

Palakkad Gap And Village Tourism of Kerala: A Case Study of Kollengode Village Tourism

Dr. Nagaraj S

Associate Professor, Dept. of Economics

Govt. College Chittur, Palakkad, Kerala-678104

doi.org/10.64643/IJIRTV13I1-204855-459

Abstract—Village tourism plays a significant role in India's socio-economic development by creating employment opportunities and generating additional income for rural communities. It enables villagers to earn through home stays, handicrafts, local cuisine, transportation, and guiding services, thereby reducing dependence on agriculture. The village tourism contributes to rural development, cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, and inclusive economic growth in India. The Palakkad Gap is a natural break in the Western Ghats Mountain range that runs along India's west coast. It is a significant influencing factors of climate, culture, and economic activities in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Kollengode Village, situated near Palakkad, reflects rural Kerala life, cultural heritage, and natural attractions.

Index Terms—Western Ghats, Palakkad Gap, Village Tourism, Cultural heritage

I. INTRODUCTION

The Palakkad Gap is one of the most remarkable geographical features of South India, forming a natural break in the majestic Western Ghats between the Nilgiri Hills in the north and the Anamalai Hills in the south. Stretching approximately 30–40 km in width, it serves as a vital corridor connecting Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The gap has played a significant role in shaping the region's climate, biodiversity, trade, transportation, and cultural exchange for centuries. It allows the southwest monsoon winds to pass through the mountains and has historically functioned as the gateway to Kerala from the eastern plains. Nestled within this unique landscape is Kollengode, a picturesque town in Palakkad district renowned for its scenic beauty, fertile paddy fields, traditional villages, and rich cultural heritage. Surrounded by the foothills of the Western Ghats, Kollengode offers an ideal

setting for eco-tourism activities such as nature walks, birdwatching, cycling, village experiences, and exploration of local biodiversity.

The region's tranquil environment, agricultural landscapes, and proximity to forest ecosystems provide visitors with opportunities to experience sustainable tourism while appreciating the ecological significance of the Palakkad Gap. Kollengode Eco-Tourism promotes responsible travel that conserves natural resources, supports local communities, and enhances awareness of the area's unique environmental and cultural heritage.

By combining conservation, education, and community participation, the destination offers a model for sustainable tourism in Kerala, allowing visitors to connect with nature while contributing to the preservation of this ecologically important region.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Kollengode is a traditional village located near Palakkad town. Known for its scenic beauty, cultural heritage, and agricultural economy, it offers a glimpse into authentic rural life in Kerala. Green paddy fields and lakes, Hills and plantations, Bird sanctuaries and scenic spots, ancient temples, Festivals and folk performances, Local handicraft centers, also Kollengode tourism provides farm stays, village walks and traditional Kerala cuisine experiences. Kollengode Palace (Heritage Landmark), Thamarapadam and Viewpoints, Thamarapadam Scenic Spot, Vamala and Vengappara Viewpoints. Sustainable tourism can help preserve nature and culture while enhancing economic benefits.

It Encourages solar energy, rainwater harvesting, and waste reduction in home stays. Above all it satisfies the agricultural integration in Kerala.

III. STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS OF THE STUDY

As tourism grows, rural areas often experience improvements in infrastructure such as roads, sanitation, communication facilities, and public services, which enhance the quality of life for local residents. Furthermore, village tourism supports environmental conservation by promoting sustainable tourism practices and encouraging the protection of natural resources and rural landscapes. It helps reduce rural-to-urban migration by creating livelihood opportunities within villages, allowing people to remain in their communities while earning a stable income. Village tourism also fosters cultural exchange between visitors and local residents, increasing awareness and appreciation of India's diverse traditions and ways of life. Although tourism in Kollengode contributes to local income in several ways, it has so many problems facing. The most important challenges in kollengode tourism development are limited infrastructure (roads, signage, and public toilets), seasonal tourism affecting income stability, lack of professional tour management, limited awareness among tourists, environmental degradation due to unplanned development, waste management, environmental concerns with, insufficient promotional activities and accessibility issues in some remote areas.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mohan Pai (2023) Tourists engage in farming experiences such as planting, harvesting, and traditional food preparation, enhancing income and awareness of farming culture. Tourism also encourages investment in roads, sanitation, and cultural preservation, improving overall living standards.

T. N. Narendra Varma (2021) Kollengode is widely admired for its vast green paddy fields, coconut groves, and serene rural landscape, which provide a peaceful contrast to urban life. The scenery changes with the seasons — emerald green during monsoons and golden at harvest — making it a beautiful spot for nature lovers and photographers. Many visitors simply enjoy walking through the fields, cycling on village roads, and capturing the scenic vistas of the

Nelliyampathy hills in the distance — a hallmark of Kollengode's rural charm.

Rajiv Kumar (2019) An emerging part of Kollengode's tourism is farm-based tourism like the “*Kudilidam*” experience, where visitors can sit in rustic huts surrounded by paddy fields and hills. This allows tourists to immerse themselves in traditional farming life, tranquillity, and cultural interaction.

V. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The study is based on both descriptive and analytical methods. The study uses both primary and secondary data sources to ensure accuracy and reliability.

Primary data

A field visit was conducted to Kollengode village and nearby tourism spots to observe the tourist inflow, local environment and infrastructure, Interaction between tourists and local residents and Cleanliness, waste disposal and transport facilities. The direct observation helped in understanding the behaviour of tourists, impact of tourism on paddy fields and village life, traffic congestion and overcrowding issues and facilities available for tourists. Also, informal interviews were conducted with the local residents, shop owners and tea stall operators, farmers involved in farm tourism and auto drivers and local guides

Secondary data

The secondary data was collected from the books related to kerala tourism, western

Ghats and rural tourism, government publications and reports of Kerala tourism department, newspapers such as Hindu, Indian Express, Manorama, travel magazines and journals, online articles, research papers and tourism websites.

Sampling Method

A convenience sampling method was adopted with constituting 320 respondents due to time and resource limitations. The sample included the local residents, small business owners and tourists visiting the village. This method was suitable for understanding general perceptions and experiences related to tourism.

Limitations of the Study

The important limitations of the study are listed below:

- Time constraints limited detailed surveys

- Some respondents were unwilling to share detailed information
- Lack of official tourism statistics specific to Kollengode
- Dependence on secondary sources for certain historical and economic data

Despite these limitations, the data collected is sufficient to draw meaningful conclusions.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The study uses adequately statistical tools like tabular presentation and modern technique called Logistic Regression model to explain data in precise format.

A. Gender

In the study 320 respondents are surveyed. The gender wise classifications are listed below:

Table 1: Gender classification

No.	Gender	No. of people	% of people
1	Male	184	57.5
2	Female	136	42.5
	Total	320	100

Source: primary data

B. Age

The age wise classifications of tourists are four categories namely below 20, 20-40, 40-60 and above 60 ages in the study area which are given below:

Table 2: Age classification

No.	Male	% of male	Female	% of female
Below 20	56	30	38	28
20-40	69	38	62	46
40-60	47	25	28	21
Above 60	12	7	8	5
Total	184	100	136	100
Average	46		34	

Source: primary data

C. Preference of visitors

The visitors have different preference for choosing particular place. In the study the visitors are reported their preference for choosing this particular visiting

spot. The tourists’ preferences are nearest place, better use of recreation, enjoy natural beauty, educational study tour or photography purpose. It is explained Logistic Regression model.

Table 3: Preference of visitors using of Logistic Regression Analysis

No	Determinants of occupational change	Coefficients	P value
1	Nearest place (male=1, female=0)	0.367	(0.289)
2	Recreation (male=1, female =0)	0.813**	(0.033)
3	Enjoy natural beauty (male=1, female =0))	0.085	(0.895)
4	Educational purpose (male=1, female =0)	1.211**	(0.0242)
5	Photography (male=1, female =0)	1.994**	(0.001)
	Constant	2.939*	(0.082)
	-2 Log likelihood	80.943(0.000)	
	Cox & Snell R Square	0.14	

Source: Compiled from collected data.

Note: Logistic Regression Analysis is study of finding the odd ratio among the two explanatory variables.

The table explained that the enjoyment of natural beauty of Kollengode places is the highest preference than other items. In this, male tourist is 85% than female proportions which only constitutes 15%. The second preference is nearest place of journey. In this female prefer 64% than male which only covers 36%. It shows that female prefer nearest areas to travelling due to physical problems, less time to travel or financial problems. The least preferences of tourists to select Kollengode places is taking photography. It only covers 0.1%. in male proportion is higher than female.

Finding of the study

The major findings of study are given below:

1. The male tourists cover 58 % and female are 42% to the study areas.
2. The age category of 20-40 is more prefer to site seeing in the study areas in both male and female.
3. The age group of 60 and above are least prefer to tour in the study areas in both male and female.
4. The most attracting factor of study areas is enjoying natural beauty.
5. The least preference of tourists is taking photography in the study areas.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study put forward some suggestions to improve tourism development of Kollengode are listed below:

1. Improve road connectivity and signage
2. Develop tourism information centers
3. Train local youth in hospitality and guiding
4. Promote Kollengode and Palakkad Gap through social media and websites
5. Encourage eco-tourism and cultural experiences
6. Collaborate with travel agencies and Kerala Tourism.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Kollengode tourism importance lies in its unique rural character, serene landscapes, and cultural richness. However, the current situation reflects both rapid popularity and significant challenges. To sustain tourism that benefits visitors and residents structured planning, infrastructure investment, community involvement and eco-friendly policies are essential. Future success will depend on balancing economic gains with environmental conservation and cultural preservation, ensuring that Kollengode remains “beautiful” not just on social media, but in reality, for generations to come.

REFERENCES

- [1] M. Pai, “Explores the Western Ghats’ geography, topography, tribes, and conservation,” *Journal of Management Research*, vol. 7, pp. 165–179, 2025.
- [2] P. V., “A study on eco-tourism destinations in Kerala,” *International Journal of Management*, vol. 3, pp. 176–199, 2024.
- [3] R. Kumar, “Service quality in rural tourism: A prescriptive approach,” *IIMK Adarsh Journal of*

Management Research, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 69–87, 2022.

- [4] T. N. Narendra Varma, “Experiential tourism and homestays in Kerala,” *International Journal of Research and Review*, vol. 5, pp. 36–42, 2018.
- [5] M. P. K., “An analysis of the economic impact of tourism in Kerala,” *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, vol. 4, pp. 202–211, 2016.
- [6] S. Kadur and Kamaljit, “India’s Western Ghats: A vanishing heritage,” *International Journal of Business Economics and Management Research*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 216–222, 2015.