

# Negative Cultural Impacts Due To Tourism Development-A Comparative Study between Urban and Rural Tourist Centres of Kerala

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**Abstract – The study is conducted by selecting a sample of four hundred respondents from urban and rural tourist centres of Kerala in order to compare the influence of negative cultural factors among those two. One hundred and fifty one respondents are selected from urban centres and two hundred and forty nine from rural centres. The main objective of the study is to find out which centre is worst affected by negative cultural impacts due to the development of tourism. It is found out from the study that in all the six variables indicating the negative cultural impact, the urban centres of Kerala are leading with the highest Mean Scores. Hence urban centres are popularly affected by those factors than rural.**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Kerala globally known as God's Own Country by reason of an advertisement campaign initiated by Kerala Tourism Development Corporation is a world famous tourist centre. Its culture, traditions, festivals and modern society are unique and internationally known. Its rich forests, healthy rivers and beautiful landscapes are natural marvels of the world. Kerala is famous especially for its eco-tourism and responsible tourism initiatives. Tourism industry is the backbone of the state's economy by contributing a sizeable portion of its GDP. Tourism development and host culture are strongly related. Tourism interfere the cultural originality in multiple ways. To a certain extent it strengthens the host culture but at the same time it distracts the virginity of the culture also. How urban and rural tourist centres of Kerala are affected by the negative cultural impacts is the subject matter of this study.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Tourism has a multiple impact on the culture of the locality. It influences culture of the region positively and negatively. Tourism experiences prove that it is powerful enough to make a cultural transition. It may be drifted positively or negatively according to the circumstances prevailing in the locality. The study tries to bring out specifically the negative cultural impacts of tourism. Cultural commoditization, standardization, cultural clashes etc. are some of the negative impacts. Kerala is a place of rich culture and ancient traditions and its monuments are internationally renowned. Tourist interventions may disturb the culture adversely and the study tries to

bring out how these negative cultural impacts vary with urban and rural centres of Kerala. That means cross cultural interaction can make significant changes in the cultural lifestyle of host population. The level and intensity of this issue changes with respect to the tourist centre's geographical location. Hence the study makes a comparison between a sample of tourist centres selected in urban and rural Kerala. The problem is stated as '**NEGATIVE CULTURAL IMPACTS DUE TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT-A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL TOURIST CENTRES OF KERALA**'.

## 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

The paper has the following objectives;

1. To identify the negative cultural impacts in Kerala due to tourism development.
2. To know whether urban or rural centres are worst affected in terms of the identified negative cultural impacts.
3. To make suggestions to reduce negative cultural impacts

## 4. METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING DESIGN

Both primary and secondary data are used in the study. A sample of 151 respondents belonging to urban centres and 249 of rural centres are selected by Simple Random Sampling Method

for collecting primary data. Hence the total sample size is 400. Secondary data is collected from different published sources like Department Publications, Magazines, News Papers, Journals, Reference Books, Library Materials and the internet.

## 5. NEGATIVE CULTURAL IMPACTS DUE TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The development of tourism invites a lot of distractions to the culture of a region. Those distractions are called negative cultural impacts. The following are the major cultural negatives identified for the study;

### 5.1. Cultural Degradation

The originality of the culture is degraded by the interference of tourists. Hence the culture of the locality will lose its original values to get a new mixed form. The continuous arrival and interaction of tourists will slowly degrade its true nature.

### 5.2. Cultural Commoditization

For higher tourism revenues and to attract more tourists the authorities sell culture as a commodity. That means culture is traded like products or commodities for tourist satisfaction. It eventually reduces the importance of culture of the region.

### 5.3. Cultural Disrespect

Tourists are coming to visit a centre from different parts of the world. They do not know the importance of the culture of a locality which is considered divine by the host community. The tourists because of their ignorance disrespect the local culture, traditions and monuments.

### 5.4. Loss of Authenticity

Cross cultural interaction of tourist culture with host culture deteriorates the importance and authenticity of the host culture.

### 5.5. Standardisation

The culture of the locality is standardized for the sake of tourist satisfaction. That means it is made attractive by modification to suit the demands of the tourists just like packages.

### 5.6. Cultural Clashes

Disrespect of culture by tourists often leads to cultural clashes. The tourist culture and the host culture might be contrary to one another leading to a cultural clash.

## 6. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The primary data collected through the questionnaire from four hundred respondents comprising 151 from urban centres and 249 from rural centres of different parts of Kerala are compared by using descriptive statistics including Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation. Finally the significant difference of the variations is tested by using ANOVA. The analysis is done by using SPSS Software.

Table 1.1 Descriptive Statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Cultural Degradation	Urban	151	<b>28.9073</b>	5.92098	.48184
	Rural	249	26.2651	6.89100	.43670
	Total	400	27.2625	6.65879	.33294
Cultural Commoditization	Urban	151	<b>19.1391</b>	3.40204	.27685
	Rural	249	16.3092	4.56105	.28904
	Total	400	17.3775	4.37812	.21891
Cultural Disrespect	Urban	151	<b>20.6159</b>	5.35395	.43570
	Rural	249	18.6827	5.08157	.32203
	Total	400	19.4125	5.26371	.26319
Loss of Authenticity	Urban	151	<b>24.8675</b>	6.01628	.48960
	Rural	249	22.6627	6.49990	.41191
	Total	400	23.4950	6.40410	.32021
Standardisation	Urban	151	<b>18.6424</b>	3.49541	.28445
	Rural	249	16.7791	4.33890	.27497
	Total	400	17.4825	4.13672	.20684
Cultural Clashes	Urban	151	<b>17.9603</b>	4.08229	.33221
	Rural	249	15.9799	5.14425	.32600
	Total	400	16.7275	4.86182	.24309

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it is observed that in all the six negative cultural impacts the urban centres are leading with Mean Scores **28.9073** for Cultural Degradation, **19.1391** for Cultural Commoditisation, **20.6159** for Cultural Disrespect, **24.8675** for Loss of Authenticity, **18.6424** for Standardisation and **17.9603** for Cultural Clashes. That means in the opinion of the respondents selected for the study all the six negatives are more popular with respect to urban tourist centres than with rural.

Table 1.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Cultural Degradation	Between Groups	656.229	1	656.229	15.332	.000*
	Within Groups	17035.208	398	42.802		
	Total	17691.437	399			
Cultural Commoditization	Between Groups	752.729	1	752.729	43.448	.000*
	Within Groups	6895.268	398	17.325		
	Total	7647.998	399			
Cultural Disrespect	Between Groups	351.280	1	351.280	13.062	.000*
	Within Groups	10703.658	398	26.894		
	Total	11054.937	399			
Loss of Authenticity	Between Groups	456.976	1	456.976	11.434	.001*
	Within Groups	15907.014	398	39.967		
	Total	16363.990	399			
Standardisation	Between Groups	326.337	1	326.337	19.977	.000*
	Within Groups	6501.540	398	16.336		
	Total	6827.877	399			
Cultural Clashes	Between Groups	368.636	1	368.636	16.189	.000*
	Within Groups	9062.661	398	22.771		
	Total	9431.298	399			

Source: Primary Data

\*Significant at 1% Level of Significance

Now it time to test whether those differences in Mean Scores are significant by using F-Test with the help of ANOVA. The following hypotheses are used to test the variation;

***H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the Mean Scores of urban and rural tourist centres with reference to negative cultural impacts***

***H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference between the Mean Scores of urban and rural tourist centres with reference to negative cultural impacts***

From the above table it is visible that all the six variables under study are varying significantly between the urban and rural places of tourist centres. The variations are found to be significant at 1% Level of Significance in all cases as ***p<0.01*** (vide last column of the table). Hence, the null hypotheses are rejected and the alternate hypotheses are accepted at 1% level meaning there is significant difference between the Mean Scores of urban and rural tourist centres of Kerala with respect to negative cultural impacts.

## 7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. In the case of the first negative cultural impact, Cultural Degradation the urban centres are leading with a Mean Score of **28.9073** indicating the issue is more popular in urban areas than in rural
2. Considering the second variable Cultural Commoditization also the urban area is leading with a Mean Score of **19.1391** representing the problem is more prevalent in urban centres.
3. Regarding Cultural Disrespect also urban tourist centres of Kerala are leading with an Average of **20.6159** showing the problem less popular with rural areas.
4. Loss of Authenticity being the fourth variable is also considered as a more prominent issue in urban centres as its Average Score is **24.8675** higher than that of rural centres.
5. Considering standardization the Mean Score of urban centres is **18.6424** which is higher than that of rural centres indicating the problem is prevailing more in urban centres.
6. The sixth indicator of negative cultural impacts called Cultural Clashes is also prevalent in urban than in rural centres of Kerala as its Mean Score **17.9603** is higher than that of rural.

## 8. SUGGESTIONS

From the above discussions of the paper the following suggestions are evolved;

1. Cultural tourism should be identified as a separate area by authorities and should be given special consideration so that the tourists will not disrespect the culture of the centres.
2. An education drive should be undertaken both for host community as well as for the guest community so that both uphold the dignity of cultural sites.
3. From the study it is seen that urban centres are worst affected by cultural negative impacts. Hence urgent steps should be undertaken to revive the cultural traditions of such centres by campaigning and media advertising.

## 9. CONCLUSION

Kerala's cultural traditions are unique compared to other states of India. Its monuments and cultural sites and temples are world famous. At the same time it is one among the world famous tourist spots also. As per the report of the National Geographic Traveler Magazine Kerala is one among the ten paradises on the world. The scale of tourist arrivals to the state is alarmingly high. Tourism industry is a major revenue earner to the state contributing significantly to its GDP. The government has to deal tourism development with utmost care as there is a high potential to destroy the virginity of the culture of the state due to tourist interference.

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