

TOURISTS' PERCEPTION OF WELLNESS TOURISM IN KERALA: A STUDY OF SATISFACTION AND REVISIT INTENTION

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Abstract

This study examines tourists' perception of wellness tourism in Kerala, with special reference to satisfaction and revisit intention among visitors to wellness tourism spots in Thiruvananthapuram district. It aims to identify the factors influencing tourist satisfaction and revisit intention and to analyse the effect of satisfaction on revisit intention. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from 100 tourists through a structured questionnaire using simple random sampling, and the data were analysed using SPSS with MANOVA and regression analysis. The findings show that gender, marital status, education level, and monthly income significantly influence tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, whereas age group and occupation do not show a consistent significant effect. The regression results further reveal that tourist satisfaction has a strong positive and statistically significant effect on revisit intention. The study concludes that improving service quality, hygiene, staff behaviour, infrastructure, and value for money is essential for enhancing tourist satisfaction and promoting the sustainable growth of wellness tourism in Kerala.

Keywords:- Wellness Tourism, Tourist Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, Kerala, Tourist Perception.

Wellness tourism has emerged as a fast-growing segment of the tourism industry as travellers increasingly seek experiences that improve physical health, mental balance, and overall well-being. The Global Wellness Institute defines wellness tourism as travel

associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing personal well-being, highlighting its distinction from conventional leisure travel through its focus on relaxation, rejuvenation, stress reduction, and healthier lifestyles.

Kerala holds a distinctive place in India's wellness tourism landscape because

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of its strong association with Ayurveda, yoga, nature-based healing, and its unique natural and cultural environment. The state's appeal is further strengthened by the Department of Tourism's accreditation system for Ayurveda centres, which supports service quality and authenticity. In tourism research, satisfaction is a key indicator of how far the travel experience meets tourists' expectations regarding treatment quality, hygiene, accommodation, staff behaviour, authenticity, and value for money, while revisit intention reflects their willingness to return and recommend the destination to others. Since repeat visitation contributes to destination loyalty and long-term sustainability, examining tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention towards wellness tourism spots in Kerala is important for understanding the factors that influence these outcomes and for improving destination competitiveness (Global Wellness Institute, 2024; Kerala Tourism, 2026; Vada et al., 2019).

2. Scope of the Study

The present study is confined to an examination of tourists' perception of wellness tourism in Kerala, with special reference to selected wellness tourism spots in Thiruvananthapuram district. It primarily investigates tourist satisfaction and revisit intention as the key dimensions of perception. The study further covers the influence of selected demographic variables on these dimensions and analyses the relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. Hence, the study is delimited to the selected geographical area, the chosen sample, and the variables included in the analysis, and

do not attempt to cover the entire wellness tourism sector of Kerala.

3. Statement of the Problem

Wellness tourism is recognised as travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing personal well-being, and it has become a rapidly expanding segment of the global tourism industry. Kerala has emerged as a prominent wellness tourism destination because of its strong association with Ayurveda and its approved Ayurveda centres operating under the Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala. However, the growth and sustainability of wellness tourism depend not only on the availability of such services but also on how tourists evaluate their actual experiences in terms of satisfaction, authenticity, and willingness to revisit. Earlier research has shown that tourism experience and well-being are closely associated with destination attachment, revisit intention, and destination loyalty (Vada et al., 2019). In this context, there is a need for an empirical study on tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention towards wellness tourism spots in Kerala. Therefore, the present study addresses the problem of analysing tourists' perception of wellness tourism in Kerala, with special reference to satisfaction and revisit intention.

4. Significance of the Study

The present study is significant because wellness tourism has become an important and rapidly expanding segment of the global tourism industry, while Kerala continues to promote Ayurveda and related healing practices as a core part

of its tourism identity. The study is relevant because the long-term success of wellness tourism depends not only on destination image and service availability but also on tourists' actual satisfaction and their intention to revisit, both of which are closely related to destination loyalty and competitiveness. By examining tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention towards wellness tourism spots in Thiruvananthapuram district, the study provides empirical evidence on how tourists evaluate wellness experiences in the selected destinations. The findings may help tourism planners, wellness service providers, and policymakers improve service quality, authenticity, hygiene, and overall visitor experience. The study also contributes to the existing literature on wellness tourism by offering area-specific evidence from Kerala, where accredited Ayurveda centres are institutionally supported as part of the state's tourism system.

5. Review of Literature

Recent studies show that wellness tourism has developed as an experience-centred form of travel in which tourists seek physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being through authentic and restorative experiences. The literature identifies tourist satisfaction as a major outcome of wellness tourism, shaped by treatment quality, staff professionalism, hygiene, accommodation, atmosphere, authenticity, and value for money. Research also confirms that wellness tourism experiences significantly influence satisfaction and broader well-being outcomes (Liu et al., 2023), while satisfaction in turn plays an important role

in shaping revisit intention and recommendation behaviour, which are widely treated as indicators of destination loyalty and competitiveness (Um et al., 2006; Vada et al., 2019; Zeng & Yi Man Li, 2021). Other studies further suggest that emotional value, happiness, and memorable tourism experiences positively affect revisit intention (Hu et al., 2021; Peng, 2023; Torabi et al., 2022). In the context of Kerala, existing studies recognise the state as a major Ayurveda and wellness tourism destination, but empirical evidence on tourist perception, satisfaction, and revisit intention remains limited and fragmented. Most Kerala-based studies focus on Ayurveda tourism potential and service quality gaps rather than on an integrated analysis of tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. Therefore, the present study attempts to address this gap by examining tourists' perception of wellness tourism in Kerala with special reference to satisfaction and revisit intention.

6. Objective of the Study

- To identify the factors influencing tourist satisfaction and revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots.
- To examine the effect of tourist satisfaction on revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots.

7. Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots in Thiruvananthapuram district. The study covers tourists visiting selected destinations

offering Ayurveda, yoga, spa therapies, meditation, naturopathy, and related rejuvenation-based services. A sample of 100 respondents was selected through simple random sampling. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire, while secondary data were gathered from journals, books, reports, government publications, Kerala Tourism documents, websites, and earlier studies. The collected data were compiled and analysed using SPSS.

8. Analysis and Discussions

H0: There is no significant difference in tourist satisfaction and revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots with respect to demographic variables.

H1: There is significant difference in tourist satisfaction and revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots with respect to demographic variables.

Table 9.1 presents the MANOVA results examining whether tourist satisfaction and revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots differ significantly across selected demographic variables. The findings show that gender, marital status, education level, and monthly income have a significant multivariate effect on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, as their p-values are below the 5 per cent level. In particular, education level and monthly income show highly significant differences. In contrast, age group and occupation do not exhibit a consistent significant multivariate effect, since the major test statistics such as Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, and Hotelling's

Trace are not significant at the 5 per cent level, even though Roy's Largest Root indicates significance in both cases. Therefore, it can be concluded that tourist satisfaction and revisit intention vary significantly with respect to gender, marital status, education level, and monthly income, whereas age group and occupation do not show a consistent significant influence. Hence, the null hypothesis is partially rejected.

H0: Tourist satisfaction does not have a significant effect on revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots.

H1: Tourist satisfaction has a significant effect on revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots.

Regression Analysis: Effect of Tourist Satisfaction on Revisit Intention Toward Wellness Tourism Spots

Table 9.2 presents the regression analysis conducted to examine the effect of tourist satisfaction on revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots. The results show a strong positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention ($R = 0.684$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.468$) indicates that tourist satisfaction explains 46.8 per cent of the variation in revisit intention, while the remaining variation is attributable to other factors. The ANOVA result further confirms that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 86.412$, $p < 0.01$). The coefficient analysis reveals that tourist satisfaction has a positive and highly significant effect on revisit intention ($B = 0.693$; $\beta = 0.684$; $p < 0.01$), indicating that an increase in tourist

Table 9.1
MANOVA Results: Tourist Satisfaction and Revisit Intention Toward
Wellness Tourism Spots

Demographic Variable (Groups)	Test	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig. (p)
Age Group (Below 25, 26–40, Above 40)	Pillai's Trace	0.082	2.04	4	194	0.091
	Wilks' Lambda	0.919	2.07	4	192	0.087
	Hotelling's Trace	0.087	2.10	4	190	0.083
	Roy's Largest Root	0.071	3.42	2	97	0.037*
Gender (Male, Female)	Pillai's Trace	0.061	3.15	2	97	0.047*
	Wilks' Lambda	0.939	3.15	2	97	0.047*
	Hotelling's Trace	0.065	3.15	2	97	0.047*
	Roy's Largest Root	0.065	3.15	2	97	0.047*
Marital Status (Married, Unmarried)	Pillai's Trace	0.074	3.88	2	97	0.024*
	Wilks' Lambda	0.926	3.88	2	97	0.024*
	Hotelling's Trace	0.080	3.88	2	97	0.024*
	Roy's Largest Root	0.080	3.88	2	97	0.024*
Education Level (Up to Higher Secondary, Graduate, Postgraduate & Above)	Pillai's Trace	0.168	4.53	4	194	0.002**
	Wilks' Lambda	0.835	4.71	4	192	0.001**
	Hotelling's Trace	0.196	4.88	4	190	0.001**
	Roy's Largest Root	0.181	8.74	2	97	0.000**
Occupation (Student, Employed,	Pillai's Trace	0.113	1.91	6	192	0.081
	Wilks' Lambda	0.890	1.95	6	190	0.076

Source: Primary Data, * Significant at 5% level (p < 0.05), ** Significant at 1% level (p < 0.01)

Table 9.2
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.684	0.468	0.462	0.514

Source: Primary Data

Table 9.3
ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	22.846	1	22.846	86.412	0.000**
Residual	25.914	98	0.264		
Total	48.760	99			

Source: Primary Data

Table 9.4
Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.214	0.286		4.245	0.000**
Tourist Satisfaction	0.693	0.075	0.684	9.296	0.000**

Source: Primary Data

Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention

Independent Variable: Tourist Satisfaction

*** Significant at 1% level (p < 0.01)*

satisfaction leads to a corresponding increase in revisit intention. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is concluded that tourist satisfaction significantly influences tourists’ revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots.

9. Findings

- The MANOVA results reveal that gender has a significant influence on the combined dependent variables, namely tourist satisfaction and revisit

intention toward wellness tourism spots, as all the multivariate test statistics are significant at the 5 per cent level.

- Marital status also shows a significant difference in tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, indicating that married and unmarried tourists differ in their perception and future behavioural intention toward wellness tourism spots.

- The analysis indicates that education level has a highly significant effect on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. This shows that tourists with different educational backgrounds vary considerably in their satisfaction levels and intention to revisit wellness tourism spots.
- Monthly income is found to be one of the strongest demographic factors influencing tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, with all multivariate test statistics significant at the 1 per cent level. This suggests that income plays an important role in shaping tourists' satisfaction and their willingness to revisit wellness tourism spots.
- Age group does not show a consistent significant effect on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. Although Roy's Largest Root indicates significance, the major multivariate tests such as Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, and Hotelling's Trace are not significant at the 5 per cent level. Therefore, age group is not considered a major determinant in this study.
- Occupation also does not show a consistent significant influence on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, since the major multivariate statistics are not significant at the 5 per cent level. Hence, occupation is not a key variable affecting the combined dependent variables.
- Overall, the first hypothesis is partially rejected, as only some demographic variables such as gender, marital status, education level, and monthly income significantly influence tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, while age group and occupation do not show consistent significance.
- The regression analysis shows a strong positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, with a correlation coefficient of $R = 0.684$. This indicates that an increase in tourist satisfaction is associated with an increase in revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots.
- The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.468$) reveals that 46.8 per cent of the variation in revisit intention is explained by tourist satisfaction. This means that tourist satisfaction is an important predictor of revisit intention, though other factors also contribute to revisit behaviour.
- The ANOVA result of the regression model is highly significant ($F = 86.412, p = 0.000$), confirming that the regression model is statistically valid for explaining the effect of tourist satisfaction on revisit intention.
- The regression coefficient for tourist satisfaction ($B = 0.693$) indicates that a one-unit increase in tourist satisfaction leads to a 0.693 unit increase in revisit intention. This confirms that tourist satisfaction has a positive and substantial.
- The standardized beta coefficient ($Beta = 0.684$) further confirms that tourist satisfaction is a strong

predictor of revisit intention. Since the significance value is 0.000, the second null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

- The study clearly establishes that higher tourist satisfaction leads to stronger revisit intention, showing that satisfied tourists are more likely to return to wellness tourism spots in the future.

10. Suggestions

Based on the analysis of tourists' perception, satisfaction, and revisit intention toward wellness tourism in Kerala, the following suggestions are proposed:

- **Improve Service Quality:** Wellness tourism centres should improve the quality of treatments and related services, because better service quality increases tourist satisfaction and encourages repeat visits.
- **Provide Training to Staff:** Staff members should be properly trained in hospitality, communication, and professional behaviour so that tourists receive courteous and efficient service during their wellness visit.
- **Improve Infrastructure and Facilities:** Better accommodation, transportation access, signage, and wellness facilities should be developed to make the tourist experience more comfortable and attractive.
- **Introduce Targeted Marketing Strategies:** Marketing efforts should focus on different demographic groups such as gender,

marital status, education, and income, because these variables significantly influence satisfaction and revisit intention.

- **Preserve Authenticity of Ayurveda and Wellness Services:** Kerala's wellness tourism should continue to emphasize authentic Ayurveda, yoga, and natural healing practices, since authenticity adds value to the tourist experience and strengthens destination appeal.
- **Encourage Revisit Intention Through Loyalty Measures:** Special discounts, membership benefits, and follow-up wellness offers can be introduced to motivate satisfied tourists to revisit wellness destinations in Kerala.
- **Increase Government Support and Monitoring:** The government should strengthen accreditation, quality control, and promotional support for wellness tourism centres to ensure sustainable growth and better tourist confidence.

10. Conclusion

The study concludes that tourist satisfaction plays a decisive role in shaping revisit intention toward wellness tourism spots in Thiruvananthapuram district. The findings reveal that demographic variables such as gender, marital status, education level, and monthly income significantly influence tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, whereas age group and occupation do not show a consistent effect. The regression analysis further confirms that tourist satisfaction has a strong positive impact on revisit intention,

indicating that satisfied tourists are more likely to return to wellness tourism destinations. The study therefore highlights that the long-term success and sustainability of wellness tourism spots depend on delivering high-quality and satisfying experiences through better

service quality, hygiene, staff behaviour, infrastructure, pricing, and overall wellness environment. Improving these aspects can strengthen visitor loyalty, encourage repeat visits, and enhance the competitive position of wellness tourism destinations.

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