

## RESEARCH ARTICLE



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## DISTRIBUTION OF TRANSPORTATION IN THEMUZIRIS HERITAGE SITES OF KERALA

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### Abstract

*Tourism Geography always covers a wide range of interests including the studies of heritage tourism activities with spatial distribution and infrastructure. Cultural attractions with natural settings are the major attractions of North Paravur and Kodungalloor areas of middle Kerala, they are popularly known as **Muziris Site**. This area is famous for heritage tourist destinations with well distributed drainage channels which support cultural exchange of different people from the ancient time itself. Therefore almost all the sites are well connected with adjacent water bodies and road networks. The main aim of the paper is to analyze spatial distribution of all heritages sites and its accessibility. Geo- tourism components distributed especially in the heritage attractions in association with enough connectivity are the main theme of this study. The data collection methods like Field observation, GPS survey, and interviews have used to complete the study. The geospatial techniques using Arc GIS has been used for the fulfillment of maps.*

*There is a vital relationship between transport and tourism which forms the basis of the heritage tourism industry in the study area. It can be done to ensure that individual attractions and organizations can operate a number of sites develop in their travel plans. Better transport provides more options for traveler to reach them by public transport via bus, rail, water transport etc. In the case of present destination all three have a significant role for reaching each Site without much difficulty. The present destination is well-connected with NH-17 and NH- 66 in association with the Kollam –Kottappuram National Water Highway. Nearest Metro station, Aluwa and Cochin International Airport 20 kms from the town are the added advantages.*

**Keywords:** Drainage Channels; Cultural exchange; Heritage sites; GeoTourism component

### Introduction

The Muziris Heritage Site (MHS) stretches across from the two municipalities of North Paravur in Ernakulam District to that of Kodungalloor in Thrissur District of Central Kerala. Major sites are distributed in four Panchayats of Ernakulam District, which are Chendaman-

galam, Chittattukara, Vadakekkara, Pallipuram, and two Panchayats in Thrissur District, namely Azhikode and Methala. Geographical diversities are the major component for developing tourist destination in these panchayats. The study area comprises different types of heritage tourist spots like religious, cultural,

historic, Natural etc. Geographical or environmental elements like Physiography (landscape, flora, fauna), Drainage, Climate are the most important determinant factors of the development of tourist sites. Manmade infrastructures like well-connected transportation, can also help to develop sites through accessibility. The entire heritage sites under the study area are well connected with many drainage channels adding natural attraction and motivation to the tourists. Recently drainage system under the study area may cause threat to the heritage sites with water logging and floods. Heritage walk as a tool of cultural display in the impression, perception, and interpretation of the heritage sites and its understanding of the past for public.

## Objective

The objectives of the study are following:

- To know and classify heritage tourist spots on the basis of their characteristics.
- To identify the spatial distribution and transport facilities of heritage tourist spots in the study area.

## Methodology

The present study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data collection is based on GPS Survey, Field observation, Interviews etc. Cartographic analysis was done with the help of geospatial techniques using Arc GIS software. The secondary data have been collected from books, reports, articles, and newspapers.

## Location Aspect of the study area

A heritage site must be located in historically or geographically remarkable places having special attractions of cultural features. Heritage sites under this study area is having many historical buildings, monuments, palaces, temples, churches, synagogues, waterbodies etc. The study area lies between the lat long extensions of  $10^{\circ}6'0''\text{N}$  and  $76^{\circ}14'0''\text{E}$  and it is situated at north end of Ernakulam district and bordering with Thrissur District. It is situated in the northern suburb of Kochi city. The study area is low land has an average elevation of 13 mtrs from msl.

## Previous Empirical Reviews

The title "The Geography of Cultural Tourism" seen in the book 'Issues in Cultural tourism Studies' written by Melanie K. Smith (2009) describes the cultural resources of a particular region. Asian Journal of Science and Technology Vol 08 Issue, 12, pp.7109-7114, December, 2017 Jafar Rouhi "Definition of cultural heritage properties and their values by the past". Importance of cultural heritage properties and their preservation is the aim of this paper. The book

entitled "Heritage and Development Recent Perspectives" by INTACH -12<sup>th</sup> International Conference of National Trusts New Delhi 5<sup>th</sup> Dec.2007 (Page- 139) reported in the topic 'Heritage Tourism and Conservation: Striking a Balance between Cultural Tourism and Conservation' by Martin Scicluna states about conservation of Tajmahal. Another article from this same book "Tourism as a Tool for Heritage Conservation" by Arun Gupta states, strong relationship between tourism and heritage. Another book "The Geography of Transport Systems" written by Jean-Paul Rodrigue describes about the role of transportation and its spatial relationship in worldwide. He says mode of transportation can play several different developments in the society, eg: developments in social structures through political, environmental or economic ways. He also states transport creates valuable links between regions.

## Results and discussion

**Classification of heritage spots on the basis of its characteristics** are Cultural Sites, Religious Sites, Natural Sites, and Commercial Sites etc. The study clearly reveals that maximum share in the study area is occupied by cultural sites because of the cultural and historical importance of the study area (Figure No: 1). Followed by Religious sites (30%). Natural sites share 10%. Commercial and administrative area is very less percentage.

1. **Cultural Sites** - Jews Synagogue, Jews street, Jews Cemetery, Paliam Palace, Paliam Nalukettu, Vypeekotta seminary, Pallippuram Fort, Kottappuram Fort, Cheraman Parambu, Sahodaran Ayyappan Museum, Pattanam site
2. **Religious Sites** - Mookambika Temple, Kottakkavu Church, Manjumatha Church, Kottayil Kovilakom, Cheraman Juma Masjid, Marthoma Church Kodungalloor Bhagavathi Temple, Thiruvanchikulam Mahadeva Temple.
3. **Commercial Sites** - Paravur Market, Kottappuram Market
4. **Administrative Sites and**, - Kacheri compound
5. **Natural Sites** - Thattukadavu Boat Jetty, Gothuruth, and Kottappuram ferry

## Role of Transportation in Heritage Tourism

The National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States defines heritage tourism as "traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past", and "heritage tourism can include cultural, historic and natural resources".

Transportation or accessibility is very essential in all tourism activities. Spatial distribution and transport facilities

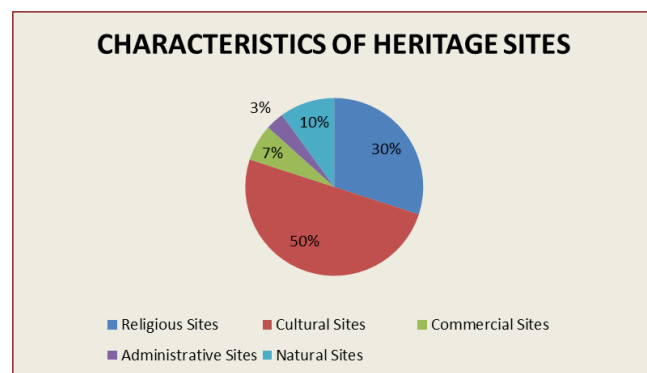


Fig. 1. Characteristics of Heritages sites

of heritage tourist Sites have a major component in tourism as attraction and accommodation. The entire study area has good networks of roads like District Roads, State Highway, Proposed NH and other roads. A part from these roads water transport also prominent here. The National Highway 17 is passes through the study area, connecting many minor roads. Where there is less connectivity of roads tourists are not able to reach the particular heritage spot. A good number of heritage spots are located near by the major roads attract more number of tourists in all season.

## Water Transportation

The River Periyar and its branches flow through the entire area which helps a good manner of trade in the ancient time itself. Due to the presence of ferry shipping people can easily reach each every corner of the Muziris heritage area. Ferry shipping meant an extension of roads to cross the straits and channels and ferries were the floating bridges and primarily met transport needs (Miotke-Dzięgiel, 2002, p. 20). Ferry services are designed to extend the land-based routes in the heritage spots and to create for carriage of goods and passengers. Thus, ferry shipping provides regular connections between Thattukadavu and Kottappuram. The Thattukadavu Boat Jetty in North Paravur is the main ferry centre, which provides regular services to Kottappuram.

## Heritage Spots Connecting Ferry Service in all heritage sites

In addition to this boat service also started from Thattukadavu Boat Jetty to Kottappuram Ferry Station. On the way tourists can get down to the **following ferries as a circuit way**. Ferry service is also available at Kottayilkovalakam, and Azhikokde Marthoma which are situating in Eriyad and Chendamangalam Panchayaths especially North west and south east part of the study area. But the ferry circuit is not connecting this place even though they have ferry spot.

Tourist can take one day trip to these entire destinations either through water ways or road ways. The following table shows distance and time taken by road and time taken by water transport.

Table 1.

Ferry spot	Distance by road	Time	Water ways (Time)
Thattukadavu to Paliam	4.3 km	10 min	6 min
Paliam to Gothuruth	3.3 km	7 min	5 min
Gothuruth to Pallippuram	7.3 km	15 min	7 min
Pallippuram to Sahodaran Ayyappan Museum	2.8 km	9 min	4 min
Sahodaran Ayyappan Museum to Kottappuram	10.2 km	23 min	10 mints

Source: Computed by the authors with the help of field data (2019)

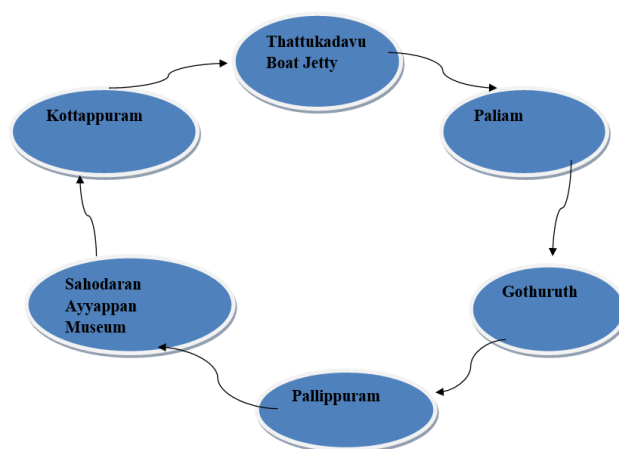


Fig. 2. Ferry Circuites

The following map shows intensity of transport network in the study area. The transport network has been calculated on the basis of field work. Different types of roads such as National Highway, district roads, and other major roads are visible in the study area. Water ways is also contribute good transportation. The intensity of transport network is more in zone I compared to other zones in the study area. This zone covers urban area which is North Paravur Municipality. Here road networks are very flexible. Not only road network water transport is available here. The intensity of road network is more at Mookambika temple, Kachery compound respectively. Both are situated in heart of the town. The proposed NH is also go through the municipality. There is only one road passes through the Kottakkavu church. Synagogue and Jews street have medium level of transport

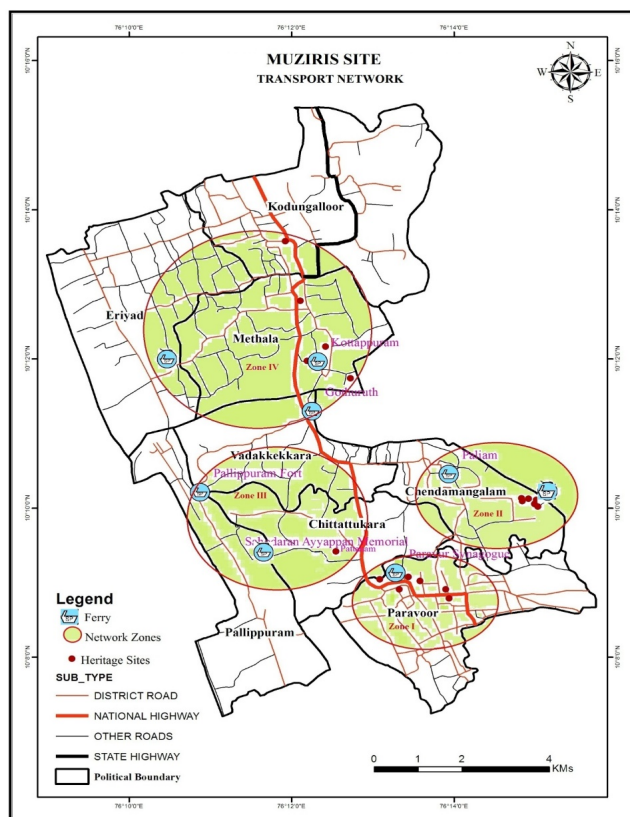


Fig. 3. Study area Map

network. Due to the presence of boat jetty it is easy to attain from different areas.

Zone II is under the administration of Chendamangalam Panchayath. The heritage sites situated at Paliam Jn. are Paliam Palace and Paliam Nalukettu. Both are situated very close to the Paliam ferry. People from Gothuruth, Kodungalloor and Paravur areas can reach this spot very easily either by water way or by road way. Zone three is having ferry spot and road service is also active here. Pallippuram fort and Sahodaran Ayyappan Museum is located in the same side of district road.

Zone IV is under the municipality of Kodungalloor except Azhikode Church and Gothuruth. Not only road network, water transport also available here. Gothuruth is an island and there are enormous drainage system support water transport. Odungalloor temple is situated the heart of the Municipality and easy to reach this spot by road ways. Azhikode Church is situated little inside from the NH. The inner roads connect this church apart from ferry.

Kottappuram Market is very close to the Kottappuram ferry. Kottappuram fort is also located on the side of a river. Ferry service also available here. Cheraman Juma Masjid and Thiruvanjikulam Temple is connects with road ways. The intensity of road network is medium here. Cheraman Parambu is situated far from the town and access with road only.

## Conclusion & Suggestions

Accessibility is the major component in tourism development and without good accessibility tourist can't reach any destination. Therefore it is an essential element in all type of tourism activity for attaining easy site visit with proper schedule. Visitors can enjoy water transportation using boat and ferry services as a cheap and time saving mode. It is well evident that from the past time onwards people were depended upon the water transport more than roads in the study area due to its drainage facility.

From the above zone wise classification it is understood that an intensive transport network is available at North Paravur and Kodungalloor region. North Paravur stands the first in intensity of transportation but kottayil kovilakam in Chendamangalam Panchayath is having the lowest network of transportation. Even though this area has distributed with more heritage sites, visitors are facing some difficulty to reach few sites and gradually became not attracted. In zone III the entire part is located in Ernakulam District and all District roads are passes through this zone. Heritage Sites like Pallippuram fort, Manjumatha Church and Sahodaran Ayyappan Smarakam are located on the side of this road. The popular Site Pattanam is located here where no water transport facilities are available. Zone IV is covering Kodungalloor and Gothuruth is the only place in Ernakulam district in this zone. Gothuruth is an island having more water transport facilities than road ways. Heritage spots located in this zone are easy to accessible than Zone II and III. Kottayil kovilakam is located little far from the town and has less road transport network rather than water transport. But the ferry located in Kottayil kovilakom is not functioning properly and it causes less tourist flow. If the ferry works properly it would be attract more number of tourists, because the area is having four religious centers of different religion. Another speciality of the study area is having well connecting ferry service routes from Thattukadavu Boat to Kottappuram. The present study clearly reveals that where there is less concentration of public transportation facilities, the tourists spots may not accessible to public and visitors alike.

Table 2.

Heritage Site	Intensity of road
Mookambika Temple	High (4)
Kacheri Compound	High (4)
Synagogue	Medium (3)
Jews Street	Medium (3)
Thattukadavu	Medium (3)
Jews Cemetery	Medium (3)
Kottakkavu Church	Low (2)
Paravur Market	Medium (3)
Kannankulangara Temple	Medium (4)
Palam Nalukettu	Medium (2)
Palam Palace	Medium (2)
Kottayilkoilakam- Temple	Low (1)
Mosque	Low (2)
Church & Vypeekotta Seminary	Low (1)
Jews Cemetery	Low (1)
Pattanam	Medium (3)
Pallippuram Fort	High (4)
Manjumatha Church	High (4)
Sahodaran Ayyappan Smarakam	Medium (3)
Azhikode Church	Low (2)
Kodungalloor Temple	High (4)
Thiruvanchikulam Temple	Medium (3)
Cheraman Juma Mazjid	Medium (3)
Cheraman Parambu	Low (2)
Kottappuram Fort	Medium (3)
Kottappuram Market	Low (2)
Gothuruth	Medium (3)

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