ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the factors influencing tourist destination loyalty towards Munnar, India as a tourism destination. The factors taken into account for the study were the perception of the tourists, image of the destination, attributes of the destination and experience of the tourists at the destination.

The study applied the descriptive research method, which uses a self-administered questionnaire to collect the information from the tourists at the destination. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed among various tourists at Eravikulam national park in Munnar. The finds shows that most of the tourists belong to the age group of 20-35 years (72%), with an annual income level of INR5, 00,000 and above (49.3%), hold Postgraduate Degree (44.3%), are male (78.8%) and married (78.5%). The respondents include both domestic and international tourists, the majority of the tourists are Indians (94.8%).

The results from Pearson correlation show a moderate positive significant relationship between the independent variables perception, Image and experience towards satisfaction (Correlation coefficient = .433, .463 & .422 respectively) and a low positive significance between the independent variable attribute and mediating variable satisfaction (Correlation Coefficient = .399). The mediating variable satisfaction shows a moderate positive significance towards the dependent variable Loyalty (Correlation Coefficient = .598).

The findings of this study conducted at Munnar among the tourists visiting Eravikulam National Park shows that there exists loyalty among the tourists visiting Munnar and the Perception of tourists, Image of destination, attributes of destination and experience of tourists are factors that influences the satisfaction level of tourists at Munnar and the satisfaction of tourists has a high level of influence on tourists' loyalty towards the destination of Munnar. The study also shows that all these factors must be taken into consideration to understand the loyalty of tourists towards the destination Munnar.