



An Analysis of the Cultural Tourism Product Satisfaction Level in Kerala

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Abstract

Cultural Tourism implies “A type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. Kerala, referred to as ‘God’s Own Country’, enjoys unique geographical features and its classical art forms, colourful festivals, exotic cuisine etc., are some of the cultural marvels that attract travellers. Though the share of cultural tourism in the tourism development of the state has not been assessed in quantitative terms, the arrival of foreign and domestic tourists to cultural tourism destinations in Kerala undoubtedly accentuate the contribution of cultural tourism to the state’s exchequer. The level of satisfaction that cultural products that the state tourism offers is subjected to analysis to explore the principal factors and confirm whether they are significant reflections of satisfaction from cultural products. The study asserts the need for redefining and revamping the role of cultural events, monuments such as the Synagogue and other religious places and aims to provide a high level of satisfaction so as to attract cultural tourists to destinations in Kerala.

Keywords: Cultural tourism, Cultural tourism products, Monuments, Rituals, Festivals, Folklore

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1. Introduction

Cultural tourism, centred on cultural principles, is the process of using cultural heritage principles to design tourism products that satisfy customer needs, offer benefits to society and the economy, and preserve cultural values. The UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) views the convergence between tourism and culture and the increasing interest of visitors in cultural experiences to bring unique opportunities for the tourism sector³.

UNESCO article on Cultural tourism views it as primarily location-based, motivated by a desire to interact and experience culture first-hand. A tourism destination's tangible and intangible cultural assets, including its heritage, performing arts, handicrafts, rituals, and gastronomy, are presented for tourists to discover, study, and enjoy⁴.

Notwithstanding the fact that the boundary that distinguishes cultural tourism and heritage tourism is intricate, several major types of heritage are included under the umbrella term "cultural heritage," according to UNESCO. Paintings, sculptures, coins, and manuscripts are examples of movable cultural heritage. Monuments, archaeological sites, buildings and historic sites, artefacts, and other items that are thought to be valuable enough to be preserved constitute tangible cultural heritage. Rituals, performing arts, and intangible cultural assets, such as oral traditions or living expressions that have been passed down to us from our ancestors, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social customs, rituals, holiday celebrations, and knowledge and customs relating to nature, the cosmos, or the afterlife, are considered to be part of our intangible cultural heritage.

Tourism played an important role as a foreign exchange earner for India till 2019 before the global pandemic Covid 19 ruled out physical movements of humans. However, the provisional figures of the Bureau of Immigration, Government of India for May 2022 shows a 2043.7% increase of Foreign Tourist Arrivals over May 2021, which

³ NGUYEN, CH (2022). Factors Affecting the Development of Cultural Tourism in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 9 (3), 123-133. <https://doi.org/10.13106/JAFEB.2022.VOL9.NO3.0123>

⁴ <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-and-culture>

indicates the recovery of Indian tourism from the firm grip of travel restrictions imposed on account of Covid 19 across the globe. Though tourism has been the most used piece for researchers, cultural tourism and its share in India's tourism has been evading the attention of analysts and investigators. One of the main attractions for tourists is cultural tourism, and it is well-known that many tourists who intend to visit India concentrate their trip on the cultural and heritage values that India possesses. Even if it is not purely cultural, many travellers coming to India consider cultural tourism as a by-product of their travel. We may always assert that every tourist site includes unintended cultural tourism. If treated and cared for properly, India, with its vast cultural heritage and diverse cultural spots, can leave an indelible impact on the global map.

2. The Problem

Cultural tourism is defined by the UNWTO as tourism centred on cultural attractions and products and it is one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism industry, accounting for an estimated 40% of all tourism worldwide⁵. Cultural tourism is a continuously evolving sub-sector, which continues to be transformed by changing lifestyles, burgeoning forms of culture and creativity, and traditional and digital innovation.

Kerala, the tiny state at the southern tip of the Indian peninsula, with high human development indices when compared to other Indian states has been dependent to a greater extent on tourism for its economic and social development. The fertility provided by God's own endowment of lush green natural landscapes and a very high literacy rate coupled with a generous hospitality towards guests, makes the state conducive to espouse tourism as the reliable tool for laying the foundation of development whether economic, social or environmental.

⁵ <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/cutting-edge-bringing-cultural-tourism-back-game#:~:text=The%20cultural%20sector%20as%20a%20whole%20depends%20greatly%20on%20the%20tourism%20industry.&text=Cultural%20tourism%20%2D%20defined%20by%20the,40%25%20of%20all%20tourism%20worldwide.t>

Man-made attractions which are not deliberately created to attract tourists but form part of the culture of the region are known as cultural tourism products. The cultural environment of tourism is associated with literature, music, drama, poetry, painting, sculpture, folklore, carvings, handicrafts, arts, fairs, festivals, monuments, architecture, historical sites, museums, religious buildings, cultural sites and archaeological sites as well as contemporary living Centres. The state of Kerala, endowed with Art forms, handicrafts, fairs, festivals, mementos, folk tales, architecture and religious sites are very impressive to tourists who visit to the state. With a rich heritage and cultural products that promotes cultural pursuits, international tourists and domestic tourists from other parts of India can be wooed to seek the heritage, culture and uniqueness of the state, the scope of which opens unlimited vistas of development through tourism.

The problem under investigation is protection of natural and built heritage as well as promotion of local festivals, art forms and culinary experiences so as to provide a high quality of experience for visitors that leads to satisfaction and results in loyalty of visitors to the state and towards its cultural tourism. The neglected and hidden potential of Kerala's cultural tourism destinations as well as products need to be tapped. By addressing the problem identified, this study attempts to pave the way for improving the efficiency of the cultural tourism offered by the state and the state's development through such tourism.

3. Review of Literature

Maitland and Newman (2008) are of the view that visitors are not drawn by tourist attractions but by "qualities of place and culture - 'architecture', 'people', 'food', 'culture' and 'diversity.'" McIntosh and Goeldner (1986) consider cultural tourism as comprising "all aspects of travel, whereby travellers learn about the history and heritage of others or about their contemporary ways of life or thought".

A focal point for visitor attention and experience (Krolikowski & Brown, 2008), is the physical form as defined by architecture that

aestheticizes areas with recognisable marks that provide a specific feeling of place (Edwards, Griffin, and Hayllar, 2008).

Cultural assets can also carry the economic benefits since it is one of the attractions of cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is an experience for urban tourists to experience new things and enjoy the sensation of being in a real and authentic place (Koerniawaty et.al., 2021).

Pedersen (2002) in the Practical Manual for World Heritage Site Managers specifies criteria for the inclusion of cultural properties on the World Heritage List that includes monuments (architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science), groups of buildings (groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science) and sites (works of man or the combined works of nature and of man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of view).

Most cultural tourism products, such as cultural events, festivals, and etc., could provide opportunities for encouraging tourists' participation (McKercher & du Cros, 2002). A unique asset, culture, or building is not a tourist attraction unless its tourism potential is actualized by enabling its consumption.

Culture, in its widest sense, provides a set of material and symbolic resources that are abundant in supply and highly mobile (Rojek & Urry, 1997; Smith & Robinson, 2006).

According to Lvanovic (2008), cultural resources available within defined geographic areas form a broad cultural base for tourism development. Since different destinations provide different products of cultural processes, cultural resources as a cultural base exemplify the sense of a place. The uniqueness of a cultural destination is the attribute that distinguishes it from other destinations.

4. Research Question and Objective

With an abundant supply of core cultural products such as Palaces, Festivals, Cultural fairs & events, Boat races, Forts, Caves, Performing Arts-Music/dance/theatres etc. the Indian state of Kerala offers tremendous potential for cultural tourism that can induce economic and socio-cultural development of the host community in the state. The available literature on cultural tourism products and resources paves way for effective tapping of cultural tourism potentials where such architecture and traditionally rich rituals and festivals exist. The research question that popped up from the review of extant literature was how far the different cultural tourism products offered by Kerala influence the satisfaction level of tourists' perceptions and expectations?

This paper attempts to explore the factors impacting the cultural tourism products offered in Kerala and determine whether such components are significant in prediction of cultural tourism products.

5. Methodology

This study is based on the satisfaction level responses of tourists visiting cultural tourism destinations in Kerala regarding the cultural tourism products available. A sample of 428 respondents was selected by multi-stage random sampling, where the state of Kerala was divided into 3 regions in the first stage and selecting 2 districts from regions based on the importance of cultural tourism destinations in the second stage and selecting respondents from such destinations in the third stage. The sample consisted of 126 foreign tourists and 302 domestic tourists which in turn includes tourists from within Kerala and other states of India.

The level of satisfaction from cultural products offered by Kerala were obtained on a 5-point scale ranging from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. The data set consisting of 428 observations was randomly split into two equal halves each consisting of 214 observations. The first split data set was used for exploratory factor analysis, while the second split data set was used for confirmatory factor analysis. The satisfaction ratings were subjected to exploratory factor analysis using dimension reduction on 19 cultural products offered by

cultural tourism destinations in Kerala. The principal components extracted with a criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1, were named to represent first order latent variables in the measurement model of cultural products.

6. Results and Discussion

The profile of the respondents is sketched out in Table 1.

| Age Group | n | % | Gender | n | % |
|----------------|-----|-------|--------------------------|-------|------|
| <=20 years | 31 | 7.2 | Male | 251 | 58.6 |
| 21-30 years | 177 | 41.4 | Female | 177 | 41.4 |
| 31-40 years | 90 | 21.0 | | Total | 428 |
| 41-50 years | 94 | 22.0 | Category | n | % |
| 51-60 years | 20 | 4.7 | Domestic | 302 | 70.6 |
| >= 61 years | 16 | 3.7 | Foreign | 126 | 29.4 |
| Total | 428 | 100.0 | | Total | 428 |
| | | | | 100 | |
| Marital Status | n | % | Monthly Income | n | % |
| Married | 283 | 66.1 | Below Rs. 50000 pm | 189 | 44.2 |
| Single | 123 | 28.7 | Rs. 50001 -Rs. 100000 pm | 184 | 43.0 |
| Divorced | 16 | 3.7 | Rs. 100001-Rs. 150000 pm | 39 | 9.1 |
| Widowed | 6 | 1.4 | Above Rs. 150001 pm | 16 | 3.7 |
| Total | 428 | 100 | | Total | 428 |
| | | | | 100 | |

The sample consisted of 41.4 percent of respondents within the age group of 21 to 30 years of which 58.6 percent were male. While nearly 30 percent of the respondents were foreign tourists, two third of total respondents were married. Eighty-seven per cent of the respondents were from relatively low-income groups with income less than ₹100000 per month.

A principal component analysis was run on 19 cultural heritage tourism products offered by Kerala, in which the respondents were required to rate their satisfaction on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 for very dissatisfied to 5 for very satisfied. The descriptive statistics of the 19 variables are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

| | Mean | SD | N |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|-----|
| Palaces | 3.9299 | .96888 | 214 |
| Religious Places | 4.6262 | .53116 | 214 |
| Fairs and Festivals | 4.3879 | .75311 | 214 |
| Cultural events | 4.6776 | .49766 | 214 |
| Boat races | 3.3972 | .93256 | 214 |
| Handicrafts | 3.4533 | .89083 | 214 |
| Forts | 3.5280 | .88634 | 214 |
| Historical places | 3.6822 | .85138 | 214 |
| Cultural Villages | 3.1869 | .95564 | 214 |
| Caves | 3.0280 | .85534 | 214 |
| Galleries | 3.9206 | .57999 | 214 |
| Museums | 4.3037 | .70962 | 214 |
| Performing Arts-Music/dance /theatres | 3.3832 | .93090 | 214 |
| Visual arts Paintings/Sculpture | 3.9813 | .88261 | 214 |
| Synagogue | 4.5000 | .67657 | 214 |
| Cuisine | 2.7944 | .78409 | 214 |
| Architectures | 3.0561 | .83167 | 214 |
| Poetry and literature | 3.1589 | .88439 | 214 |
| Traditional Scenery | 3.5093 | .60313 | 214 |

Cultural fairs and events with the highest mean score of 4.6776 ± 0.497 was found to be the most satisfying cultural product offered by Kerala's cultural tourism, while the least satisfying one was Cuisine as indicated by the lowest mean score of 2.7944 ± 0.784 . All other cultural products other than Cuisine were found to have a mean score greater than 3.00 which indicates average or more than average satisfaction.

A careful scan of the correlation coefficients revealed that the highest correlation is 0.866. The determinant of the correlation matrix was found to be $5.040E-5$ i.e., 0.00005040 which is greater than 0.00001 (Field 2012 p771). Therefore, multicollinearity was not found to be a

problem for this set of data. The measures of sampling adequacy and presence of identity matrix was checked and the results of such as well as the communalities extracted are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 KMO and Bartlett's Test

| | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .818 |
| | Approx. Chi-Square | 5121.181 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | df | 171 |
| | Sig. | 0.000 |
| Communalities | Initial | Extraction |
| Palaces | 1.000 | 0.743 |
| Religious Places | 1.000 | 0.669 |
| Festivals | 1.000 | 0.692 |
| Cultural fairs & events | 1.000 | 0.662 |
| Boat races | 1.000 | 0.691 |
| Handicrafts | 1.000 | 0.762 |
| Forts | 1.000 | 0.824 |
| historical places | 1.000 | 0.700 |
| Cultural Villages | 1.000 | 0.831 |
| Caves | 1.000 | 0.816 |
| Galleries | 1.000 | 0.665 |
| Museums | 1.000 | 0.669 |
| Performing Arts-Music/dance / theatres | 1.000 | 0.792 |
| Visual arts Paintings/Sculpture | 1.000 | 0.780 |
| Synagogue | 1.000 | 0.768 |
| Cuisine | 1.000 | 0.667 |
| Architectures | 1.000 | 0.721 |
| Literary Tourism | 1.000 | 0.748 |
| Traditional Scenery | 1.000 | 0.687 |
| Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. | | |

With a KMO measure of sampling adequacy of 0.818 which considered to meritorious and a Bartlett's measure of Chi-square of 5121.181 at 171 degrees of freedom, with a significance value of less than 0.05 which rejects the null hypothesis that the original correlation matrix is an identity matrix, the data is well suited for the principal component analysis.

Principal component analysis is based on the assumption that all variances are common initially and hence all the communalities before extraction will be unit (1). The communalities under extraction reflect the common variance in the data structure, for instance in this case, 74.3 percent of the variance associated with the first measure namely 'Palaces.' The exploratory factor analysis extracted 5 components with loading greater than 0.30. Varimax rotation method was applied since each factor has a small number of large loadings and a large number of zero (or small) loadings. After a varimax rotation, each original variable tends to be associated with one (or a small number) of factors, and each factor represents only a small number of variables.

Explanation for the total variance and the eigen values associated with the initial 5 linear components or factors identified in the data set after extraction and after rotation are shown in Table 4. The extraction of factors with the eigen values greater than 1 gives 5 components where the other factors load into. Before rotation the principal component 1 extracted explains 35.575 per cent of the variance, principal component 2 explains 15.093 per cent of the variance, principal component 3 explains 8.882 per cent of the variance and principal component 4 explains 8.813 per cent of the variance while the 5th principal component explains 5.359 per cent of the variances. However, after rotation principal components 1 and 2 explains lesser while components 3, 4 and 5 explains greater variances, though the total variances explained remain the same at 73.092 per cent of variances. The rotated component matrix is shown as Table 5.

Table 4 Total Variances Explained

| Component | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1 | 6.759 | 35.575 | 35.575 | 3.673 | 19.330 | 19.330 |
| 2 | 2.868 | 15.093 | 50.668 | 3.066 | 16.137 | 35.467 |
| 3 | 1.688 | 8.882 | 59.550 | 2.911 | 15.324 | 50.791 |
| 4 | 1.555 | 8.183 | 67.732 | 2.275 | 11.974 | 62.765 |
| 5 | 1.018 | 5.359 | 73.092 | 1.962 | 10.327 | 73.092 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 5 Rotated Component Matrix

| | Component | | | | |
|--|-----------|------|------|-------|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Handicrafts | .855 | | | | |
| Forts | .840 | | | | |
| Historical places | .787 | | | | |
| Boat races | .678 | .308 | | | |
| Caves | .603 | .490 | | -.431 | |
| Cultural Villages | .539 | .506 | | -.445 | |
| Literary Tourism | | .816 | | | |
| Traditional Scenery | | .772 | | | |
| Architectures | | .733 | .383 | | |
| Cuisine | | .638 | .470 | | |
| Performing Arts-Music/dance / theatres | | | .810 | | |
| Galleries | | .311 | .737 | | |
| Museums | | | .715 | | |
| Visual arts Paintings/Sculpture | .389 | | .653 | -.349 | |
| Palaces | | | | .798 | |
| Festivals | | | | .780 | |

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Synagogue | .808 |
| Cultural fairs & events | .758 |
| Religious Places | .516 .628 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Cross loading of factors are ignored by considering only the greatest positive values loading into the components.

The factors are identified as:

6.1. Handicrafts/ Forts and historical places

This principal component comprises of 6 measures of satisfaction towards cultural products namely 'Handicrafts', 'Forts', 'Historical places', 'Boat races', 'Caves' and 'Cultural Villages' that load positively with loadings greater than 0.539. They together account for 19.33 per cent of total variances after rotation.

6.2. Architecture, Literary tourism and Cuisines

Four measures of satisfaction towards cultural products such as 'Literary Tourism', 'Traditional Scenery', 'Architectures' and 'Cuisine' load positively into this principal component with loadings greater than 0.638 and together accounts for 16.137 per cent of total variances after rotation.

6.3. Performing Arts, Galleries and Museums

'Performing Arts-Music/dance /theatres', 'Galleries', 'Museums' and 'Visual arts Paintings/Sculpture' are the four measures of satisfaction towards cultural products that positively load into this component with loadings greater than 0.653 and explains for 15.324 per cent of the total variances after rotation.

6.4. Palaces & Festivals

Only two measures of satisfaction towards cultural products such as 'Palaces' and 'Festivals' load positively into this component with

loadings greater than 0.780 and explains 11.974 of total variances after rotation.

6.5. *Synagogues/ Cultural Events and Religious Places*

The fifth and final principal component into which 3 measures of satisfaction towards cultural products, such as 'Synagogue', 'Cultural events' and 'Religious Places', load positively with greater than 0.628 loadings could explain the 10.327 percent of total variances after rotation.

7. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis

A Cultural tourism products model was formulated and tested with latent variables identified through exploratory factor analysis such as 'Handicrafts/ Forts and historical places', 'Architecture, Literary Tourism and Cuisines', 'Performing Arts, Galleries and Museums', 'Palaces & Festivals', and 'Synagogues/Cultural Fairs & Events and Religious Places.'

The Cultural tourism products model identifying reflections in the above-mentioned latent variables is shown as Figure a.

Modifications between error terms, as is shown in the diagram, had to be introduced in order to get a better fit model.

To assess how reliable is the said measurement model in measuring the intended latent construct namely 'Cultural Products', the internal and composite reliability were checked.

7.1. Internal Reliability

The Internal Reliability of the model indicating how strong the measuring items are holding together in measuring the respective constructs was determined using Cronbach's Alpha. The internal reliability is achieved when the Cronbach's Alpha exceeds 0.70. The internal reliability represented by Cronbach's Alpha of these 19 items is shown in Table 6.

The Cronbach's alpha of the 19 response items was found to be 0.888 which indicates that the model possesses sufficient internal reliability.

Table 6 Cronbach’s Alpha of Cultural Tourism Products

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .888 | 19 |

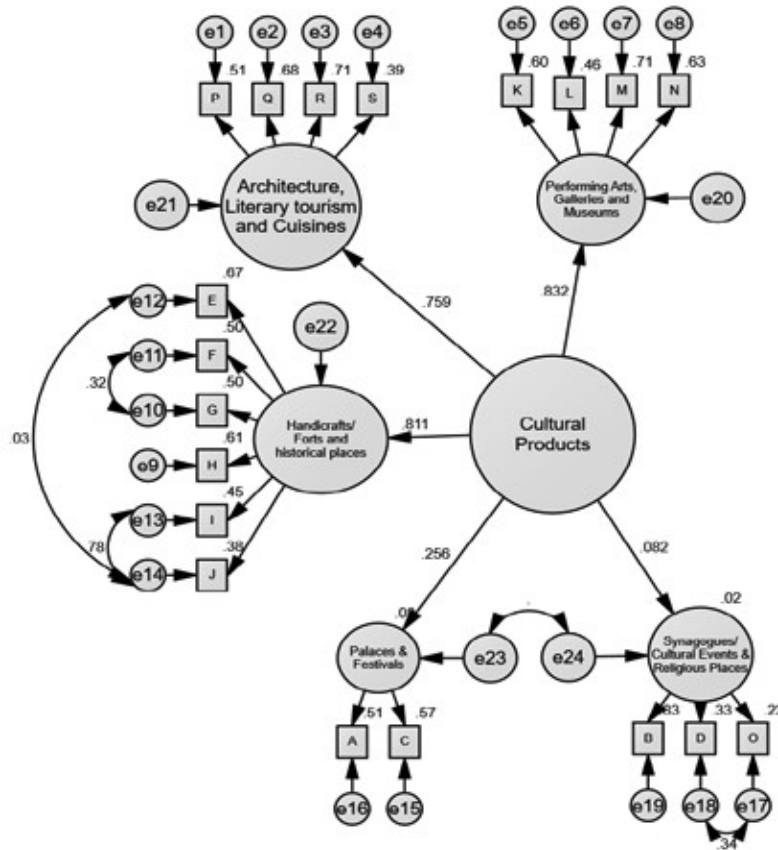


Figure a Cultural Products – Measurement Model

| Legends for the Figure | |
|------------------------|---|
| A Palaces | K Galleries |
| B Religious Places | L Museums |
| C Fairs and Festivals | M Performing Arts-Music/dance /theatres |
| D Cultural events | N Visual arts Paintings/Sculpture |

| | | | |
|---|-------------------|---|-----------------------|
| E | Boat races | O | Synagogue |
| F | Handicrafts | P | Cuisine |
| G | Forts | Q | Architectures |
| H | Historical places | R | Poetry and literature |
| I | Cultural Villages | S | Traditional Scenery |
| J | Caves | | |

7.2. Composite Reliability and Convergent Validity

The composite reliability indicating the internal consistency of the latent variable was calculated as follows.

$$CR = (\sum K)^2 / [(\sum K)^2 + (\sum 1 - K^2)]$$

where K = factor loadings on each item and $1 - K$ = error

Besides avoiding the low factor loading items in a model which could cause the construct to fail Convergent Validity, such convergent validity could also be verified by computing the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for the construct as follows.

$$AVE = \sum K^2 / n$$

where K = factor loadings on each item and n = number of items in the model.

Table 7 shows the Average Variance explained (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) of the model explaining latent variable cultural products.

The model under review was observed to have achieved composite reliability that indicates the reliability and internal consistency of the latent construct, namely factors influencing visit to Kerala, since the CR value of 0.959 is much above the threshold value of 0.70.

The suggested threshold value of AVE is 0.5 and the convergent validity is said to be achieved if AVE is more than 0.5. In the model

under consideration, AVE is 0.510 therefore convergent validity is achieved.

7.3. Discriminant Validity

By identifying the items' redundancy in the model through a discrepancy measure called Modification Indices (MI) and constraining the redundant pair as "free parameter estimate" for the redundant items that have high value of Modification Indices, the model has ensured discriminant validity which indicates that the measurement model of the construct namely Cultural tourism products is free from redundant items.

Yet another requirement for discriminant validity is that the correlation between endogenous constructs should not exceed 0.85. The correlation value exceeding 0.85 indicates that the two constructs are redundant or having serious multicollinearity problems. The correlations between the variables in the model are shown in Table 8.

Table 7 Average Variance explained (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR)

| | | K | K ² | 1 - K ² |
|-----------------------|------|-------|----------------|--------------------|
| Handicrafts | <--- | 0.811 | 0.658 | 0.342 |
| Architecture | <--- | 0.759 | 0.576 | 0.424 |
| Performing Arts | <--- | 0.832 | 0.692 | 0.308 |
| Synagogues | <--- | 0.082 | 0.007 | 0.993 |
| Palace | <--- | 0.256 | 0.066 | 0.934 |
| Cultural Villages | <--- | 0.769 | 0.591 | 0.409 |
| Caves | <--- | 0.742 | 0.551 | 0.449 |
| Boat races | <--- | 0.760 | 0.578 | 0.422 |
| Historical places | <--- | 0.742 | 0.551 | 0.449 |
| Forts | <--- | 0.768 | 0.590 | 0.410 |
| Handicrafts | <--- | 0.692 | 0.479 | 0.521 |
| Poetry and literature | <--- | 0.841 | 0.707 | 0.293 |
| Traditional Scenery | <--- | 0.632 | 0.399 | 0.601 |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Architectures | <--- | Architecture | 0.802 | 0.643 | 0.357 |
| Cuisine | <--- | Architecture | 0.728 | 0.530 | 0.470 |
| Music/dance /theatres | <--- | Performing Arts | 0.845 | 0.714 | 0.286 |
| Galleries | <--- | Performing Arts | 0.708 | 0.501 | 0.499 |
| Museums | <--- | Performing Arts | 0.640 | 0.410 | 0.590 |
| Sculpture | <--- | Performing Arts | 0.723 | 0.523 | 0.477 |
| Palaces | <--- | Palace | 0.739 | 0.546 | 0.454 |
| Fairs and Festivals | <--- | Palace | 0.765 | 0.585 | 0.415 |
| Synagogue | <--- | Synagogues | 0.557 | 0.310 | 0.690 |
| Cultural events | <--- | Synagogues | 0.666 | 0.444 | 0.556 |
| Religious Places | <--- | Synagogues | 0.770 | 0.593 | 0.407 |
| | | Total | 16.629 | 12.243 | 11.757 |
| Average Variance Extracted (AVE) | | | | 0.510 | |
| Composite Reliability (CR) | | | | | 0.959 |

Table 8 Implied Correlations between variables

| | B | D | O | C | A | N | L | K | M | P | Q | S | R | F | G | H | E | J | I |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| B | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D | 0.51 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| O | 0.43 | 0.37 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | 0.42 | 0.36 | 0.30 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A | 0.40 | 0.35 | 0.29 | 0.57 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.35 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| L | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.02 | 0.10 | 0.10 | 0.46 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| K | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 0.51 | 0.45 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| M | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.14 | 0.13 | 0.61 | 0.54 | 0.60 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| P | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.11 | 0.10 | 0.33 | 0.29 | 0.33 | 0.39 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| Q | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.37 | 0.52 | 0.36 | 0.43 | 0.58 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| S | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.02 | 0.09 | 0.09 | 0.29 | 0.26 | 0.28 | 0.34 | 0.46 | 0.51 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| R | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.13 | 0.12 | 0.38 | 0.34 | 0.38 | 0.45 | 0.61 | 0.67 | 0.53 | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| F | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.25 | 0.34 | 0.30 | 0.33 | 0.40 | 0.31 | 0.34 | 0.27 | 0.36 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| G | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.38 | 0.33 | 0.37 | 0.44 | 0.34 | 0.38 | 0.30 | 0.40 | 0.67 | 1.00 | | | | |
| H | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 0.36 | 0.32 | 0.36 | 0.42 | 0.33 | 0.37 | 0.29 | 0.38 | 0.51 | 0.70 | 1.00 | | | |
| E | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.37 | 0.33 | 0.36 | 0.43 | 0.34 | 0.38 | 0.30 | 0.39 | 0.64 | 0.58 | 0.56 | 1.00 | | |
| J | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 0.36 | 0.32 | 0.36 | 0.42 | 0.33 | 0.37 | 0.29 | 0.38 | 0.46 | 0.44 | 0.51 | 0.57 | 1.00 | |
| I | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.38 | 0.33 | 0.37 | 0.44 | 0.35 | 0.38 | 0.30 | 0.40 | 0.39 | 0.43 | 0.57 | 0.59 | 0.87 | 1.00 |

None of the correlations between variables in the model exceeded 0.87 which indicated no concern of multicollinearity.

7.4. Construct Validity

This validity is achieved when the Fitness Indexes for a construct achieved the required level. The fitness indexes indicate how fit the items are in measuring their respective latent constructs. The fitness indices of the influence to visit Kerala model are shown in Table 9.

Table 9 Fitness Indices – Cultural Tourism Products-Model

| Cultural Tourism Products - Model | | Values | df | p | Threshold |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|-----|--------|-----------|
| Absolute Fit | Standardized RMR | 0.0652 | | | <0.08 |
| | CMIN χ^2 | 590.14 | 133 | 0.0782 | p>0.05 |
| | RMSEA | 0.067 | | | <0.08 |
| | GFI | 0.915 | | | >0.90 |
| Incremental Fit | CFI | 0.920 | | | >0.90 |
| | NFI | 0.9 | | | >0.90 |
| Parsimonious Fit | χ^2 /DF (Discrepancy Ratio) | 4.437 | | | <5 |

As is obvious, all the indices are in the acceptable range, the threshold value conditions being met. The model is considered to be a perfect fit.

The regression weight prediction of the latent variable “Cultural tourism products” of Kerala’s reflections of measured variables except Synagogues are not significantly different from zero at the 0.001 level (two-tailed).

The hypothesis test results are summarised in Table 10.

Except the null hypothesis which states that dimensions of ‘Synagogues/ Cultural events and religious places’ is not significant in prediction of satisfaction from cultural products all other null hypotheses get rejected at 0.001 level.

Table 10 Hypothesis Test Results

| Null Hypothesis | SRW | p | Model Fitness | Decision |
|---|-------|-------|------------------------------|--------------|
| H ₀₁ The dimensions of 'Handicrafts/ Forts and historical places' is not significant in prediction of 'Cultural tourism products of Kerala' | 0.811 | *** | | Reject |
| H ₀₂ The dimensions of 'Architecture, literary tourism and Cuisines' is not significant in prediction of 'Cultural tourism products of Kerala' | 0.759 | *** | | Reject |
| H ₀₃ The dimensions of 'Performing Arts, Galleries and Museums' is not significant in prediction of 'Cultural tourism products of Kerala' | 0.832 | *** | 2/df= 4.437, RMSEA = .067 | Reject |
| H ₀₄ The dimensions of 'Palaces & Festivals' is not significant in prediction of 'Cultural tourism products of Kerala' | 0.256 | *** | | Reject |
| H ₀₅ The dimensions of 'Synagogues/ Cultural fairs & events and Religious Places' is not significant in prediction of 'Cultural tourism products of Kerala' | 0.082 | 0.205 | | Can't Reject |

*** indicates significant at 0.01 level

It is thus observed that the dimensions of 'Handicrafts/ Forts and historical places', 'Architecture, literary tourism and Cuisines', 'Performing Arts, Galleries and Museums' as well as 'Palaces & Festivals' are significant in prediction of satisfaction from cultural products that the state of Kerala has to offer.

8. Conclusion

The available statistics regarding recovery of Tourism in India as well as Kerala due to 'Covid 19' restrictions on tours and travels, highlight the potential of the tourism industry. The cultural tourism sector in Kerala, which has not been considered at par with many other states in India, can be a focal point of development through tourism, if the core cultural products available within the state are moulded and projected appropriately. It is in this backdrop, that the cultural products currently offered by Kerala tourism have been examined and the level of satisfaction such products are currently providing to foreign and domestic tourists are brought under the scanner. A detailed analysis of such products highlighted the prominence of cultural events, fairs and festivals and religious places. However, cuisines and architecture in Kerala were not found to be highly satisfactory from the perspective of the tourists. Redefining the outlook of tourists towards cultural products on offer can be materialised once the significant predictors of satisfaction from such products available are identified. The study focused on the exploration of a combination of core cultural products and confirmed that except 'Synagogues/ Cultural events and religious places' all other principal components identified as combinations of core cultural products namely of 'Handicrafts/ Forts and historical places', 'Architecture, literary tourism and Cuisines', 'Performing Arts, Galleries and Museums' as well as 'Palaces & Festivals' were significant indicators of satisfaction in tourists from cultural products. Despite the prominence of cultural events, it was not found to be significant in prediction of satisfaction from cultural products. The other two insignificant reflections of satisfaction from cultural tourism products namely Synagogues and religious places generally pertaining to pilgrim tourism need to be specifically positioned as cultural products.

9. Implications

The study analysed the core cultural products offered by the cultural tourism sector in Kerala and identified various products influencing the satisfaction level of tourists. The study established an empirically tested model for the satisfaction from cultural products. Besides, the study validated the relevant aspects confirming the significance of combinations of cultural products that can impact the level of satisfaction of tourists. Though UNWTO identifies 40% of tourists as cultural tourists, no such efforts have been made to identify the share of cultural tourism in tourist inflows to India and Kerala. Henceforth, it's high time that the stakeholders of cultural tourism destinations in Kerala revamp their outlook in marketing the available cultural products. *The National Geographic Traveller*, which earlier described Kerala as one of the 50 destinations of a lifetime, in their recent article on Kerala titled, 'State of Enlightenment?'⁶ praises the culture of the State, along with its people

and natural beauty, before recommending it as a hotspot for tourists around the world. It is in this context that the tourism authorities, nodal agencies for promotion of tourism and private entrepreneurs in Kerala should view the importance of cultural products and the role it can play in providing a high level of satisfaction to tourists. Timely intervention in maintenance of cultural destination sites and frequent organisation of cultural events is the need of the hour.

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