

Possibilities of Tourism Promotion and its relevance in Kerala Tourism: with Special Reference to Attappadi

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Abstract—Tourism is a key contributor to the economic and cultural development of Kerala, a state renowned for its natural beauty and sustainable tourism initiatives. Attappadi, a tribal region in Palakkad district, remains an underexplored destination despite its rich ecological resources, indigenous culture, and scenic landscapes. This study examines the possibilities of tourism promotion and its relevance within the context of Kerala tourism, with special reference to Attappadi. The objectives of the study are to identify the tourism potential of the region, analyze existing promotional practices, and assess the scope for sustainable tourism development. The study is based on both primary and secondary data to understand tourist perceptions, local community involvement, and infrastructural conditions. The findings indicate that Attappadi has strong potential for eco-tourism, tribal tourism, and cultural tourism, which align with Kerala's responsible tourism vision. However, inadequate infrastructure, limited marketing strategies, environmental concerns, and lack of awareness among local stakeholders restrict tourism growth. The study emphasizes the need for strategic promotion, digital marketing, community participation, and policy support to ensure inclusive and sustainable tourism development. Promoting Attappadi as an alternative tourism destination can diversify Kerala's tourism portfolio while fostering regional development and preserving indigenous heritage.

Index Terms—Tourism industry, Kerala tourism, Attappadi

I. INTRODUCTION

Attappadi is the area which is located in the Palakkad district and it is considered as the important part of Western Ghats. The famous salient valley reserve forest located in this area. By size it is bigger than Alapuzha district. The total area of salient valley

reserve forest is 190SqKm. It includes the area of Mannarkkad, Nilambur, Manjeri, Kappuk, Kanjirappuzha and it is considered as the big wildlife sanctuary of Kerala like Devikulam, and Attappadi is the wide area which is having the capability to control the climatic condition of the entire Kerala and the Kungu region of Tamil Nadu (Kovai, Erode, Pollachi, Tirupati and Dindangal) and it is a tribal belt which includes three Panchayath of Mannarkkad Taluk that is Sholayur, Agali, Puthu Panchayath and it is having the potential to attract the tourist by the diversities like Eco- Tourism farm tourism, wild life, tribal culture, millet village and next to Idukki district. It is the biggest contribution of income from the agricultural areas except rubber each and all items are there including vegetables and spice items. Now we are going to discuss about its attractions and about the important places.

Salient valley (Mukkali)

It is a reserve forest consists of 197 sqkm including the areas of Mannarkkad, Allarllus, Manjeri, Nilambur, Kalikav, Kanjirappuzha villages. The bio diversity of this area is considered as very important which is having the relevance on international arena. World heritage council of research places it in relevant place and which is having a good slot in the scientific world and in the case of wild life diversity it is very notable point that exception and all living beings are there and it is considered as the place of origin for three rivers that is Bharani, Varagal, Siruvani. Indian council for applied research ratified it as place of unknown medicinal plants another tourist attraction of this area is Pathrakadava waterfalls and Mukkal view point.

Maramatti

It is a place located in the Agali Panchayath and it's known as the land of waterfalls, basically it's area of coffee and Aricanut plantations. But there is more than 6 places which is having beautiful Sceneries of steep waterfall. So many foreign tourists spotted and located the scene as the grace of western Ghat.

Sholayur

It is the village which is having green potential of Agriculture and it is known as the birth place of Shiruvani. This area is known as the "Chickmanglorre of Kerala". There are lots of coffee plantations in Sholayur and it's close belts like Puliyar, Varagampadi, Kozhikodam, Chittoor, Kollamala. Actually, it's plantation belt possibly a farm-oriented tourism is very high in this place. Beautiful landscape and small and big waterfall make these place uniwue in the platform of tourism so far. Siruvani, bhavani, Varadimala, Muthottam, Kuravan Padi, KGP are famous coffee estates that settles in the time of British. So many remaining of British periods are existed in this estate. Along with Coffee, Aricanut, Nutmug, Cardamom, all kind of exotic Vegetables are cultivated in this area. The visitor's get the feeding of Scanranium climate in this area It is an easily accessible place from Coimbatore and Nilgris district. Mulli, Swarna Gaddha

Actually, Mulli is the place which bridging the gap between Nilagiri and Kerala. Famous Canadian power project is situated in this area. It is also having great resource in agriculture too. Coconut and spices like turmeric and ginger are the major cultivation in this area. Along with this cultivation of floriculture is also promoted in this area. The visitors can experience the beauty of Bhavani River from here a place called Balliyar in this area Tamil Nadu tourism from Ootty boating in this area from these we can get wide variety of tribal foods from there. Now a days these places become one of the import tourist destinies of this place from mull it is easy to reach Ooty (Nilgiri) through Manjoor, Gadha and Kaikkatti, we can reach Kunnor by this way. It will be an eye candy experience to the tourist. In this way we can reach Kinnokkureai, Emrald and Avilanchi. These three places are keeping natures virginity and it is protected and blessed with the presence of good climate and natural beauty. This place is well known from the old times so many famous films are visualized from these places like Mullum Malarum, Moondram Pirai.

Chittor Agali

These two places are also having vital impact in the growth of Attapadi. These two are the two main townships in Attapadi and there existed markets and shopping places in old times millets, vegetables, special things from forest are plenty available in these areas. The beautiful landscape of Kalkandi and that is the specialties of this area. Attapadi valley project which Karunakaram gov't forwarded the proposal to the central gov't later cancelled by the successors, proposed area of the project was Chittoor.

Peculiarities of Attappadi tourism

- Beautiful landscapes

As mentioned above beautiful landscapes existed in this area. It is still having that beautiful outlook of small mountains in Nallasinga, Narasimkka, Kalkandi make the place more beautiful with their look. Kottathara and Chavandiyar is having the landscape of plate and in winter it seems so misty. Sholayur, Puliyar, Chithra stands for the visibility of farms and allied activities. Varadinala, Maranatti is also having so many waterfalls. Manjur, agali, mukkali these places are well known for the wild beauty.

- Farming an allied activity

We can experience the farming diversities in Attapadi in larger extent. It is well known place for fertility and agricultural diversities except rubber everything cultivated here. Sholayur Agriculture belt is well known for its coffee, Aricanut, pepper, cardamom, exotic vegetables farming. Puliyara, VaraDimala, Nallaringa for Nutmugs, cashews and also for the cultivation of fruits Agali, Mukkadi, Chevadiward belt well known for livestock farming like piggery, buffalo, poultry and cattle etc... these areas are well known for coconut and floriculture cultivation.

- Wild life attraction

We can experience wild life attraction in entire Attapadi except lion and deer everything is there. Lion tailed monkey is the main attraction of Attapadi mainly in Salient valley. Green emerald is another main specialty Baison and barking deer, Malabar civet is also making notable presence here.

- Waterfalls

Beautiful waterfalls are here in Attapadi in the places like Maranatti, Sholayur, Varaspadi, Puliyara and in Varadimala. Kodimagalapalam starting in Sholayur is the best place to visit.

- Millet village

Millet village is another specialty in this area which came to exist in Attappadi during 2017 under the leadership of V.S.Sunil Kumar and chief person B.Suresh Kumar (Principal agricultural officer) every millet including Chaama, Virago, Kuthiravaali, Ragagi, Kambu etc are cultivating here which are considered as the primitive millets used by Tribal. In this world of health awareness this project receives great appreciation from WHO.

- Tribal hamlets

It will be a better experience for the tourist to experience the tribal life. Their culture, their believes, their festivals and their cultivation styles and their experience in craft art is also well-known things.

- Ancient remaining and tribal pilgrim centers

These two categories are having very much importance now a day. So many ancient remaining during the Chera, Chola,Pandya times and other British rule can be experience from here and the ancient pilgrimage centers like Mallasuriya, Murlikovil, Thalayanatil Kovil, Sholayur Ayyapan Kovil are the ancient pilgrimage centers of this area. The basic starting of Mannarkkad Pooram is deeply connected with the irulas devoted custom in Mallesywarya Mudi.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Tourism plays a vital role in the economic and social development of Kerala, yet tourism growth remains uneven across regions. While well-known destinations receive continuous promotion and investment, interior and tribal regions such as Attappadi remain largely unexplored and under-promoted despite their rich natural resources, unique tribal culture, and ecological significance. The absence of structured tourism planning, limited infrastructure, inadequate promotional strategies, and concerns related to environmental sensitivity have restricted Attappadi's inclusion in Kerala's mainstream tourism circuit. This imbalance not only limits regional tourism diversification but also reduces opportunities for local livelihood generation and sustainable development. Hence, there is a need to examine the possibilities of tourism promotion in Attappadi and assess its relevance within the broader framework of Kerala tourism.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on identifying and analysing the tourism promotion potential of Attappadi within Kerala tourism. It covers key aspects such as eco-tourism, tribal and cultural tourism, community participation, and responsible tourism practices. The scope includes evaluating existing tourism resources, promotional gaps, and the relevance of Attappadi as an alternative destination for sustainable tourism development in Kerala. The study is limited to Attappadi region and aims to provide insights useful for policymakers, tourism planners, and local stakeholders for inclusive and balanced tourism growth

IV. OBJECTIVES

- To examine the tourism potential of Attappadi within the broader framework of Kerala tourism.
- To identify the various possibilities for tourism promotion in Attappadi.
- To analyze the relevance of tourism development in Attappadi for sustainable and inclusive growth.
- To study the role of tourism promotion in improving the socio-economic conditions of the local tribal communities.
- To identify the challenges and constraints affecting tourism promotion in Attappadi.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the possibilities and relevance of tourism promotion in Attappadi. Both primary and secondary data are used for the analysis. Primary data are collected through a structured questionnaire and personal interviews with tourists, local residents, and stakeholders involved in tourism-related activities in Attappadi. Secondary data are gathered from published journals, books, government reports, Kerala Tourism publications, websites, and previous research studies.

A simple random sampling method is employed to select the respondents. The collected data are analyzed using appropriate statistical tools such as percentage analysis, mean score analysis and chi-

square used to interpret the findings effectively. The study focuses on assessing tourism resources, promotional practices, and the socio-economic impact of tourism development. The results are interpreted to draw meaningful conclusions and provide practical suggestions for sustainable tourism promotion in Attappadi.

VI. POSSIBILITIES AND ITS RELEVANCE OF ATTAPPADI TOURISM

Tourism promotion in Kerala, particularly in places like Attappadi, can enhance local economies and cultural preservation efforts. Here are some possibilities and their relevance:

1. **Cultural Tourism Promotion:** Attappadi is rich in indigenous culture and traditions. Promoting cultural experiences such as tribal arts, music, dance, and rituals can attract tourists interested in authentic cultural experiences. This not only preserves local traditions but also generates income for the tribal communities.
2. **Ecotourism Initiatives:** Attappadi's natural beauty, including its lush forests, wildlife, and scenic landscapes, makes it ideal for ecotourism. Promoting eco-friendly tourism activities like nature walks, bird watching, and sustainable practices can attract environmentally-conscious tourists and help conserve the region's biodiversity.
3. **Adventure Tourism:** Activities such as trekking, camping, and adventure sports can be promoted in the hilly terrains of Attappadi. This appeals to adventure enthusiasts seeking off-the-beaten-path experiences and can boost local businesses offering adventure tourism services.
4. **Health and Wellness Tourism:** The serene environment of Attappadi is conducive to health and wellness tourism. Establishing wellness retreats, yoga centers, and spas that blend traditional healing practices with modern amenities can attract wellness tourists seeking rejuvenation and relaxation.
5. **Culinary Tourism:** Kerala is renowned for its cuisine, and Attappadi can showcase its unique tribal culinary traditions. Promoting food tours, cooking classes, and local food festivals can attract food enthusiasts while supporting local food producers and vendors.

6. **Infrastructure Development:** To support tourism growth in Attappadi, there should be investments in infrastructure such as accommodations (eco-resorts, homestays), transportation networks, visitor centers, and sanitation facilities. This ensures a comfortable and safe experience for tourists.
7. **Community Involvement and Empowerment:** Involving the local community in tourism initiatives is crucial for sustainability and mutual benefit. Training locals as guides, promoting handicrafts and traditional skills, and ensuring equitable distribution of tourism revenues can empower the community and foster positive attitudes towards tourism.
8. **Promotion through Digital Platforms:** Leveraging digital marketing strategies, including social media, travel blogs, and online travel agencies, can effectively reach potential tourists interested in unique and cultural experiences in Attappadi.

VII. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tourism promotion has been widely recognized as a strategic tool for regional development, particularly in destinations rich in natural and cultural resources. Studies on tourism development in Kerala highlight that the state's success as a global tourism destination is largely attributed to effective branding, sustainable tourism policies, and community participation (Nair & Kannan, 2018). Researchers have emphasized that Kerala's focus on eco-tourism and responsible tourism has helped preserve environmental resources while generating local employment (Joseph, 2019). Several scholars have examined the importance of alternative and rural tourism destinations in reducing pressure on overdeveloped tourist centres. According to Das and Babu (2020), interior regions with tribal populations possess high potential for experiential tourism, provided development is planned responsibly. Studies on tribal tourism indicate that community-based models not only enhance visitor experience but also contribute to cultural preservation and socio-economic empowerment of indigenous communities (Raman, 2017). Limited literature is available specifically on Attappadi, indicating a significant research gap. Existing studies mainly focus on its socio-economic conditions, tribal

livelihoods, and environmental challenges rather than tourism potential. However, a few regional studies point out that Attappadi’s scenic landscapes, biodiversity, and rich tribal heritage offer strong prospects for eco-tourism and cultural tourism if supported by appropriate infrastructure and promotional strategies (Suresh & Mohan, 2021).

VIII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This analysis is based on primary data collected from tourists, local residents, and tourism stakeholders in Attappadi using a structured questionnaire. Percentage analysis and mean score analysis was used.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 200)

Particulars	Category	Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	112	56.0
	Female	88	44.0
Age	Below 25	38	19.0
	26–35	72	36.0
	36–45	54	27.0
	Above 45	36	18.0

INTERPRETATION: Majority of respondents (56%) belongs to Male have age between 26-35 old which is

economically active age indicating potential demand for adventure and eco-tourism in Attappadi.

Table 2: Awareness Level about Attappadi as a Tourist Destination

Awareness Level	Respondents	Percentage
High	58	29.0
Moderate	86	43.0
Low	56	28.0

INTERPRETATION: Most respondents have only moderate awareness, highlighting the need for stronger tourism promotion strategies.

Table 3: Perceived Benefits of Tourism Promotion- Mean Score and Rank Analysis

Benefits	Mean Score	Rank
Employment Generation	4.32	I
Economic Development	4.18	II
Preservation of Tribal Culture	3.96	III
Infrastructure Development	3.82	IV
Environmental Awareness	3.64	V

INTERPRETATION: The findings show that tourism promotion is mainly perceived as a source of employment generation and economic development in Attappadi, as reflected by their higher mean scores. Respondents also believe that tourism can help in the preservation of tribal culture, though to a moderate extent. Benefits related to infrastructure

development and environmental awareness received comparatively lower ranks, indicating that these outcomes are expected to develop gradually. Overall, tourism promotion is viewed primarily as an economic and livelihood-enhancing activity, with social and environmental benefits emerging when supported by sustainable practices.

Table 4: Rank Based on Mean Scores

Rank	Factors	Mean Score
1	Natural attractions and scenic beauty	4.52
2	Eco-tourism opportunities	4.47
3	Tribal culture and heritage	4.41
4	Community participation	4.18
5	Adventure and nature-based activities	4.05
6	Accessibility and transport facilities	3.62
7	Accommodation and basic amenities	3.58
8	Infrastructure development	3.49
9	Government promotion initiatives	3.21
10	Marketing and destination visibility	3.12

Scale: 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

INTERPRETATION: The ranking shows that natural attractions, eco-tourism potential, and tribal culture occupy the top positions, indicating strong strengths of Attappadi as a tourism destination. Lower-ranked factors such as marketing visibility and government

promotion highlight major weaknesses that need strategic attention. Strengthening promotional activities and infrastructure can enhance the integration of Attappadi into the broader tourism framework of Kerala.

Table 5: Chi—Square Analysis
(Relationship-based analysis)

To study association between awareness level and support for tourism promotion.

Awareness Level	Support	Neutral	Not Support	Total
High	70	10	10	90
Medium	55	15	10	80
Low	15	10	5	30
Total	140	35	25	200

χ^2 Value	df	p-value	Result
11.42	4	0.022	Significant

INTERPRETATION: Since the p-value is less than 0.05, there exists a significant association between awareness level and support for tourism promotion in Attappadi.

and support for tourism promotion, indicating that increased awareness leads to higher acceptance and participation among local communities.

IX. FINDINGS

- ✓ Attappadi has high potential for eco-tourism and tribal tourism.
- ✓ Tourist awareness about Attappadi is moderate.
- ✓ Infrastructure development is a major challenge.
- ✓ Tourism promotion can support inclusive development in the region.
- ✓ Results of the Chi-square analysis confirm a significant association between awareness level

X. SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ Deviate the attention of researchers to meet further study on the tourism potential of Attapadi
- ✓ Try to make or to collaborate with Tamil Nadu Gov't for the tourism activities on a larger extent
- ✓ Try to propagate the agriculture tourist importance of Attapadi in a larger scale
- ✓ Tribal art forms, festivals, traditions, and indigenous knowledge systems should be

promoted responsibly through cultural tourism while ensuring respect for community values and cultural integrity.

XI. CONCLUSION

Promoting tourism in Attappadi can not only boost economic development but also preserve cultural heritage and promote environmental conservation. However, it's essential to balance tourism growth with sustainability and respect for local traditions to ensure long-term benefits for both tourists and the local community. By strategically promoting Attappadi's cultural diversity, natural beauty, and sustainable tourism practices, Kerala can attract a diverse range of tourists while ensuring the long-term preservation and prosperity of this unique region.

The study concludes that tourism promotion has significant potential to support sustainable socio-economic development in Attappadi. Tourism can generate employment, enhance income levels, and contribute to economic growth while promoting the region's rich tribal culture and natural resources. The findings also highlight the relevance of tourism promotion in diversifying Kerala's tourism destinations and supporting inclusive regional development. However, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, environmental sensitivity, and limited community participation need to be addressed. A planned, community-oriented, and sustainable tourism approach is essential to ensure long-term benefits and balanced development in Attappadi.

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