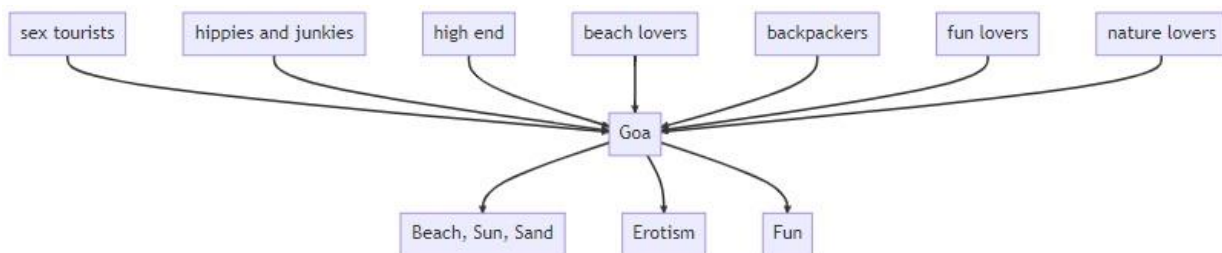
Garden Spice Tourism: Experiencing the state's spice gardens.

Back-water Tourism: Enjoying the serene backwaters and houseboat experiences.

In Goa, the constant tourist influx often leads to an unregulated flow of visitors into the state, as shown in Figure 2 below. In contrast, Kerala manages tourism by meticulously shaping the image presented to tourists. Nevertheless, once tourists enter the state, every endeavor is made to engage them with a diverse range of tourism experiences, as depicted in Figure 1 above.

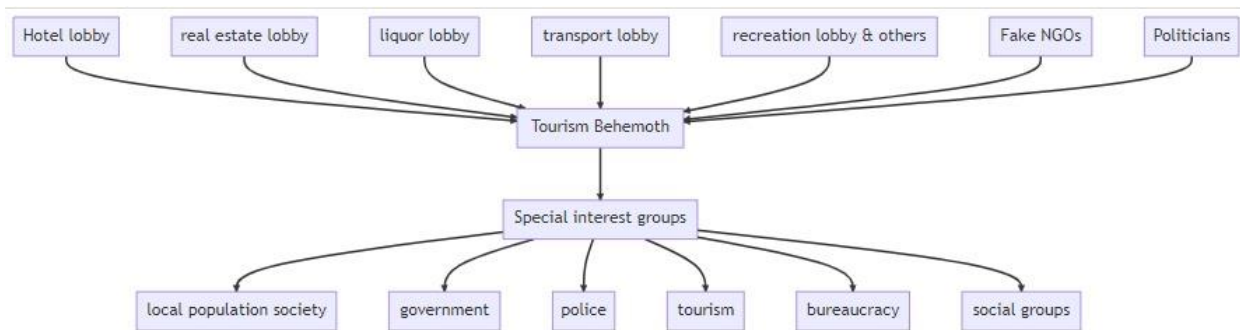
In Goa, the sheer volume of tourist arrivals and the substantial economic interests in the tourism sector have conferred significant power upon private entities. The influence of various lobbies, including those representing hotels, liquor, entertainment (such as casinos, pubs, and discos), real estate, construction, and transportation is renowned in Goa. These interest groups frequently wield significant influence over various stakeholders, which may include government entities, local communities, and tourism authorities. This influence may also be attributed to the substantial presence of influential domestic and international business interests in Goa, all seeking a share of the tourism boom.

Fig 2.



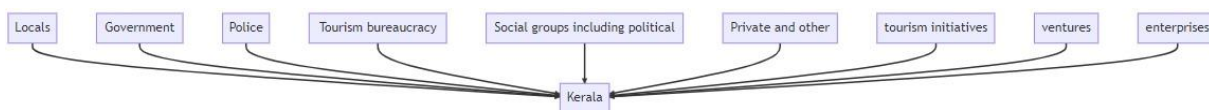
(Refer to Figure 3 for a visual representation of the influence wielded by these stakeholders).

Fig 3.



In Kerala, in contrast, the tourism sector remains relatively modest and plays a peripheral role in a society still heavily influenced by social groups, public sentiment, robust governmental oversight, and authoritative regulatory bodies (see Figure 4 below).

Fig 4.



Duration of Stay and Quality of Friendly Interactions

In Kerala, where strong religious and cultural traditions are deeply rooted, locals tend to maintain friendly interactions with tourists while also upholding their native cultural values. This apparent easy-going friendliness in Kerala can also be linked to the fact that, although statistically, the average foreign tourist's visit lasts around 7-14 days in both Kerala and Goa (Coco Planet Tour Company 2007; Mehra 2008), in Goa, the stay tends to be more extended and leisurely, often at a single lodging establishment.

Furthermore, Goa's smaller size allows tourists to explore multiple facets of the state, fostering a stronger bond with hotel staff during their 14-day stays. In contrast, Kerala tourists often move around, leaving less time for deep interactions with staff. Kerala's tourism employees typically have basic English skills, resulting in more superficial interactions.

The language barrier is less in Goa, where more people speak English, facilitating stronger bonds. Another factor is culture and religion. Kerala Christians have ancient roots dating back to the 1st century AD, influenced by Indo-Dravidian traditions. Goan Christians, influenced by 15th-16th-century Portuguese conversions, show more Western traits, creating a stronger cultural connection with Western tourists, unlike most other parts of India.

Fig 5.

COMMON AREAS FOR BOND- BUILDING: GOA

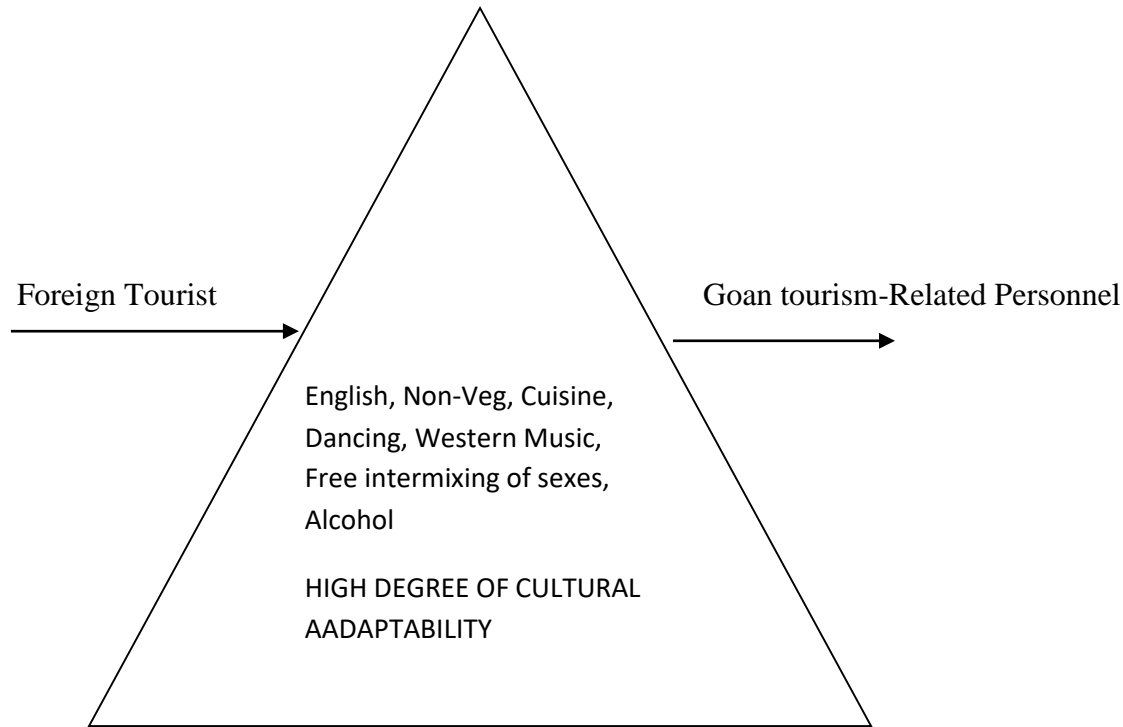
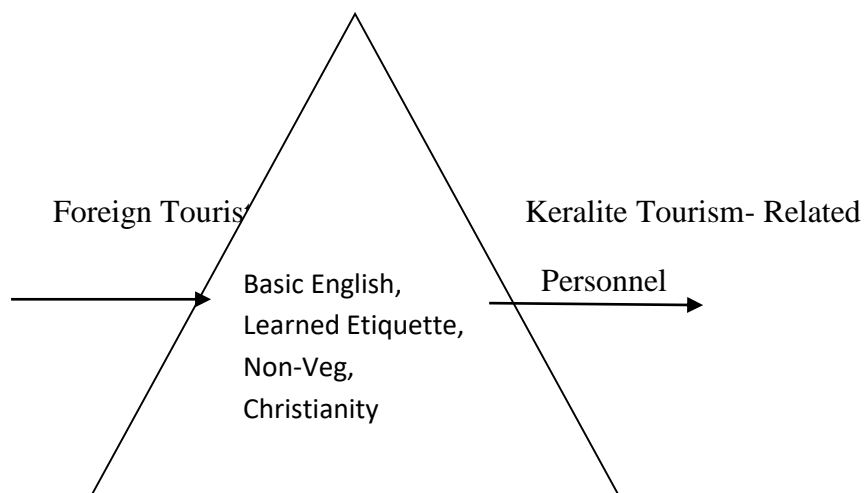


Fig 6. Common Areas for Bond-Building : Kerala



In Goa, frequent interactions with numerous foreign tourists annually can lead to shifts in the values, attitudes, and beliefs of tourism-related employees over time. Backpackers and hippie tourists in Goa often opt for more budget-friendly accommodations and longer stays, fostering enduring relationships with locals. Some foreigners have even purchased properties in Goa, prompting government legislation to address this issue.

These lasting relationships result in a deeper cultural exchange, with both foreigners and Goans influencing each other's cultures. In contrast, Kerala has managed to preserve its cultural identity to a greater extent.

Conclusion

Kerala and Goa, despite sharing similarities such as cuisine, a substantial Christian population, coastal climates, and extensive coastlines, also showcase significant cultural distinctions that particularly attract Western tourists to Goa. Variances in the duration of tourists' stays, the ratio of tourists to the local population, and the presence of stringent regulations in Kerala create challenges for foreign visitors to exert a substantial impact on the local culture, thus contributing to a more culturally sustainable tourism environment. Conversely, in Goa, various facets of the private tourism sector hold considerable sway over the government and local communities.

Kerala's tourism strategy is diversified and emphasizes non-sensual imagery. The slogan "God's own country" conveys an image of unparalleled natural beauty, environmental harmony, and moral integrity. Specific destinations like Tekkady promote environmentally responsible tourism, such as "spice garden" and "organic farm" tourism. The culture of aggressive commercialization, noticeable in some coastal areas of Goa, has not reached the same extremes in Kerala's coastal villages. Given these factors, Kerala's tourism model appears to be more culturally sustainable and less conflicting with the long-term preservation of its indigenous culture. Table 1 below provides a convenient comparison between the tourism models of Kerala and Goa.

Constraints of the research and directions for future investigations

Limitations of the study primarily stem from its qualitative and observational nature. Further research can enhance this work by providing quantitative and empirical frameworks to complement the qualitative findings. It's essential to recognize that Tekkady's suitability as a representative of Kerala's broader tourism approach may necessitate more thorough scrutiny. Various forms of tourism, including beach tourism, wildlife tourism, natural health tourism, and adventure tourism, could yield distinct on-ground dynamics, each warranting comprehensive investigation.

Furthermore, conducting an inquiry into the causes behind the shortcomings of various alternative tourism models in Goa would provide valuable insights. While this paper primarily concentrates on the social and cultural ramifications of tourism and provides perspectives on culturally sustainable models, it's vital to acknowledge that these aspects are interlinked with environmental and economic factors. Future research could delve into the integrated examination of these dimensions in both Kerala and Goa, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the tourism landscape.

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