



IMPACT OF BEACH TOURISM IN CHAVAKKAD BEACH, KERALA

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Abstract

Tourism industry is the fastest growing industry both in developed and undeveloped countries. Nowadays we all are looking to sustainable development in all our economic and non-economic activities. One of the greatest fields which has enormous opportunities in sustainable development is tourism. Tourism with its multiplier effect has a major role in the country's sustainable development. This paper tries to analyze the perception level of the community toward the economic, social and environmental impact of Beach tourism. India has the greatest opportunities in the tourism sector. Beach tourism is one among the classification of tourism which impact rural community development.

Kerala, as its name depicts God's own country plays a vital role in ecotourism activities. Moreover, ecotourism helps to develop the local community not only in the case of economic aspect, but also it creates a wider impact on socio cultural and environment impact. Although tourism has lot of economic benefits, it has a negative impact on culture and environment also. This paper tries to analyze the economic, social and cultural impact of Beach tourism towards the local communities in Chavakkad Beach, Kerala.

Chavakkad Beach is a beautiful tiny coastal village in Chavakkad municipality of Thrissur district. Chavakkad beach is an unexplored Beach tourism destination in Thrissur district by domestic tourist. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the economic, social and cultural impact of Beach tourism on a tiny coastal area Chavakkad-an upcoming Beach destination located in Thrissur district.

Keywords: Beach tourism, Economic impact, Socio-Cultural Impact, Socio-Cultural impact

Introduction

In the present scenario, tourism is a multiplier effect source of income in our country. India has such tremendous potential opportunities in this sector. The effect of tourism will not only provide economic benefits but social, cultural and environmental benefits also. Kerala is a famous destination for its ecotourism activities. The new trends appearing in the tourism activities are boosting rural and unexplored tourist areas for the purpose of familiarizing them as a sustainable tourism destination. Kerala has many unexplored beautiful coastal destinations. One among them is Chavakkad Beach which is situated five kilometers from Guruvayoor temple. This beach lies on the Arabian Sea coast and it attracts many domestic tourists. It is a beautiful tiny coastal village in Chavakkad municipality of Thrissur District, Kerala, India. The most important feature of this beach is that, at this beach the river meets the sea. The meeting point can be termed as “Azhimukham”, that can be considered as the most popular beach, because of its unexplored potentials by the domestic tourist. This study tries to give a clear picture about the economic, social and cultural impact of Beach tourism in the beach destination.

Review of literature

Hakim Muttaqim et.al (2020) made a study on “Determinant of economic value of beach tourism post Aceh Tsunami: An appraisal on Travel cost method. The study tried to measure the economic value of tourism in western part of Indonesia (Aceh province) after the tsunami. Moreover, this study empirically examined the effects of travel cost, income, age and education on the economic value of coastal tourism. For this purpose, the travel cost method is used to measure the economic value of tourism. The study found that there was a visitor surplus which increased local revenue. The study recommended the full management of infrastructural facilities.

Siti Astariningsih Setyoputri, M.H Dewi Susilowati et.al (2020) conducted a study on “Tourist preferences on the attraction of beach tourism objects in Kebumen Regency, Central Java Province”. This paper analyzes attractiveness like site attraction, event attraction, supporting facilities and accessibility and tourist’s preferences on beach tourism areas in Kebumen Regency. For this study, researchers made surveys, data tracing and also collected data from related agencies. They analyzed the collected data by using graphs and maps. The study found that the tourist objects having high attractiveness were not the first priority for tourists.

Neelam Kumari (2021) conducted a study on “Impact of ecotourism on the Indian economy. The main objective of the study was to analyze the problems and prospects of Indian ecotourism. This paper tried to analyze the impact of ecotourism on the Indian economy. The study found that ecotourism is considered as a promotional tool of recycling energy, efficiency, water conservation and creation of economic opportunities for the local community.

Suraj Upadhaya, Sarada Tiwari (2022) made a study on Local people’s perception of the impact and importance of ecotourism in central Nepal”. This study tried to understand the local people’s perception of the impact and importance of ecotourism. The result of the study revealed that most of the respondents are

interested in ecotourism activities. Moreover, their interests were significantly affected by their age, academic qualification and occupation.

Birendra Kishore Roy (2021) engaged a study on “Responsible beach tourism and environmental issues in sustainable development: - A study of Digha, West Bengal, India. The main objective of the study was to identify the linkage between tourism pressure and tourist behavior.. The study identified that, the particular coastal region is under developing stage and it has various potential which includes multiple tourism development. The study recommended a planned garbage disposal system for both perishable and nonperishable goods near coastal areas, food counters and local shops, should be made.

Proshanta Kumar Ghosh, Debajit Datta (2022) made a study on coastal tourism and beach sustainability- An assessment of community perception in Kovalam, India. The study adopted field level assessment of beach activities and participatory tourist and citizen appraisals for data analysis. This study found several environmental parameters which leads to beach pollution and water quality status and recommended several suggestions to resolve the drawbacks for the sustainable survival of the coastal tourism.

Objective

- To study the demographic variable of the respondents reside in Chavakkad in Thrissur.
- To analyze the impact of Beach tourism in Chavakkad, Thrissur.

Research Methodology

The study conducted among the local residents in Chavakkad toward the impact of Beach tourism on local community. The study follows descriptive research design and both primary and secondary data were used for the purpose of data collection. Primary data were collected from 166 respondents from Chavakkad municipality who have lived more than 10 years. The survey was conducted by using structured questionnaire for analyzing the perception level of local community towards the Beach tourism. Demographic variables used in the study were age, gender, marital status, occupation, educational qualifications and average monthly income. Economic, social and cultural impacts were identified by using 11 constructs based on Likert scale. Descriptive statistics like percentage analysis, average and standard deviation are used for the purpose of data analysis.

Demographic profile

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents, highlighting key characteristics such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, and income.

Table no: 1
Demographic Profile of the Respondent

Variables	Categories	Percentage
Gender	Male	61.44
	Female	38.56
Age	20-30	84.33
	30-40	9.63
	40-50	6.04
Marital status	Married	34.94
	unmarried	65.06
Educational qualification	School level	19.28
	Graduation	67.47
	Post-graduation	13.25
Occupation	Students	48.19
	Employees	33.73
	Business	13.25
	house wife	4.83
Income	Up to Rs.20000	56.63
	Rs.20001-30000	21.69
	Rs.30001-40000	15.67
	Rs.40001-50000	3.61
	Rs.Above 50000	2.40

Source -primary data

The demographic profile reveals that the majority of respondents are male (61.44%), while females constitute 38.56%. Most respondents (84.33%) fall within the 20-30 age group, followed by 9.63% in the 30-40 range and 6.04% in the 40-50 category. Regarding marital status, 65.06% are unmarried, whereas 34.94% are married. In terms of education, most respondents (67.47%) hold a graduation degree, while 19.28% have completed schooling and 13.25% possess a post-graduation degree. Occupationally, the largest group consists of students (48.19%), followed by employees (33.73%), business professionals (13.25%), and housewives (4.83%). Income distribution shows that 56.63% earn up to Rs. 20,000, while 21.69% fall in the Rs. 20,001-30,000 range. Those earning Rs. 30,001-40,000 make up 15.67%, whereas 3.61% earn Rs. 40,001-50,000, and only 2.40% have an income above Rs. 50,000.

Economic impact of Beach tourism

The table provides an analysis of the economic impact of beach tourism in Chavakkad, based on various indicators such as employment opportunities, income generation, infrastructural development, and government support. Key metrics, including minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation, highlight respondents' perceptions of the positive and negative economic effects. The findings reveal that beach tourism contributes significantly to job creation, improved standards of living, and local government revenue, while also fostering investment and support for coastal development.

Table no: 2
Positive Economic impact of Beach tourism

Impact	Min	Max	Mean	S.D	Indicator
Beach tourism provides new employment opportunities	1	5	4.33	0.71	Strongly Agreed
It helps to develop infrastructural improvement	1	5	3.64	1.09	Agreed
Increased government assistance like grant	1	5	3.95	0.81	Agreed
It attracts new investments in the destination	1	5	4.12	0.67	Agreed
Diversity provided to coastal products	1	5	4.33	0.71	Strongly Agreed
It helps to supplement women employment	1	5	4.02	0.78	Agreed
Tourism activities increase local product prices	1	5	3.87	0.94	Agreed
It will increase local government income	1	5	4.10	0.84	Agreed
Increase in money for local development	1	5	4.14	0.81	Agreed

Source: computed

The results indicate that beach tourism in Chavakkad Beach has a generally positive economic impact on the local community. The highest-rated benefits include employment opportunities (Mean = 4.33, S.D = 0.71) and diversification of coastal products (Mean = 4.33, S.D = 0.71), suggesting that tourism significantly contributes to job creation and enhances local business opportunities. Investment attraction (Mean = 4.12, S.D = 0.67) and increased local government income (Mean = 4.10, S.D = 0.84) further highlight how tourism stimulates financial growth in the region. While infrastructural improvement (Mean = 3.64, S.D = 1.09) received a relatively lower score, indicating some variability in its perceived benefits, the overall agreement on tourism-driven development suggests that beach tourism plays a crucial role in economic progress. However, increased local product prices (Mean = 3.87, S.D = 0.94) implies potential inflationary effects, which might impact affordability for residents.

Table no: 3
Negative Economic impact of Beach tourism

Impact	Min	Max	Mean	S.D	Indicator
Increase in Cost of Living	1	5	4.65	0.71	Strongly Agreed
Seasonal Employment Issues	1	5	4.64	1.09	Strongly Agreed
Overdependence on Tourism	1	5	3.62	0.81	Agreed
Unequal Economic Benefits	1	5	4.37	0.67	Strongly Agreed
Environmental Costs Leading to Economic Burden	1	5	4.44	0.71	Strongly Agreed
Increase in Cost of Living	1	5	3.52	0.78	Agreed
Seasonal Employment Issues	1	5	3.42	0.94	Agreed

Source: computed

The results highlight significant negative economic impacts of beach tourism in Chavakkad Beach. The most concerning issues are the increase in the cost of living (**Mean = 4.65, S.D = 0.71**) and seasonal employment issues (**Mean = 4.64, S.D = 1.09**), indicating that tourism has made daily expenses higher for locals while providing jobs that lack stability. Environmental costs leading to an economic burden (**Mean = 4.44, S.D = 0.71**) and unequal economic benefits (**Mean = 4.37, S.D = 0.67**) further emphasize that tourism-driven environmental degradation and economic disparities remain key challenges. Although overdependence on tourism (**Mean = 3.62, S.D = 0.81**) was rated slightly lower, it still suggests concerns about the region's reliance on tourism as the primary economic driver. Lower-rated but still notable issues include a secondary mention of increasing cost of living (**Mean = 3.52, S.D = 0.78**) and seasonal employment concerns (**Mean = 3.42, S.D = 0.94**), indicating some variability in perceptions.

Socio- cultural impact of Beach tourism

The table highlights the socio-cultural impacts, both positive and negative, associated with tourism in the region. It reflects respondents' perceptions on issues such as increased drug usage and crime, changes in traditional culture, and the effects of tourism on local living conditions and the environment. Key metrics like mean and standard deviation provide a quantitative understanding of the intensity and variation in these impacts, offering insights into how tourism influences the socio-cultural fabric of the destination.

Table no: 4

Positive socio-cultural impact of Beach tourism - Descriptive statistics

Impact	Min	Max	Mean	S.D	Indicator
Preservation of Local Culture and Traditions	1	5	4.28	0.99	Strongly Agreed
Improved Community Pride and Identity	1	5	3.90	1.02	Agreed
Cultural Exchange and Awareness	1	5	3.95	0.85	Agreed
Development of Local Arts and Handicrafts	1	5	3.68	1.10	Agreed
Strengthening Social Infrastructure	1	5	4.03	1.06	Agreed
Preservation of Local Culture and Traditions.	1	5	3.58	0.94	Agreed

Source: computed

The findings indicate that beach tourism in Chavakkad Beach has a positive socio-cultural impact on the local community. The most notable benefit is the preservation of local culture and traditions (Mean = 4.28), showing strong agreement among respondents. Strengthening social infrastructure (Mean = 4.03) and cultural exchange and awareness (Mean = 3.95) are also well-recognized benefits. Improved community pride and identity (Mean = 3.90) and development of local arts and handicrafts (Mean = 3.68) further highlight tourism's role in fostering cultural engagement. However, a secondary mention of preservation of local culture and traditions (Mean = 3.58) with a slightly lower score suggests some variability in perceptions. Overall, the results affirm that beach tourism contributes positively to the region's socio-cultural fabric.

Table no: 5

Negative socio-cultural impact of Beach tourism

Impact	Min	Max	Mean	S.D	Indicator
Increased drugs usage and crime level	1	5	3.48	0.99	Agreed
Feel immoral behaviour in tourism destination.	1	5	3.90	1.02	Agreed
Traffic congestion creates noise pollution.	1	5	3.58	0.94	Agreed
Overcrowding creates an unpleasant situation.	1	5	3.30	0.97	Agreed
Tourism creates a change in traditional culture	1	5	3.35	0.85	Agreed
Working in the tourism sector feels insecurity.	1	5	4.25	1.09	Agreed

Source: computed

The findings suggest that beach tourism in Chavakkad Beach has several negative socio-cultural impacts. The most significant concern is job insecurity in the tourism sector (Mean = 4.25), indicating that many workers feel uncertain about their employment stability. Perceived immoral behavior (Mean = 3.90) and traffic congestion causing noise pollution (Mean = 3.58) are also notable concerns. Increased drug usage and crime levels (Mean = 3.48) and changes in traditional culture due to tourism (Mean = 3.35) highlight the social challenges tourism brings. Overcrowding leading to an unpleasant experience (Mean = 3.30) is another issue identified by respondents. Overall, while tourism brings benefits, it also raises social and cultural concerns that need to be addressed.

Findings

- The majority of respondents are male (61.44%).
- Most respondents (84.33%) belong to the 20-30 age category.
- A significant portion (65.06%) of respondents are unmarried.
- The majority (67.47%) have completed graduation.
- The largest group consists of students (48.19%).
- More than half (56.63%) of respondents earn up to Rs. 20,000.
- Tourism at Chavakkad Beach has a strong positive economic impact, with job creation and coastal product diversification being the most significant benefits (Mean = 4.33). It also attracts investments (Mean = 4.12) and boosts local government income (Mean = 4.10), contributing to financial growth. While infrastructural improvements are acknowledged (Mean = 3.64), perceptions vary, suggesting uneven development. However, tourism also leads to increased local product prices (Mean = 3.87), indicating potential affordability concerns for residents.
- Beach tourism in Chavakkad Beach has notable negative economic impacts. The most significant concerns are the rising cost of living (Mean = 4.65) and seasonal employment instability (Mean = 4.64), making daily expenses higher and jobs less secure. Environmental degradation leading to economic burdens (Mean = 4.44) and unequal distribution of economic benefits (Mean = 4.37) highlight further challenges. While overdependence on tourism (Mean = 3.62) is a moderate concern, it still indicates a risk for the local

economy. Variability in perceptions is seen in secondary mentions of cost of living increases (Mean = 3.52) and seasonal employment concerns (Mean = 3.42).

- Beach tourism in Chavakkad Beach positively impacts the local socio-cultural environment, with the preservation of culture and traditions (Mean = 4.28) being the most significant benefit. Other key advantages include strengthening social infrastructure (Mean = 4.03) and enhancing cultural exchange and awareness (Mean = 3.95). While tourism fosters community pride and supports local arts, some variability in perceptions exists regarding its cultural preservation impact.
- Beach tourism in Chavakkad Beach has notable negative socio-cultural impacts, with job insecurity in the tourism sector (Mean = 4.25) being the most significant concern. Other issues include perceived immoral behavior (Mean = 3.90), traffic congestion (Mean = 3.58), and increased crime and drug usage (Mean = 3.48), highlighting social challenges. Additionally, overcrowding and cultural changes (Mean = 3.30–3.35) contribute to an unpleasant experience, indicating the need for better management.

Suggestions

- The local government may initiate actions for the betterment of the research area. For this community participation is a good strategy for the sustainable development.
- Financial and marketing assistance from the government may help the area development.
- Sustainable marketing strategy with public private partnership helps to increase the arrival of all categories of tourists.
- Policies may be adopted for tourism activities which help to increase the value of local products.
- The study recommended that, various cultural fests may be conducted which helps the local residents for sharing their cultural activities. Authorities may take necessary actions for conducting such fairs.
- Exhibitions and trade fairs may be conducted in the beach area which helps to increase the cultural identity of the community.

Conclusion

Tourism plays a vital role in the development of local community. Chavakkad beach is an unexplored beach destination in Thrissur district. The developments in the research area will help the local community not only in the economic development but also it creates togetherness and social quality in the minds of local residents. More over the research reveals that, beach tourism can help to create cultural identity in the minds of the community. Ultimately beach tourism helps the local community in a sustainable way.

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