

Assessing the Role of Tourism in Promoting Economic Development in Mattancherry: A Case Study Approach

Objectives:

The primary objective of this study is to assess the role of tourism in promoting economic development in Mattancherry using a case study approach. The specific objectives are:

1. **To quantify tourism's economic impact** by analyzing its contribution to:
 - Income generation patterns in home stays and hotels
 - Employment creation (full-time/seasonal) in hospitality and allied sectors
2. **To assess tourism's socio-cultural influence** through:
 - Preservation of heritage assets (e.g., Dutch Palace, Jewish Synagogue)
 - Risks of cultural commodification in local businesses
3. **To evaluate infrastructure development** by examining:
 - Tourism-driven upgrades (roads, sanitation, public spaces)
 - Gaps in waste management and seasonal overcrowding
4. **To formulate sustainable strategies** by identifying:
 - Policy interventions for income stability (e.g., off-season tourism)
 - Community-based solutions to mitigate displacement risks

Methodology:

1. **Research Design:**
 - **Case study approach** (qualitative + quantitative).
 - **Descriptive research** with primary and secondary data.
2. **Data Collection:**
 - **Primary Data:**
 - i. **Sample Size:** 67 respondents (Home stay operators, Hotel managers/owners).
 - ii. **Tools:** Structured questionnaires, interviews, field observations.
 - **Secondary Data:**
 - i. Government reports (Kerala Tourism), academic journals, KTDC publications.
3. **Sampling:**
 - **Simple Random Data** (due to accessibility constraints).
 - Stakeholders: Local businesses (30%), tourists (35%), residents (20%), officials (15%).
4. **Statistical Tools:**

- **Percentage analysis** (demographic trends).
- **Chi-square test** (association between tourism growth and economic indicators).
- **ANOVA** (income differences across sectors).
- **Garrett's Ranking** (prioritizing key challenges).
- **Lorenz Curve & Gini Coefficient** (income inequality analysis).

Data Analysis:

1. Economic Impact:

- 83.6% of respondents agreed tourism boosted local income.
- 50.7% reported significant employment growth (hotels, handicrafts, transport).
- Seasonality: 73.1% faced income fluctuations.

2. Cultural & Infrastructure Effects:

- 76.1% observed improved cultural exchange.
- 65.7% noted infrastructure upgrades (roads, public spaces).
- Rising rents: 65.7% reported increased property prices.

3. Challenges:

- Top-ranked issues: Waste management (26.9%), overcrowding, cultural commodification.
- Gini Coefficient: 0.38 (moderate inequality post-tourism growth).

4. Hypothesis Testing:

- Rejected H_0 ($p < 0.05$): Tourism significantly impacts economic development.

Conclusion:

The research concludes that tourism plays a crucial role in promoting economic development in Mattancherry, contributing significantly to employment generation, business growth, and cultural preservation. However, without proper planning and sustainable practices, negative impacts such as environmental degradation, overcrowding, and loss of cultural authenticity could undermine long-term benefits.

Promoting year-round tourism, improving infrastructure, and implementing sustainable tourism strategies can ensure balanced economic and cultural growth in Mattancherry.