

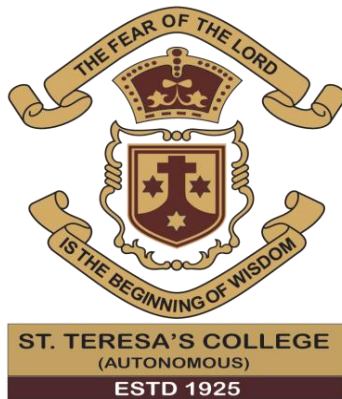
A HISTORICAL INSIGHT INTO THE VYPEEN-FORT KOCHI JANKAR (FERRY) SERVICE

A Project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a

BA Degree in History

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)

Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam.



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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE, (AUTONOMOUS)

ERNAKULAM

APRIL 2023

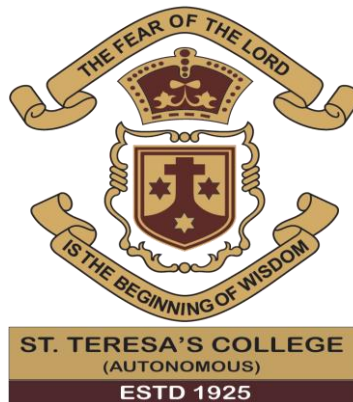
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CERTIFICATE

This is to verify that the project work entitled "A HISTORICAL INSIGHT INTO THE VYPEEN-FORT KOCHI JANKAR (FERRY) SERVICE" being submitted by AKHIA K JOSHY, ALKA JOHNY, ANEETA DAISON, HRIDYA MARY V L & RONA ELSA ANTONY in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of BA Degree in History of St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University is a bona fide record of the work done by them under my supervision and guidance. No part of this work has been submitted elsewhere for the award of the degree.

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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this project work entitled "A HISTORICAL INSIGHT INTO THE VYPEEN-FORT KOCHI JANKAR (FERRY) SERVICE" is an original work done by us under the guidance of Dr. Vinitha T Tharakan, Assistant Professor, Department of History, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous). No part of this work has been submitted elsewhere for the award of any degree.

Place: Ernakulam

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We take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude and deep regard to our guide Dr. Vinitha T Tharakan, Assistant Professor, Department of History, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam for her exemplary guidance, monitoring and constant encouragement throughout the course of the project. She has taken the pain to go through the project and make necessary corrections as and when needed.

I express my gratitude to Dr. Stancy S, Head of the Department of History, Department of History, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam for her constant support, valuable suggestions, and guidance. We express our gratitude to Ms. Gayathri Varier for her support and encouragement.

I also thank the staff of the Library of St. Teresa's college for their cooperation. We use this occasion to thank all our respondents for the valuable time they spent with us.

Lastly, I extend my heartfelt thanks to our family and friends for their constant encouragement throughout the process of creating this project.

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the outline, period, and the area of the study. Kerala backwaters is a network of several lakes, rivers and canals lying parallel to the Arabian sea coast. Kochi is the second most important port city on the western coast of India. It is in the Ernakulam district of the central region of the State of Kerala, along the Arabian Sea and the Vembanad Estuary. Thus, Kochi is unofficially referred to as the ‘economic capital’ of Kerala by volume of trade. Kochi’s urban configuration includes several island residential communities scattered along its western coast and in the backwaters of Kerala.¹ Then again, as a coastal city, it is most likely to be affected by climate change, unless managed with efficiency and careful planning.²

Kochi is a land of pulsating coastlines, golden beaches, and swift rivers. Thus, it is called the “Queen of Arabian Sea.” Since Kochi is the largest and one of the most densely populated cities in Kerala, this configuration is unique and highlights the crucial role of water transport in providing mobility for these island communities. There is no doubt that the water bodies connect the islands and the villages with the main land. The city has a long background in the fishing industry and has relied on water transport since the early days of settlement. Hence, the Waterways have always been an important system in a city like Kochi. Among them, the inland water transport was once, the primary and an important means of passenger transport along the Vembanad lake. Regular ferry services connect most locations on both banks of the backwaters. The Kerala State Water Transport Department³ operates ferries for passengers as

¹ RETA 6293: Cities Development Initiative for Asia June 2010-Pre-Feasibility Study Urban Transport, Cochin, [India-www.kochimetro.org](http://www.kochimetro.org)

² Kumar, Revathi Siva. ‘Can Waterways Provide the Key to Developing Kochi?’ Citizen Matters, 29 June 2018, <https://citizenmatters.in/development-kochi-metro-waterways-canals-7062>.

³ About the Department - State Water Transport Department, Government of Kerala, India. <https://www.swtd.kerala.gov.in/pages-en-IN/aboutdept.php>.

well as tourists. It is the cheapest mode of transport through the backwaters.⁴ The ferry services⁵ have improved the water transport services and facilities for Kochi's island communities and mainland residential colonies, significantly enhancing their access to the urban facilities of the growing urban area in Kochi.

Currently, there are several government and non-government agencies is a major requirement in the water transportation sector in Kochi. The coordination among these agencies results in the smooth functioning of this sector.

The project is divided into four sections. The Introduction chapter concentrates on the purpose and brief explanation about the project. Moreover, it also consists of the aims and objectives of the project along with the literature review that analyses the previously introduced existing viewpoints about the topic of study. The methods used to analyse the research topic has also been mentioned under this chapter.

The Historical background, which is the second chapter, attempts to discuss the research structure and its definition in depth.

The next chapter Analysis and interpretation plays a crucial role in the project by critically comparing, analysing, and verifying all the findings with the help of the primary and secondary data collected.

The last chapter which is the Conclusion concludes and summarises the achievements of the research aims and objectives. This chapter also comprises of the limitations and highlights the future scope of the study.

The project also contains a title page, declaration, acknowledgements, and a table of contents at the beginning. Furthermore, it also contains appendix, pictures, and bibliography in the end.

⁴ 'Kerala Backwaters'. *Wikipedia*, 28 Jan. 2023,

https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Kerala_backwaters&oldid=1136141409.

⁵ A place where passengers, freight, or vehicles are carried by boat across a river, lake, arm of the sea, or other body of water.

Area and Period of study

Although Kochi is blessed with abundance in the case of waterways, the water transport has undergone a transition over the years. As of now, there are ferries from Fort Kochi, Bolgatty Island and Ernakulam on the mainland. All the ferries offer scenic rides on the Vembanad Lake backwaters. The area of study in this project is restricted to the two islands across the Vembanad lake namely- Vypeen and Fort Kochi. Hundreds of passengers including the foreign tourists make use of the two Jetties for travel to Fort Kochi, Mattancherry, Vypeen, Bolgatty Palace, Mulavukadu, and Vallarpadam. The study dates to the 18th century and continues till the 21st century.

Review of Literature

The review itself, however, effectively synthesizes this raw information into a more useful form that supports the overall paper's purpose of defining the current state of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar (Ferry) service. There have been a lack of models and theoretical frameworks that have been previously introduced to the research area.

However, certain books, Official records like Gazetteers, Newspaper articles, Journals and personal interviews were helpful in the study. Moreover, it is truly a very difficult task to understand the transition in the water transport system and even more hard to study and generalize about the viewpoints of the island communities which consists of innumerable human beings. But maximum effort has been put to collect and interpret data unbiased and as valid as possible.

Aims and Objectives

The development of Kochi has been mainly on account of the political, administrative, and commercial importance it has enjoyed over the centuries. The following research work aims to highlight the understanding of the role played by the ferry in the daily lives of the average

citizen. It relies upon extensive review of primary and secondary data, people's observations about the ferry system recorded through primary surveys and personal interviews.

The study seeks to highlight the origin, importance and the structural development of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar service over the years. It strives to achieve this through the accomplishment of the following objectives:

- To review the existing condition of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar service in particular.
- To understand the roles and limitations of the main agencies that operate in the smooth functioning of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar service.
- To seek and appreciate the concerns of the ordinary users of ferry transport and understand the role it plays in their life.
- To suggest possible solutions towards improving and thereby revitalizing the ferry transportation sector in the region of Kochi.
- The study also helps to trace out the significance of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar service in the field of Tourism.

Methodology

Various research methodologies have been undertaken for this project. This project contains data which mainly focuses on the primary sources like personal interviews, surveys, Gazetteers, case studies etc, which makes it a qualitative-research but also it uses statistics which makes it quantitative research. Hence, it is a combination of both the research methodologies. This project is analytical, objective, and descriptive in nature.

Primary data used in this research include Interviews with the local people, newspaper reports and personal journals. A survey was conducted to know about the general public perception regarding the topic. The survey was conducted in Google forms. Due to time limit,

only a few respondents were selected as sample for the study. Questionnaire was prepared but the questions had to be revised according to the information and data known to the respondents. The final questionnaire had questions which consisted of data regarding the public perception about the ferry service in Vypeen and Fort Kochi. Some of the respondents were reluctant to reveal their personal information. Official records such as Gazetteers are used. Field visits to the boat jetties and residential colonies in the islands were also helpful in conducting the project. Field work was done in the months of September, October, November, and December, 2022 by the researcher. A detailed analysis of the results of this study helped in formulating suggestions in order to bring out the major prominence of this water transportation.

Secondary data used in this project are minimal as there is lack of written evidences regarding this topic. However, some of the newspaper articles were helpful. Many of the journals, reports and links related to the topic were available in the online platform which also acted as a helpful resource.

Limitations of the Study

The area of study was limited to Vypeen and Fort Kochi of Kochi city. Due to time limit, only few respondents were interviewed, in which some of them refused to reveal their identities. A survey was conducted and is assumed to be representative of the general public opinion about the ferry service. The respondents may have been biased in answering questions related to the mode of transport which prevailed in these regions. But maximum effort has been put to collect and interpret data unbiased and as valid as possible.

CHAPTER - 1

WATER TRANSPORTATION IN VYPEEN AND FORT KOCHI: UNFOLDING ITS PAST

A brief Overview about the state of Kerala: Its location, geography, and the natural resources

This chapter provides a brief overview of the key historical changes the water transport had undergone with a focus on the evolution of new means of waterways in the water transport sector. Kerala, southwestern coastal state of India. It is a small state, constituting only about 1 percent of the total area of the country.⁶ Kerala has been exposed to many foreign influences via its long coastline; consequently, the state has developed a unique culture within the subcontinent, not only with a diverse religious tradition but also with its own language, Malayalam.⁷ Kerala is a place which displays much variation in landscape, religion and traditions. Thus, it has become a lively place to visit. Kerala has a long history of welcoming new people, accommodating and absorbing them into its existing structures. The coastal regions of Kerala have a network of waterways, inlets, estuaries, lakes, and natural canals connecting coastal towns. This interlinked body of waterways is known as the backwaters in Kerala, over 900 km of which is navigable.⁸ The state has numerous backwaters, which are used for commercial inland navigation. Transport services are mainly provided by country craft and passenger vessels. There are 67 navigable rivers in the state while the total length of inland waterways is 1,687 kilometres (1,048 mi).⁹ Kerala backwaters have been used for centuries by the local people for transportation, fishing, and agriculture. The region has supported the efforts of the local people to earn a livelihood. The

⁶ Kerala | History, Map, Capital, & Facts | Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kerala>.

⁷ Kerala | History, Map, Capital, & Facts | Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kerala>.

⁸ <https://spb.kerala.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-09/13PlanEng.pdf>.

⁹ 'Kerala.' *Wikipedia*, 15 Mar. 2023,

<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Kerala&oldid=1144774012#Transportation>.

backwaters were formed by the action of waves and shore currents creating low barrier islands across the mouths of the many rivers flowing down from the Western Ghats range. In the midst of this landscape there are a number of towns and cities, which serve as the starting and end points of backwater cruises.¹⁰

Evolution of Kochi: The Growth stimulants

Historians believe that Kochi owes its rise as a prominent port city to the great flood in River Periyar in 1341. Until that time, Mahodayapuram, with its port of Muziris (now, Kodungallur) was the centre of trade. The flood and the frequent attacks of the Zamorins, the rulers of Malabar, proclaimed the death knell of this trading centre and port city. The traders slowly began to move towards the natural harbour created in the Kochi region as a result of the floods. By 1440, the city of Kochi grew to about five miles in circumference around Mattancherry. Trading activities with the Chinese and Arabs also, gradually, grew over the years.¹¹

The association of the West Kochi and Connected islands with the Eastern mainland

In this project, mainly two islands- Vypeen (Vypin) and Fort Kochi are chosen because of their importance and relevance in a densely populated city like Kochi. The Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar Ferry Service is the main focus of this project.

¹⁰ 'Kerala Backwaters.' Wikipedia, 28 Jan. 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Kerala_backwaters&oldid=1136141409.

¹¹ 'Cochin Chronicle, Kochi, Cosmopolitan City, Commercial Capital, Ernakulam, Kerala, India'. *Kerala Tourism - Kochi*, <https://www.keralatourism.org/kochi>.

Fort Kochi in Ernakulam district of Kerala is the first European township in India. Chinese fishing nets along the Vasco Da Gama Square, Santa Cruz Basilica, St Francis Church, VOC Gate, Bastion Bungalow etc. are some of the major attractions in Fort Kochi. This place is steeped in the history and culture of all who have occupied it through the ages. Fort Immanuel, a former Portuguese bastion, built in 1503, is a sign of the strategic alliance between the Maharaja of Cochin and the Portuguese monarch. There is also the Dutch cemetery situated here. People love visiting David Hall which is closely associated with the Dutch commander Hendrik Adriaan van Rhee de tot Drakenstein, who is famous for his book on the flora of Kerala, 'Hortus Malabaricus'. One can also visit St. Francis Church, the oldest European church in India. Vasco House is another landmark and is among the oldest Portuguese buildings in Kochi.¹² A multitude of faiths exist side by side in Fort Kochi, shaping Kochi's heritage, its life, culture, traditions and mythology.

Further to Fort Kochi, on the opposite banks is the Vypeen Island which is a very long narrow strip of land located in the Arabian sea. The Vypeen Island is supposed to be the highest densely populated island in the world. The island has numerous fishing villages, tourist villages and many popular beaches. It is an elongated island, about 27 km long and less than 2 km wide at its widest. The island has been formed by the deposit of silt brought down by the rivers discharging into the back-water and the sea. The island was the scene of many historical events. Many a battle was fought here between the forces of the Zamorin and the Raja of Cochin early in the sixteenth century.¹³ Thus, it is clearly evident that these two islands have confirmed a major significance in the ancient Kochi. They provide tourists a wonderful insight into the historical, cultural and traditional aspect of Kochi city. Promoted as a tourist destination, the backwater and island communities have therefore long relied on water transport to access the mainland.

¹² 'Fort Kochi in Ernakulam'. *Kerala Tourism*, <https://www.keralatourism.org/destination/fort-kochi/422>.

¹³ The Cochin State Manual- by C. Achyuta Menon, B. A., Superintendent of Census Operations, Cochin State, Formerly. Secretary to the Diwan.

Water Transportation and circulation in Kochi region

It is known that one of the inescapable basic needs of modern societies is transport. An economy has little chance of flourishing if it lacks certain basic conditions like efficient transport. Transportation systems are designed to help people achieve mobility in order to reach their points of work, education, or offices from their places of residence. In pre-independence era especially transportation across Kerala was mainly through boats. Road networks in state were quite insufficient. However, later when roadways and railways started to develop the importance of waterways started to diminish. In later part of 20th century, the past glory of waterways had in 18th and 19th century depleted rapidly. However, in 21st century there started to get a renewed emphasis on waterways of state.¹⁴ Kochi had a unique transport system as demanded by the islands dotting the vast backwater. Earlier, travellers relied on the cargo boats to get around. Dhows as a means of transport later gave way to the mechanized boats.¹⁵

The Boat Jetty has become a landmark of the city and for good reason. This was the gateway to the city for most part of its life. Boats in a variety of shapes and sizes have traditionally been the main means of transport of men and materials in the Kerala backwaters since olden days.¹⁶

Water transportation also exists as numerous small ferry (kadathu in local dialect) at various parts of the state mainly on rivers. This facilitate to cross from one shore to other where bridges are absent. It is cost effective and can be established even at higher reaches of river which are normally not having formal navigation facilities. There are also big ferries that

¹⁴ 'Wikiwand - Waterways Transport in Kerala'. *Wikiwand*,
https://wikiwand.com/en/Waterways_transport_in_Kerala.

¹⁵ 'Cargo Boats to Overhead Metro: A History of Kochi in Movement'. *OnManorama*,
<https://www.onmanorama.com/in-depth/kochi-metro/2017/06/17/cargo-boats-overhead-metro-a-history-kochi-in-movement.html>.

¹⁶ 'Kettuvallam'. Wikipedia, 11 Oct. 2022,
<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Kettuvallam&oldid=1115490390>.

facilitate even vehicles to cross the channel.¹⁷ Historically, ferry transport was the key mode for passengers and for transporting farm produce and seafood to markets due to the city having an extensive network of water canals which penetrate into the urban area. Kochi has over 60 jetties located in the backwaters.¹⁸ Boat services are operated by Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation, the State Water Transport Department and private firms from various boat jetties in the city. The jankar ferry for the transshipment of vehicles and passengers between the islands are operated between Ernakulam and Vypin, and between Vypin and Fort Kochi. However, with the construction of the Goshree bridges (which links Kochi's islands), ferry transport has become less essential.¹⁹ Water transport is a major mode of commute in the city. A great deal of road and rail congestion in Kochi could be lifted, if this mode of transport is deployed to its optimum capacity.²⁰ With the road connections between the islands and the mainland becoming increasingly congested and in a constant state of poor repair, the option for a revival of the ferry mode is rapidly becoming a reality.

The Corporation of Cochin is in charge of the operations of ferry service from Fort Kochi to Vypeen as a significant area of these location comes under it. At present, the Corporation of Cochin provides licences to the private owners to operate the Jankar ferry services and boat services.

The ferry system plays a very important role in the daily lives of office-goers and students. People closest to the boat jetties are most-likely to avail the services of the ferry system. The poorer sections of the citizens depend on the ferry services the most. Major motivation for ferry users is that it helps them save time and is inexpensive. The ferry users are not happy about the quality of their commute.

¹⁷ 'Waterways Transport in Kerala'. *Wikipedia*, 16 Jan. 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Waterways_transport_in_Kerala&oldid=1134036539.

¹⁸ RETA 6293: Cities Development Initiative for Asia June 2010-Pre-Feasibility Study Urban Transport, Cochin, India-www.kochimetro.org

¹⁹ 'Kerala.' *Wikipedia*, 15 Mar. 2023, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Kerala&oldid=1144774012#Transportation>.

²⁰ *Kochi Public Transport Day | Ferry Boats*. http://www.kochipublictransportday.org/transport/5/ferry_%20boats.

The efficiency, reliability and mobility provided by an effective ferry system will have a direct and profound impact on island communities where street systems are narrow and there are limited alternative modes of transport. Improvements in transport and mobility options have been proven to help reduce poverty levels in these often-isolated communities.

The ferry service needs to improve on counts of cleanliness, reliability and accessibility in order to retain the current user group and attract new passengers. The ferry users are willing to pay as much as double the current fares for a major improvement in the quality and levels of service-delivery.²¹ In most cases, people will opt for ferry services if they have a choice since the ride quality and comfort are better than that offered by road transport. While this chapter looks primarily in the transport sector, it also provides a better knowledge about the tourism sector as well.

Improved ferry services will therefore play an increasingly important strategic role in serving the future travel demands and improving the overall mobility of the island residents. This is of crucial importance, as the primary employment areas are located on the mainland, and commuting demands across the backwaters to service these employment activities will increase over time. Growth in ferry travel will generate substantial reductions in carbon emissions.²²

With the natural beauty of the backwaters, there is an added opportunity for the tourism field to be developed. Kerala's beaches, backwaters, lakes, mountain ranges, waterfalls, ancient ports, palaces, religious institutions and wildlife sanctuaries are major attractions for both domestic and international tourists. The city of Kochi ranks first in the total number of international and domestic tourists in Kerala. Ernakulam district, in which Kochi is situated, ranks first in the total number of domestic tourists visiting Kerala, and thus contributes to the economy of the city. The tourist enclave at Fort Kochi and presence of several historical monuments, museums etc. as well as natural attractions like the Vembanad lake and the

²¹ International Journal for Technological Research in Engineering Volume 2, Issue 11, July-2015

²² Carbon dioxide emissions or CO₂ emissions are emissions stemming from the burning of fossil fuels and the manufacture of cement.

backwaters attract large number of tourists to the city.²³ With its interesting monuments, geographic peculiarities, and emerging cosmopolitan nature, Kochi can keep a tourist engrossed for days. It was the vast Arabian Sea that brought Kochi in contact with countries across Asia, Europe and the Middle East. The Sea helped the port and the city establish itself as a focal point of trade and commerce; and the sea has opened doors to many emerging tourist activities such as cruise tourism and yachting. The setting up of the International Marina is part of Kochi's endeavours to explore the potential of these emerging trends in tourism.²⁴

The serene backwaters of Kochi give commuters an opportunity to travel, enjoying scenic views and cool breeze. The Kochi ferry works in a hub and spoke model, where the ferry takes the commuters to a point, from where they use public buses/autos for last mile connectivity.²⁵ Also, the usage of ferries will contribute to bringing an environment-friendly transport system. Ferries provide a unique experience, where you can move around freely while you travel. The contributions of ferry travel to climate change have received less scrutiny than land and air transport, and vary considerably according to factors like speed and the number of passengers carried.²⁶ The fresh sea air can also be good for our health, as well as a lower risk of developing conditions from lack of movement.

The data obtained is further used to analyse and interpret the various aspects related to the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service.

²³ 'Kerala.' Wikipedia, 15 Mar. 2023,

<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Kerala&oldid=1144774012#Transportation>.

²⁴ 'Cochin Chronicle, Kochi, Cosmopolitan City, Commercial Capital, Ernakulam, Kerala, India'. *Kerala Tourism - Kochi*, <https://www.keralatourism.org/kochi>.

²⁵ *Kochi Public Transport Day | Ferry Boats*. http://www.kochipublictransportday.org/transport/5/ferry_%20boats.

²⁶ 'Ferry'. Wikipedia, 6 Mar. 2023, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ferry&oldid=1143290543>.

CHAPTER - 2

A CLOSER INQUISITION INTO THE EMERGENCE OF THE SECTOR: STUDYING AND EXAMINING THE MAJOR COMPONENTS

The Early Phase and Later Years

This chapter attempts to discuss and analyse each component of the data collected in order to draw conclusions regarding the transition of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar Ferry Service over years, insights into the various agencies in the sector and the various problems and suggestions of the average Kochites with regard to mobility. Kerala's greatest resource is the number and variety of its people. At the outset, Kochi has an impressive list of features. With a population of over 600,000, this is the biggest city in the state and the second largest in the western coastline.²⁷ The inland water transport in Kerala includes rivers, canals and backwaters. This has played a major role in the transportation right from the olden period.²⁸ The Inland waterways has got its own natural advantages as compared to the other modes of transport. One of the major factors responsible for the success or failure of any transport system is the way in which it is perceived by the public for whom it is meant for. Hence, for a detailed analysis and interpretation of this project, some of the government stakeholders, agencies and several local people who were the native residents and the daily commuters of the two islands of Vypeen and Fort Kochi were interviewed. The information acquired from various respondents were critically examined, selected, and cross-checked.

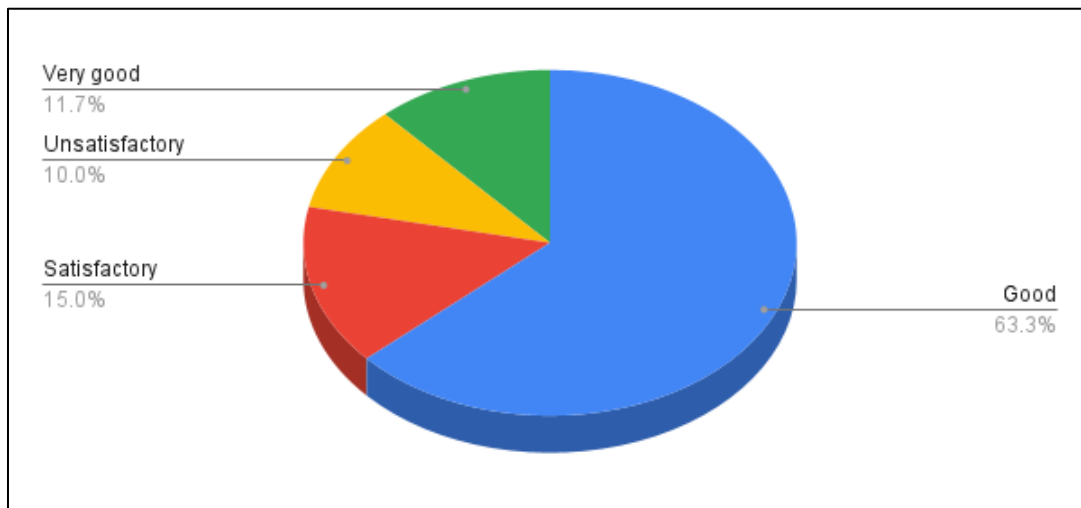
²⁷ Kumar, Revathi Siva. 'Can Waterways Provide the Key to Developing Kochi?' Citizen Matters, 29 June 2018, <https://citizenmatters.in/development-kochi-metro-waterways-canals-7062>.

²⁸ *Water Transport in Kerala | Inland Water Transport | Kerala Waterways | Kerala | Kerala.* https://kerala.me/travel/how_to_reach/waterways.

Like any other sector, the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service has also undergone certain transitions. There are ferries from Fort Kochi to Vypeen. Both the boat jetties of Vypeen and Fort Kochi became a landmark of the city of Cochin and for good reason. In the first phase, we come to see that there were dhow boats which were typically used to carry cargo materials along with passengers. This ensured the smooth loading and discharging of the commodities along with people and served as a connective link between the two islands.

Dhows as a means of transport later gave way to the mechanized boats.²⁹ Besides these organized operations by mechanised boats, many boats of various capacities also operate in these regions. It paved way for the emergence of another developed and sustainable mode of transport which is known as the Jankar (ferry) service. The road distance between Vypeen and Fort Kochi is approximately 18 kilometres, whereas, it is only 1.4 kilometres when travelled via Jankar.

The following chart represents the responses which indicate the service and reliability of the ferry service.



²⁹ 'Cargo Boats to Overhead Metro: A History of Kochi in Movement'. *OnManorama*, <https://www.onmanorama.com/in-depth/kochi-metro/2017/06/17/cargo-boats-overhead-metro-a-history-kochi-in-movement.html>.

Before the development of the Goshree bridge, the Jankar ferry services used to be the only way to connect both islands. The Jankar ferry services used for the transshipment of vehicles and passengers. The Jankar ferry service acted as a fast, fuel-efficient, comfortable and reliable mode of water transport for a large number of islanders. The Jankar ferry service reduced the passenger travel distance as compared to the road travel by increasing service reliability. It provides the passengers with regular and convenient additional mode of transport in a city like Kochi. Hence, the Jankar ferry service scores heavily against the other modes of transport. Many of the island communities of Vypeen and Fort Kochi which are primarily residential and include low-income residents mainly relied on this mode of transport. The Jankar service provided an affordable, eco-friendly, sustainable, and comfortable means of commutation.

As per the sources, earlier the blue-red and blue-white Jankar- the former, for the transportation of goods and services and the latter, which was much beneficial as it carried people, had operated between Vypeen and Fort Kochi. The Jankar which carried passengers was initially left in the Kamalakadavu boat jetty which was later placed in the Vypeen boat jetty following the protests from the island communities of Vypeen as it was a developing island which lacked sufficient facilities and hospitals. Moreover, Vypeen was a densely populated island. Therefore, the medical emergencies of Vypeen were commuted to Fort Kochi for better treatment to Ernakulam through Jankar.³⁰

During the initial stages, the Jankar service was operated by a group of people under private ownership. These private owners are currently rendering the services based on the tenders which is awarded by another party. In this project, the early private owners of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar service were interviewed. Noushad, is the former owner of the Jankar ferry service who currently runs a Travel and Tourism office near the Kamalakadavu boat jetty. As a result of the government intervention, it was known that the Jankar ferry service was handed over to the Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC),³¹ which currently operates it.

³⁰ An interview with Ubais, a middle-aged man, is a shop owner near the Kamalakadavu boat jetty who is a native for 29 years in Fortkochi-3rd September, 2022.

³¹ It is a state Government agency which once operated both cargo and passenger services.

Has now backed away from passenger services, citing continuous operational losses.

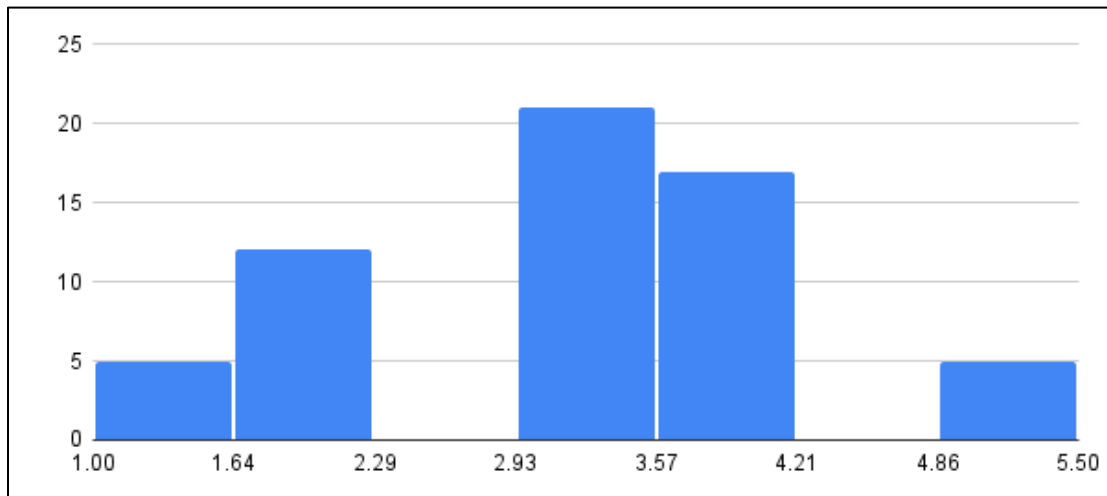
Supplies Goshree islands with drinking water on its barges. Operates cargo services for FACT industries.

Earlier, the Jankar ferry service had operated from 6.30 am to 10.30 pm. Even though, these services had widely benefited the public sector, there had also been several concerns and disadvantages regarding the same. The jankars were usually damaged, dilapidated, corroded and lacked space for it to function properly. Moreover, developmental and maintenance works were not taking place which failed to ensure a travel-friendly experience to the passengers. As per the information and explanations given by the respondents, sum of the jankars surged away in the backwaters of Vypeen and Fort Kochi regions due to an engine fault. Currently, the Jankar ferry service operates in many other regions of Kochi. The data obtained indicates that the former private owners of Vypeen- Fort Kochi Jankar services, it is known that the current service run by these private agencies are clearly based on contracts and annual tenders. The private owners of the Jankar ferry service continues to recognize services to various other regions. It is evident that these types of transports have advantages such as pollution free and cost-efficient means of transport. But the only drawback of these transport is less speed.

Boats in a variety of shapes and sizes have traditionally been the main means of water transport of people and materials in the Kerala backwaters since olden days. Boat service had been used as a convenient and cost-efficient mode of transport in earlier times. Later, for a few decades, the local islanders of Vypeen and Fort Kochi started to prioritize boats to travel to both the islands. As per the existing information, the boat services came during the year 1973-74. Primarily, there were two ferry boats named- MV Harsha, which was 35 years old and MV Bharat which was 40 years old. These two boats were maintained and operated by the Corporation of Cochin. These boats were used both for the commutation of people and commodities to various destinations. Several boats which are operated by the Corporation of Cochin are now used for tourism purpose.

Upon enquiring about the local water transport which prevailed in the early period, it was known that for a few decades, the islanders of the Vypeen and Fort Kochi region relied upon boats for their daily commutation. There were no sufficient developments or maintenance works in the boats operated by the Corporation of Cochin. During this time, many accidents occurred which resulted in the death of a large number of people travelled in these boats. The most affected were the workers and the daily commuters of the Vypeen and Fort Kochi region. This was mainly because of the irresponsible and incautious intervention of the operating bodies. The

lack of sufficient support from the rescue operation department is also said to be a major reason behind the unfortunate accidents.³²



The above graph on a scale of 0-5 shows responses which indicates the level of user satisfaction of the local ferry users regarding the maintenance and developmental activities of the sector. Even though these services had widely benefited the public sector, there had also been several concerns and disadvantages regarding the same. As per the general perception of the local people of the Vypeen and Fort Kochi region, it is understood that many of the ferry boats have no registration as per the requirements under the Inland Vessel Act.³³ The ferry boats were damaged, deteriorated, dilapidated which was in a bad condition and poorly maintained. It was not sufficient to fulfil the travel needs of large number of islanders.

³² An interview with Ashraf, whom everyone entitles as Achuttan, probably in his 70s who is a native of Fortkochi for 59 years, runs a Tea Shop near the Kamalakadavu boat jetty- 3rd September, 2022.

³³ *India Code: Inland Vessels Act, 2021.*

[https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/17048?view_type=browse&sam_handle=123456789/1362.](https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/17048?view_type=browse&sam_handle=123456789/1362)

It was on August 26 that MV Bharat, the ferry boat plying in the Vypeen – Fort Kochi sector met with an accident when a speeding fishing craft hit it. There were about 40 passengers on the ill-fated boat which is said to be three decades old.³⁴

After this unfortunate incident, for a few months there were no boat services in Vypeen and Fort Kochi region to which the local residents protested as it resulted in their daily commutation to both the islands. To bring a relief to hundreds of daily travellers, a temporary mode of water transport was introduced which was known as ‘Pappy’.³⁵ It was owned by a third party under private ownership which was operated by the Corporation of Cochin. These Pappy boats acted as a much useful mode of transport for the local island communities but, it only operated for a short period of time. The Pappy boat service ended soon because the private owners were not provided with sufficient coordination from the Corporation of Cochin. The unpaid liabilities are also a main concern which led to the stoppage of the Pappy boat service.

The Fort Kochi-Vypeen ferry service 'Pappy' was stopped after the owner demanded payment of four- month arrears, amounting to nearly Rs 6 lakh, by the Kochi Corporation. Since there was no response on the part of the local body to settle the dispute, the owner refused to continue the service. The barge, which was converted into a ferry, plies between Fort Kochi and Vypeen.³⁶

Few boat services operating between Vypeen and Fort Kochi resulted in a huge rush among the island communities. This was the result of the boat accident and the failure of the Pappy boat service. Currently, there is only one boat to commute people from Vypeen to Fort Kochi which is named as boat Fort-Queen. Fort Queen is a conventional ferry to transport passengers. This boat was introduced during the period after the incident of the boat accident of 2015. The Fort Queen boat came when Mr. K J Sohan (Deputy Mayor in 1983, Mayor in 1990 and Chairperson of the Town Planning Standing Committee in 2010),³⁷ was the then ward

³⁴ There are many news reports which contain information about the boat accidents which had severely affected the lives of the people. A news report in The Hindu newspaper on 2nd September, 2015.

³⁵ Pappy, the barge converted into ferry that began operating between Vypeen and Fort Kochi

³⁶ A news report in The Times of India newspaper on 9th March, 2017.

³⁷ *K.J.Sohan- Speaker in Kerala Architectural Festival KAF –2019/ Keralaarchitecturfestival.Com.*
http://www.keralaarchitecturefestival.com/speakers_more.aspx?id=Mjky.

member of Fortkochi-Veli. Till the present day, Fort Queen boat remains as a highly efficient mode of transportation in a financially and technically feasible manner.³⁸

Ro-Ro (Roll-on Roll-on) is a double ended ferry including the ramps on both sides. It can be controlled on both sides. The Ro-Ro service is introduced by the Corporation of Cochin. Ro-Ro was built by the Cochin Shipyard. It was launched in April, 2017 on the Fort Kochi - Vypeen route. Currently, the vessels are being operated by KSINC (Kerala Shipping Inland Navigation and Corporation). It has a carriage capacity of 53 tonnes. Mainly there are two Ro-Ro vessels. Currently one is not in a good condition, for more than 2 months. But the other one is in a good working condition conducting nearly 60 trips per day. Even with two vessels, the service witnessed heavy rush of vehicles. But now with one of them out, the situation became very worse for the regular commuters. Long queues of vehicles, like a chain, are a common sight at the entry points of Ro-Ro. In order to find solution to this problem they are demanding for a third Ro-Ro service.

When there was Jankar service, vehicles were loaded, and when it reaches there, they had to take a turn backward with their vehicles in order to get off. But when Ro-Ro came, there is a system to get off from both the sides and this is one of the advantages of Ro-Ro service. Now as there is only one ro ro service, all the extra burden lies on it as the other one is not in a good working condition, so may have to conduct more services.

Another advantage of Ro-Ro is that it takes 23 kms to travel from Vypeen to Fort Kochi by road. But the advent of Ro-Ro has made travel much easier as it takes only 3 minutes to reach Fort Kochi from Vypeen. Ro-Ro starts from morning 6 and operates till 9. Travelling is possible in Ro-Ro at affordable rates. The rates are as follows; Scooter - Rs.10/-, Small cars - Rs.40/-, SUV - Rs.50/-, Maruti Swift - Rs.40/-, and Rs.3/- for pedestrians. When it comes to cars, the rates for bigger cars are higher and the rates for smaller cars are very low. Apart from the ticket collectors, about seven people are working in Ro-Ro. Upon the introduction of RoRo services (Roll-on Roll-off) by the Cochin Corporation, the people started to prioritize more on this mode of transportation.

³⁸ An interview taken with Johny, a statesman in Vypeen region enquiring about the prevailing situation about the water transport in Vypeen and Fortkochi on 5th September,2022.

Major Agencies Involved

The Jankar service was a primary mode of water transportation on the island of Kochi, and was specifically used by the communities of Vypeen and Fort Kochi. This Jankar was controlled and run by the KSINC service (Kerala shipping inland and navigation construction) service is an inland navigation system in the pioneer of Kochi waterways. The service is managed by the government through the Kerala Inland Navigation Corporation (KINCO), which was established in 1975, and the Kerala Shipping Corporation (KSC), established in 1974. Their main focus is on barges, but they also have cruise vessels such as the Sagara Rani (1&2) and the luxurious Nefertiti.³⁹ The KSINC was established in 1989 by the amalgamation of KINCO (Kerala Inland Navigation Corporation) and KSC (Kerala Shipping Corporation). The head office of KSINC was situated at Kochi, near elamkulam, Udaya Road.

The Jankar service was deemed unsafe and had issues with stability while in operation. As a result, it was replaced by the RoRo (Roll-on/Roll-off) service, which is a type of shipping service where cargo is Driven onto a ship and secured for transport. This type of service is commonly used for transporting wheeled vehicles, such as cars and trucks, and can be more secure and efficient than other methods of transport. This was currently run by this KSINC.

There are several major agencies involved in the functioning of KSINC (Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation), a government-owned company based in the Indian state of Kerala that provides ferry and cargo transportation services. These agencies play important roles in different aspects of KSINC's operations and include:

1) Government of Kerala

The government of Kerala plays a significant role in the functioning of KSINC (Kerala shipping and inland navigation corporation), as it is a wholly owned subsidiary of the government. The government provides financial, administrative and policy support to KSINC to ensure that it full fills its mandate of developing shipping and inland navigation facilities in the state of Kerala. As KSINC operates under the direct control of the government, the government appoints the board of directors of KSINC, who are responsible for overseeing its operations.

³⁹ <https://ksinc.in/>

The government also provides the necessary funds for the corporations functioning, including capital investments for the acquisition and maintenance of vessels and other assets. The government also plays a crucial role in setting policies and regulations related to the shipping and inland navigation sector. It works closely with KSINC to identify opportunities for growth and development in the sector and provides a necessary support for the corporation to leverage these opportunities. Overall, the role of government of Kerala in KSINC is to provide the necessary support and guidance to ensure that the corporation can fulfil its mandate and contribute to the economic growth and development of the state.

2) Cochin Port Trust

KSINC operates from Cochin Port Trust, which provides infrastructure and logistical support to KSINC's operations. Cochin Port Trust is the statutory body that governs and manages the Cochin Port. It was established under the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 and is responsible for the development, maintenance, and management of the port. The Cochin Port Trust is headed by a Chairman and a Board of Trustees appointed by the Government of India. The main objective of the Cochin Port Trust is to provide efficient and cost-effective services to the shipping industry while ensuring the safety and security of the port and its surrounding areas. The trust is also responsible for implementing various initiatives and projects to enhance the port's infrastructure and capacity to handle increasing volumes of cargo.

3) Ministry of Shipping, Government of India

The Ministry of Shipping is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies and programs for the development of shipping and inland water transport in India. It provides support to KSINC through various schemes and initiatives.

4) Indian Register of Shipping (IRS)

The Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) is a classification society that offers technical services to the shipping and offshore industries. It was established in 1975 and is headquartered in Mumbai, India. IRS provides various services to ship owners, operators, and shipyards, including ship classification, statutory certification, ship and offshore asset inspection, and technical advisory services.⁴⁰

5) Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation (KSIDC)

Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation (KSIDC) is a government-owned agency established in 1961 with the primary objective of promoting industrial growth and development in Kerala, India. KSIDC provides financial and technical assistance to entrepreneurs, investors, and industries for the establishment and expansion of industries in the state. KSIDC offers various services, including project identification and formulation, feasibility studies, assistance in obtaining approvals, project financing, equity participation, and project management.

The corporation also provides infrastructure facilities, such as industrial parks, technology parks, and special economic zones, to attract investments and promote industrial growth in the state. KSIDC has been instrumental in promoting the growth of industries in Kerala by providing comprehensive support and guidance to entrepreneurs and investors. The corporation has also played a significant role in the establishment and expansion of Kerala State Industrial Enterprises Ltd. (KSINC), a state-owned enterprise engaged in the manufacturing of ships, boats, and other marine-related products. Overall, KSIDC continues to be an important government agency in Kerala, supporting the development of industries and the overall economic growth of the state.⁴¹

⁴⁰ https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Register_of_Shipping

⁴¹ <https://www.ksidc.org/>

6) Indian Navy

The Indian Navy and the Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC) have indeed collaborated on various projects, including the construction of naval vessels at KSINC's shipyard in Kochi. The shipyard, which is located in the port of Kochi, has the infrastructure and expertise to construct a variety of vessels, including passenger ships, cargo ships, and naval vessels.

In recent years, KSINC has partnered with the Indian Navy on several projects, such as the construction of Fast Interceptor Boats (FIBs) and the retrofitting of patrol vessels. The FIBs are used by the Navy for coastal security and anti-piracy operations, while the retrofitted patrol vessels are used for maritime surveillance and other naval operations. The collaboration between KSINC and the Indian Navy has helped to strengthen the country's maritime capabilities and enhance its coastal security. It has also provided a boost to the local economy in Kochi and created job opportunities for the local workforce.

7) Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)

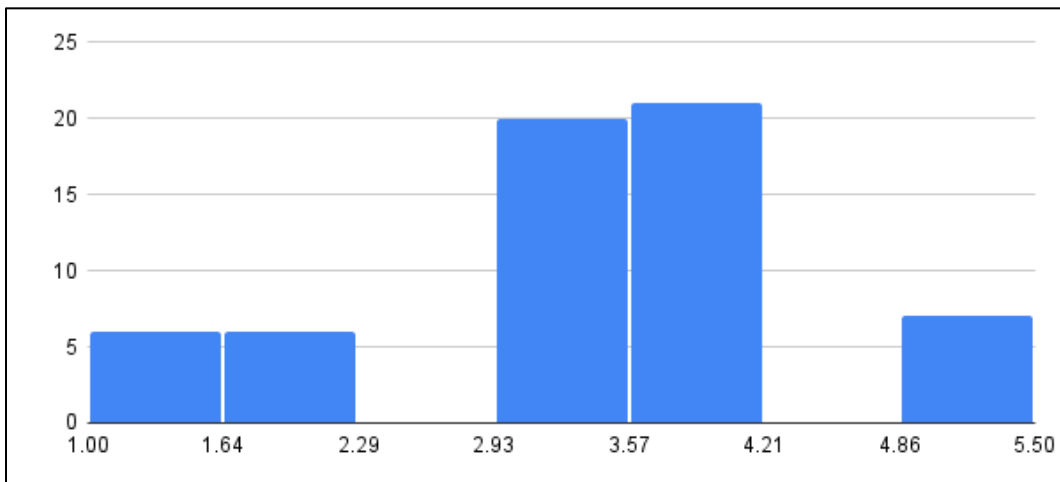
It is a government-owned shipbuilding and maintenance company located in Kochi, Kerala, India. It was established in 1972 as a partnership between the government of India and a Norwegian shipbuilding company. Cochin Shipyard has facilities for building and repairing ships, including tankers, bulk carriers, passenger ships, offshore vessels, and patrol boats. It also undertakes ship conversion and offshore fabrication projects. The company has modern infrastructure and equipment, including a dry dock, ship lift system, and state-of-the-art shipbuilding facilities.

Cochin Shipyard has built and delivered several vessels for Indian and international clients, including the Indian Navy and Coast Guard. The company has also expanded its business to provide services such as ship design and engineering, project management, and consultancy services in the maritime sector.⁴²

⁴² https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cochin_Shipyard

The Public Perception

Transportation systems are designed to help people achieve mobility in order to reach their points of work, education, or offices from their places of residence. One of the major factors responsible for the success or failure of any mass transport system is the way in which it is perceived by the public it is intended for. This project also aims to highlight the concerns and opinions of the people using the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service system, who highly prefer using this mode of transport to travel to the two islands. Some of the local residents and daily commuters were randomly chosen and asked about their experiences on the system and their expectations from it. A questionnaire was prepared for the purpose of extracting only the relevant information without being too intrusive.



The above bar graph shows the responses about the overall experience of the respondents on a scale of 0-5. It is understood that most of the users are satisfied with the current operations of the ferry service. However, basic facilities such as seating, low speed of ferry, absence of roof, safety issues, lack of seats in waiting area, irregular operation of trips, too crowded during peak hours and inadequate frequency of services are some of the major concerns of the people.

The Government is accountable to satisfy basic travel needs of its people. In this regard, the Government is liable to provide free transportation service to its citizen but the local islanders are happy that only a sum of rupees three is charged per person for the Jankar service since the time of its advent. There is an association called The Fort-Vypeen Passengers Association which consists of the people in the two island communities of Vypeen and Fort Kochi. The association has so many members and is very active. It also works to put forward the aspirations and necessities of the passengers for the development of the ferry services and also to meet their travel needs.⁴³

The Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC) is a state-owned company that provides transportation services through a fleet of vessels, including ferries, boats, and ships. KSINC has been serving the people of Kerala for several decades, offering safe, reliable, and affordable transportation options across the state's waterways. While KSINC has achieved many successes over the years, such as expanding its services and introducing new vessels, the company has also faced some challenges and concerns from the public. Some of these concerns include issues related to the quality of services, the Environmental impact of the company's operations, the infrastructure and facilities used by KSINC, and the transparency of the company's decision-making processes.

Before KSINC, the Jankar service was controlled by a private agency. It is also worth noting that some members of the public believe that the service was running well when it was under private ownership. However, it is important to note that the decision to establish KSINC and bring the service under government control may have been based on various factors, such as the need to regulate and improve the service, or to provide better opportunities for the growth of the inland navigation industry in Kerala.⁴⁴

Despite these challenges, KSINC remains committed to serving the people of Kerala and providing efficient and effective transportation services that meet the needs of its customers. By listening to feedback from the public and addressing concerns as they arise, KSINC hopes to

⁴³ An interview with Mohammad Rafeeq, residing in Ernakulam, who runs a stationary shop named Mythry Stores for about 40 years in the Vypeen boat jetty- on 17th December, 2022.

⁴⁴ An interview with Xavier Augustine, probably in his 60's, a native of the Vypeen island- on 3rd September,2022.

improve its operations and build a stronger relationship with the community it serves. In this context, it is important to understand the public perception about KSINC and to engage in constructive dialogue and collaboration to address any issues and concerns that may arise. By working together, KSINC and the public can create a more sustainable and equitable transportation system that benefits everyone in the state.

At present, there only exists one RORO, which causes delays and inconvenience for commuters. Equipment's which are made up of Hydraulic technology is used. Therefore, it is a major concern that the wastes in the lakes gets into the engines which makes the services difficult to run smoothly. Additionally, the RO-RO service is delayed due to the need for the source parts from abroad which makes it difficult for the repair and maintenance. It cannot be operated or maintained by Cochin Shipyard Limited. To address this crisis, KSINC is running a boat service named Fort Queen between Vypeen and Fort Kochi, which is a positive step towards decongesting the passenger traffic and transportation to some extent.⁴⁵

It Is important to ensure that there are enough transport options available for people to travel safely and efficiently, especially during times of high demand. The Fort Queen boat service can help alleviate some of the pressure on the existing transport system, making it easier for commuters to travel between Vypeen and Fort Kochi.

The reasons for the decline of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service are many. The development of bridges, most importantly the Goshree bridges⁴⁶ which was opened in 2000s has led to people choosing road-based transportation over water transportation. Since, the regions of Vypeen and Fort Kochi are the areas where it becomes difficult for the people to travel in water ways at times of rain. Thus, the levels of service delivery in the ferry system have not been successful in keeping up the expectations of the local people. The observations indicate that there is a deficiency in the operating effectiveness and efficiency of the ferry services which has directly affected the ferry users in many ways.

⁴⁵ An interview with Abdul Rasaq, who owns a shop in Fort Kochi named Beeravu's Cool Bar, for about 30 years- on 17th December, 2022.

⁴⁶ *Goshree Bridges* - Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goshree_bridges.

Contribution to Tourism

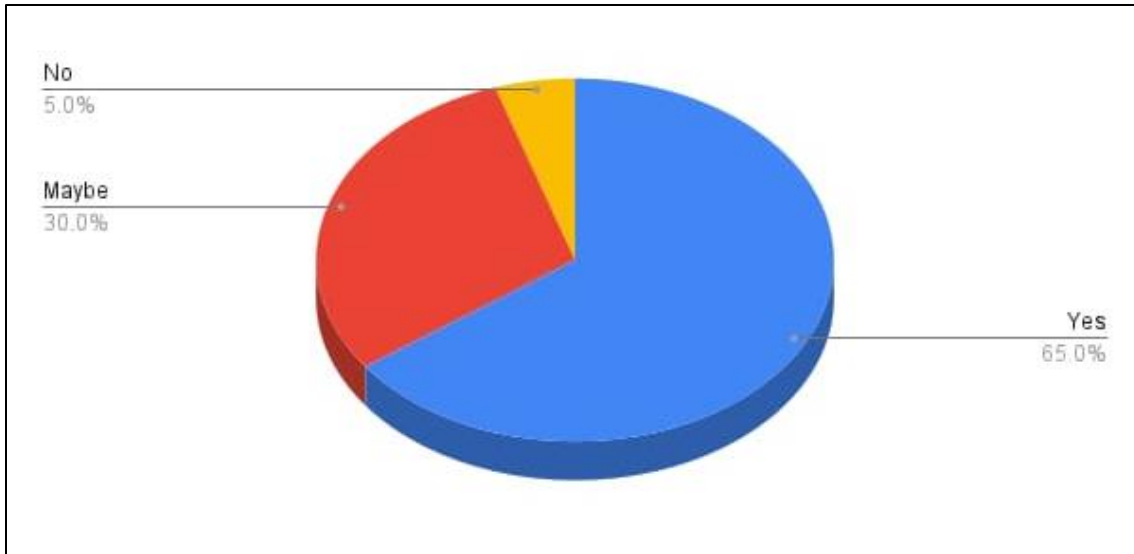
The Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service has the potential for the development of tourism industry in the city, by being the principal mode of connectivity to both the islands. It is also advantageous since the city is currently witnessing a socio-cultural revival with initiatives like Kochi- Muziris biennale.

In addition to offering an efficient, affordable and low-carbon mode of transportation in the city, the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar Ferry Service ensures connectivity and accessibility between people, resources and emergency services. It has helped with the immense potential of development, recognition, and livelihood. It also opens us further tourism opportunities.

The unique diversity of tourism in Kochi attracts tourists from different parts of the world to Kochi, be it through waterways or roadways. The Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar Ferry Service is not a primary factor in that regard but it provides the international tourists with a scenic view through the vast Vembanad Lake. They provide tourists a wonderful insight into the historical, cultural, and traditional aspect of Kochi.⁴⁷

It is hence more evident that most of the services are used by the people of the two islands who are mainly the office-goers, students, daily wage workers etc. Many others use this facility for leisure purposes.

⁴⁷ An Interview with one of the officers of the India Tourism office, Kochi on 17th December, 2022.



The above graph indicates the overall responses acquired when asked whether the Vypeen-Fort Kochi jankar ferry service has been a reason for the increase in the tourism sector. While majority of the respondents agreed to it, some of them were unsure about it. Although, it is important to note that the ferry service is a major reason for the development of tourism sector, but not the only reason. Therefore, revival of the water transports in the Vypeen and Fort Kochi region could also contribute towards strengthening of the tourism industry of the city.

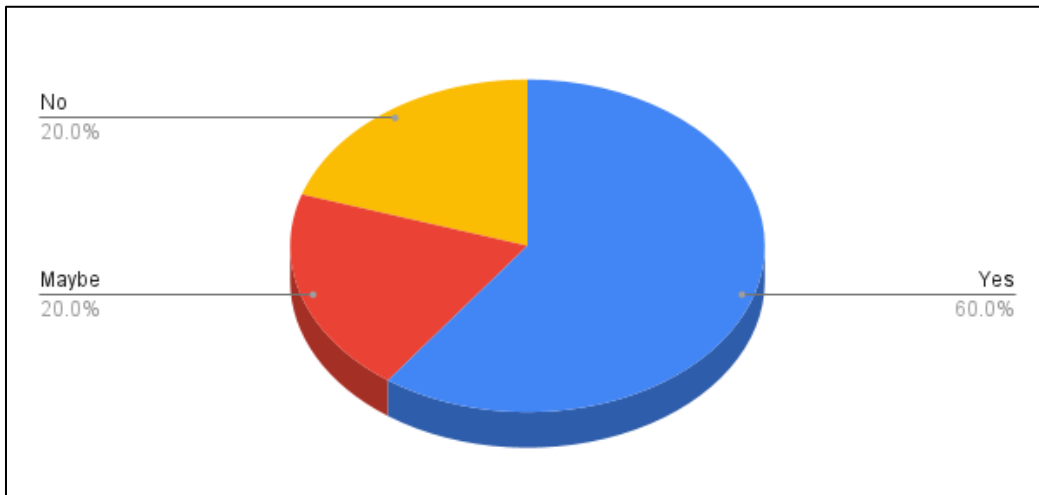
Major Findings and Suggestions

The data obtained a basis for future developments, local understanding and suggestions that can help in improving the ways in which the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service functions. Hence, making it a reliable and travel- friendly mode of transport. A detailed analysis was carried out to understand the same. However, the scope of the study is limited to the areas of Vypeen and Fort Kochi. These two regions were selected as there was mass movement of people across these islands when compared to the others.

Earlier, the Jankar ferry service was operated by a group of private owners. It was later dispatched to the Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC), a government

agency, which operated it afterwards. The Jankar services functioned perfectly and was well maintained when it was handled by the private owners. It was understood that the Government intervention made it irregular and unapproachable. Moreover, many complaints arose from the public due to irresponsible attitude.⁴⁸

According to the opinions of the respondents and the data collected from the surveys and interviews, a common concern which prevailed among the ferry users of Vypeen and Fort Kochi region was that the Government has not issued any policies for the development of ferry services. They also argue that the ferry system lacks certain guidelines in this regard.

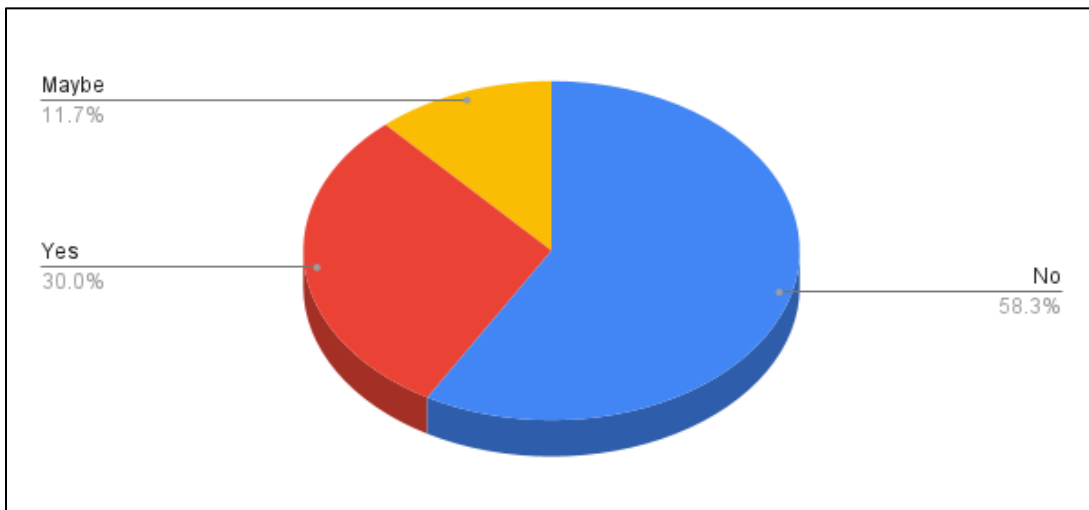


From the responses acquired, the above given chart represents that the majority of people are of the opinion that the use of ferry services has considerably helped in the reduction of the road traffic congestion of the city. It is also evident that an increased use of waterway transports has contributed to bring down pollution levels. However, some of them disagree with it.

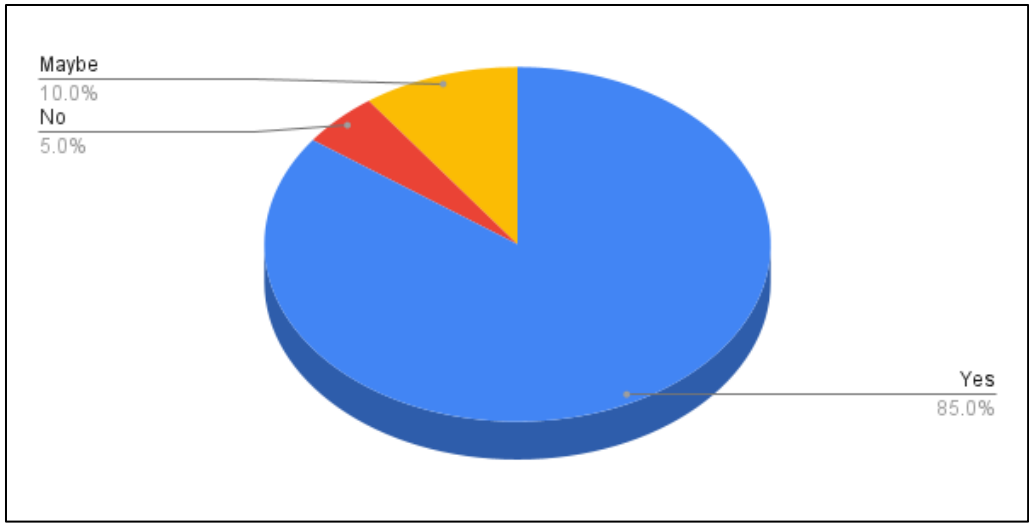
Another important factor that needs to be considered is the unique case of the West Kochi that accommodates a large population but is short on land due its unique geographical features.

⁴⁸ An interview with Basheer, who owns a shop named- NAS Cool Bar at the Kamalakadavu boat jetty in Fortkochi since decades- on 17th December, 2022.

West Kochi is also known as Fort Kochi is where most of the poorer sections of Kochi city region's urban areas live. The Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service has helped to strengthen the social ability of these island communities. It provides an efficient and affordable alternative to some of the most economically weaker sections in these areas. They depend on the mainland and make use of the ferry system to commute to the other islands. It provides them with better access to economic opportunities, employment needs, health and social facilities.



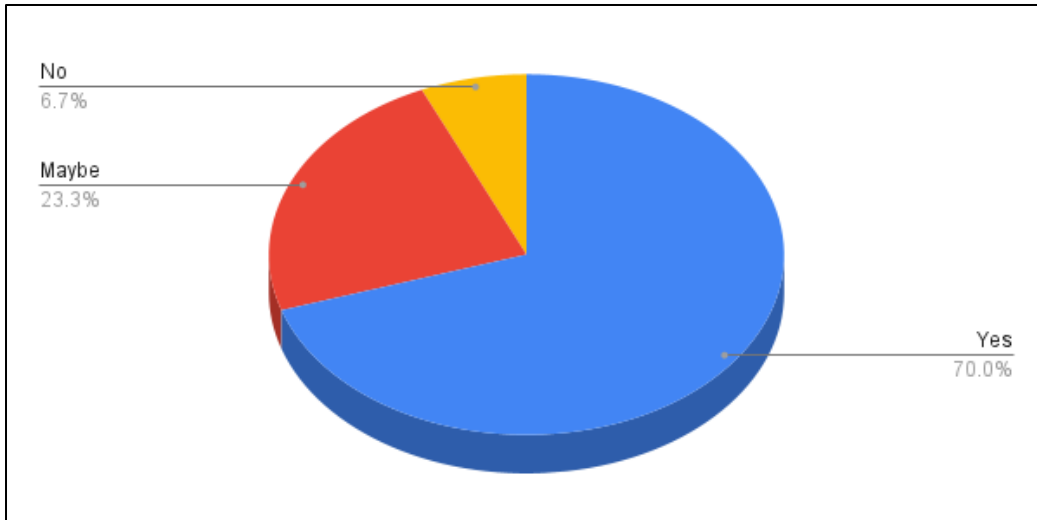
Based on the responses acquired, it was evident that majority of the people were happy with the overall performance of the ferry operations, whereas, only few are of the opinion that they face few problems in this regard. Upon further research into the subject, it was known that several passenger associations in Fort Kochi and Vypeen. These have been active over the years and have contributed greatly in helping the people voice their concerns and bring their difficulties to the notice of the authorities. They bring to public attention the issues suffered by the passengers. They work to build pressure on the different authorities to get complaints heard and make sure that they take actions upon the problems of the people.



The above chart indicates the responses of the ferry users about the cost-efficiency of the ferry services. As per the existing information, a maximum fair for ticket of rupees three per person, which was the service charge from the inception of the Jankar service in the Vypeen-Fort Kochi route. This has been a fixed rate and has not yet changed over the decades. It is understood that the passengers are ready to pay a slightly higher amount as ticket fares, as it might help to ease the financial crisis of the operating agencies.

Another significant area to look upon is the Canossa UP School, Vypeen,⁴⁹ which is located adjacent to the Vypeen boat jetty. The school was established in the year 1941. Further examinations in this area were conducted in which it was found that many of the students of this school are financially very poor. The parents of these students are not educated or employed anywhere and are daily wage workers. Upon enquiring about the relevance of Vypeen -Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service in the daily commutation of the students and staffs of the school, the response was that most of them are residents of the Vypeen region and prefer coming to school by walk. However, some of the students and staffs preferred using the ferry service.

⁴⁹ CANOSSA LP & UP SCHOOL VYPEEN - Fortkkochi, District Ernakulam (Kerala).
<https://schools.org.in/ernakulam/32080802103/canossa-lp-&-up-school-vypeen.html>.



The above chart represents the responses from the people which gives an understanding about their travel involvement and participation in the sector. The travellers opined that the ferry stations lacked well-laid and minimum level differences to make the access easier for the old and women in particular.

A major advantage of roro service is that compared to earlier Jankar service, having exits on both sides can provide greater flexibility in routing, as vehicles can enter and exit the service from either side. This can reduce travel time and costs by avoiding detours or congestion. Moreover, RORO service with exits on both sides can offer significant advantages in terms of efficiency of the service, resulting in shorter waiting times for commuters. Overall, RORO service offers significant advantages in terms of efficiency, flexibility and safety making it a preferred mode of transportation for commuters and businesses alike.

The RORO service offers a safer travel experience compared to the previous Jankar service. Earlier there were only small boats. Many boat accidents occurred. While there have been accidents on the Jankar service and difficulties with vehicles boarding and alighting, the RORO service allows for vehicles to easily board and alight from both sides of the vessel, reducing risks associated with loading and unloading. The complaint about the RORO service being down for more than 25 days and only one vessel currently operating could potentially

impact the safety and efficiency of the service. The introduction of three RORO's will help in case any one is left out due to complaint.⁵⁰

As per findings, the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has introduced a container (Roll-on Roll-off) RoRo service to operate in the Fort Kochi-Bolgatty Island Corridor, as per the request of the Cochin Corporation. This has been done in response to the withdrawal of the Sethusagar-2 RoRo ferry service from service due to technical issues.

The introduction of the Container RORO service was likely an attempt to provide a reliable alternative for ferry passengers during the period when the Sethusagar-2 is undergoing repairs. School students also made use of this. However, the Container RoRo vessel was also withdrawn from service after a week's service due to low patronage.

⁵⁰ An interview with Antony, a middle-aged man, owns a barber shop in the Vypeen boat jetty- on 17th December, 2022.

CONCLUSION

The city of Kochi is located on the western coast of India in Ernakulam district of Kerala. Kochi City Region (KCR) is a contiguous region of land consisting of the areas under the Corporation of Kochi and sixteen other local bodies, including five municipalities. The remaining units are panchayats.⁵¹

There are 41 rivers in Kerala that flows towards west clubbed with and numerous backwaters. All these are part of the inland water transport system having a length of approx. 1895 km. It is the inland canals that connect the rivers from one to another. Important places which are commercially needed are situated on the banks of these rivers.⁵² But coastal systems are sensitive to climate drivers and changes in sea levels, ocean temperature, and ocean acidity.⁵³

The main focus area of study in this project is the two regions of Vypeen and Fort Kochi. Both these regions have its own significance in a city like Kochi, which is the most densely populated city as well as the largest and the most populous metropolitan area in Kerala. We have referred in an early part of this project to the importance of Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service. It is a fuel efficient, eco-friendly, and cost-efficient mode of transport. It plays an important role in the economic upliftment of island communities. It provides much needed employment, connectivity and fulfils the tourist aspirations of not only the islanders, but also of the foreigners who visit these regions to enjoy the scenic beauty of the major tourist attraction of Kochi. This alternative source of waterway has provided an opportunity for the people of Kochi region, mainly Vypeen and Fort Kochi to commute to both islands. Moreover, it has been a potential supplement to reduce the overburdened and congested roads of the Kochi city.

The fastest growing urban world needs an affordable and reliable mode of transportation which will increase the connectivity. An efficient transport sector is vital for the development of

⁵¹ International Journal for Technological Research in Engineering Volume 2, Issue 11, July-2015

⁵² <https://spb.kerala.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-09/13PlanEng.pdf>

⁵³ Kumar, Revathi Siva. 'Can Waterways Provide the Key to Developing Kochi?' Citizen Matters, 29 June 2018, <https://citizenmatters.in/development-kochi-metro-waterways-canals-7062>.

the economy of any country. The study also attempts to understand the formation of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service, its initial stages and development over the centuries. During the initial stages, dhow boats were used for the transportation of cargo and passengers. It paved way for mechanized boats. Later, the introduction of jankars (ferries) resulted in fulfilling the travel aspirations of the island communities as they depended on the mainland mostly for their employment. Thus, the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service assumes special significance as an effort to ease the problems of the local islanders. The Ro-Ro service, which is a double ended ferry is currently operating in the sector.

Inland waterways of Kerala are comparatively under-utilised and traffic on waterways is very less compared to the other modes of transportation. Though accidents are less compared to the roads, several boat accidents in passenger boats, barges and fishing boats have occurred in recent past.

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the sector, some of the private owners, government agencies and the local islanders of Vypeen and Fort Kochi were interviewed. Individual old-timers, who were basically the natives of the regions were able to recover some of the major particulars regarding the subject which were helpful in the further study. There was a lack of written records and documents related to this sector. However, several newspaper reports, journals, gazetteers and articles were helpful. The questionnaire mainly consisted of questions related to travel time, waiting time, fare/cost and comfort level. It also collected information regarding the perception of the subject of study by the general public. The data collected were being processed for extracting necessary inputs for the study.

There are several passenger associations in Vypeen and Fort Kochi. To have a complete overview of the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service, representatives of passenger associations were interviewed for their perspectives and views on how the mode of transport had changed over the years. These associations have been active and take the efforts to put forward the concerns of the passengers in front of the public.

The project seeks to highlight the problems of the island communities of both Vypeen and Fort Kochi for whom the water transportation is meant. The levels of service delivery in the ferry system have failed to keep up with the expectation of the general public. Some of these

reasons have been understood by interviews and surveys which was conducted as part of the study. In the last few years, the water transport system in the Vypeen-Fort Kochi route has been restored and many developments are being undertaken for the smooth functioning of the sector and to ensure the travel needs of its users.

KSINC (Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation) is a government-owned company that operates ferries and boats in the Indian state of Kerala. Over the years, KSINC has played a crucial role in the transportation and tourism sectors of Kerala.

KSINC has been instrumental in providing safe and reliable transportation services to the people of Kerala. Its ferries and boats have not only facilitated the movement of people and goods but have also promoted tourism in the state. KSINC has also contributed to the growth of the local economy by generating employment opportunities

Despite facing challenges such as competition from private operators and a decline in revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic, KSINC has continued to serve the people of Kerala with dedication and commitment. As a result, KSINC remains an important entity in the transportation sector of Kerala and is expected to play a crucial role in the state's growth and development in the years to come.

The RORO service is a highly efficient and cost-effective method of moving cargo and vehicles. It is widely used in the shipping industry for transporting wheeled cargo such as cars, trucks, buses, trailers, and heavy equipment. RoRo service provides various benefits, including faster transit times, increased safety and security, and reduced handling costs.

RORO service is also a popular choice for travellers who want to explore new destinations with their own vehicle or caravan. RoRo service allows them to transport their vehicle to their destination and then explore the region at their own pace, without worrying about renting or buying a vehicle.

RORO service seems to be convenient and cost-effective mode of transportation for commuters travelling between Fort Kochi and Vypeen. The lower charges and improved safety compared to other services like Jankar are factors that makes the RORO service a popular choice for passengers. But disruptions to RoRo service can have a significant impact on the daily routine of regular commuters. Overall, RORO service is an important transportation option that

plays a vital role in the global economy and travel industry. It provides an efficient and cost-effective solution for moving cargo and vehicles, while also allowing travellers to explore new destinations with their own vehicles.

The project ends with certain suggestions to make the Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service more appealing to the passengers. Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar ferry service presents an alternative to release some of the pressure from the city's congested roadways. Travel distance through waterways is less compared to the roads. However, there was a slight decline in the operation of ferry services. The construction of bridges connecting the two islands to the mainland, poor state of ferries and services were the main important factors of the shift from ferries to road-based transports. Revival is to be considered in the service delivery and development policies of the sector. Thus, the collected data were analysed and suggestions were framed accordingly.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

A HISTORICAL INSIGHT INTO THE VYPEEN-FORTKOCHI

JANKAR (FERRY) SERVICE

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please be kind enough to spare a few minutes of your time to participate in this survey aimed at extracting people's perception about the Ferry Service. Your cooperation in this survey would also help in understanding about the early phase and later years of the sector in Vypeen and Fort Kochi region. This survey is conducted as part of the final year project on 'Vypeen-Fort Kochi Jankar Ferry Service' that would reflect the concerns of ordinary citizens of the two regions. Rest assured that none of the information thus collected would be used for a purpose other than mentioned above. Thank you for your cooperation.

1) Name: Mr/Ms/Mrs _____

2) Age group:

- Under 10 years
- 10-25 years
- 26-59 years
- Above 59 years

3) Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Others

4) Occupation:

- Student
- Private salaried
- Government employee
- Self employed
- Retired
- Unemployed
- Others

5) Which among these categories best describes the purpose of your trip?

- Work
- Education
- Business
- Leisure
- Others

6) What makes you choose the ferry over other means of transport?

- Inexpensive
- Less crowded
- Bus services not available
- Takes lesser time
- For leisure
- Convenient
- Others

7) How often do you take the ferry in a week?

- Once or less
- 2-5 times
- 6-10 times
- More than 10 times

8) How satisfied are you with the ferry service?

- Extremely dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Extremely satisfied

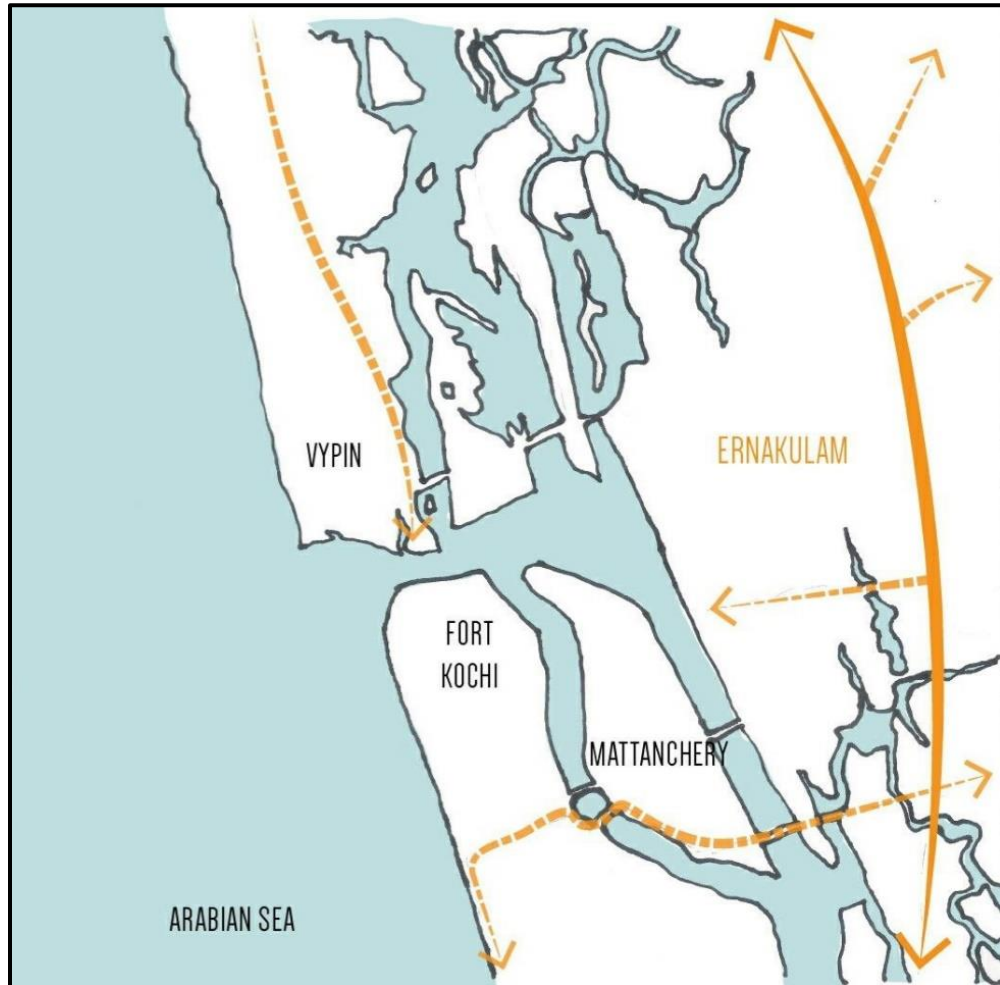
9) How has the quality of the ferry service changed over the past 5 years?

- Hasn't changed at all
- Has improved
- Has deteriorated
- Can't say

10) What problems do you encounter while using the ferry system?

- Lack of connectivity
- Uncooperative staff
- Low speed of ferry
- Absence of roof
- Safety issues
- Poor accessibility to the Jetty
- Lack of seats in waiting area
- Irregular operation of trips
- Lack of parking spaces
- Too crowded during peak hours
- Lack of toilets in the Jetty
- Nuisance from Anti-social elements
- Inadequate frequency of services
- Shortage of change
- Others

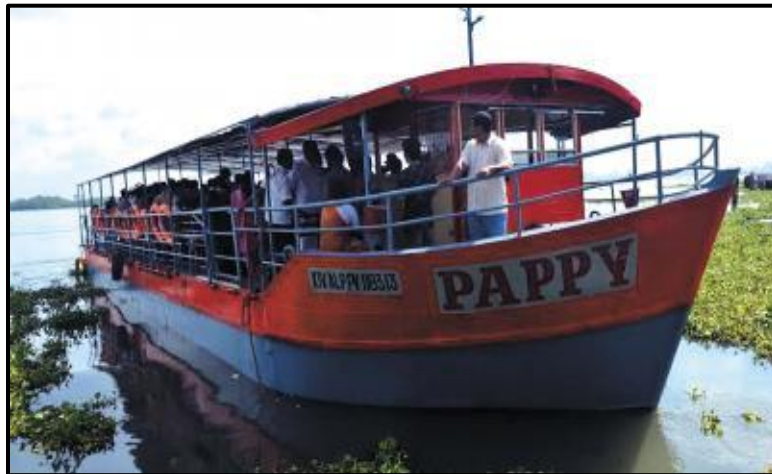
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



Map of the two islands- Vypeen and Fort Kochi



Old Jankar operating in the Vembanad lake



Pappy boat



Fort-Queen boat



Canossa Convent L.P & U.P School, Vypeen



Roll-on and Roll-off (Ro-Ro) service

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