

Thrissur Cultural Mapping: Embracing Spatial Flexibility

Athulya P V

Student, School of Architecture and Planning, Government Engineering College, Thrissur

Abstract

The report provides a comprehensive cultural mapping of Thrissur, Kerala, utilizing the UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) 2009. It aims to identify and document the city's diverse cultural assets, including tangible heritage, intangible traditions, and creative industries. The study classifies Thrissur's cultural elements into domains such as cultural and natural heritage, religious and festival spaces, old markets and participatory spaces, and educational and sports facilities. This systematic approach enables a deeper understanding of the spatial distribution and significance of the city's cultural resources. By integrating cultural data with economic and social statistics, the report highlights the broader impact of culture on Thrissur's development. The findings can inform policy formulation and support sustainable cultural preservation and growth. The cultural mapping exercise provides a comprehensive overview of Thrissur's unique cultural landscape, offering valuable insights for stakeholders to recognize, value, and promote the city's rich heritage amidst the challenges of rapid urbanization. The study aids in the identification of an area that can be transformed into a new interactive area as well as the examination of its spatial flexibility. The study underscores the need for continued efforts to document, preserve, and leverage Thrissur's cultural assets for the well-being of its communities

Keywords: Cultural Mapping, Thrissur (Kerala), Unesco Fcs 2009, Tangible & Intangible Heritage, Sustainable Cultural Preservation

Introduction

Culture is a vital aspect of human society that shapes our identities, relationships, and experiences. While urbanization presents challenges for the preservation of traditional cultures, it also offers possibilities for cultural evolution and the creation of new forms of cultural expression. Recognizing and supporting the importance of culture in the face of rapid urbanization is crucial for maintaining the social fabric and well-being of communities.

India, one of the world's oldest civilizations, has a rich cultural history shaped by a fusion of different cultures. Throughout its history, Indian culture has been significantly influenced by foreign customs (shown in figure), initially through slow transformations facilitated by kings, merchants, and travellers. In modern times, cultural changes occur more rapidly, deeply impacting people's lives. UNESCO has played a crucial role in safeguarding India's cultural heritage through various charters and conventions.

Notable initiatives include recognizing 40 World Heritage Sites, such as the Taj Mahal and Ajanta Caves, and emphasizing the preservation of intangible cultural heritage through the 2003 Convention.

The 2011 Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach integrates natural, cultural, tangible, and

intangible values in urban settings. UNESCO has also supported the establishment of heritage conservation bodies like the Archaeological Survey of India, INTACH, and the National Commission for Heritage Sites, expanding the focus to include both tangible and intangible cultural assets.

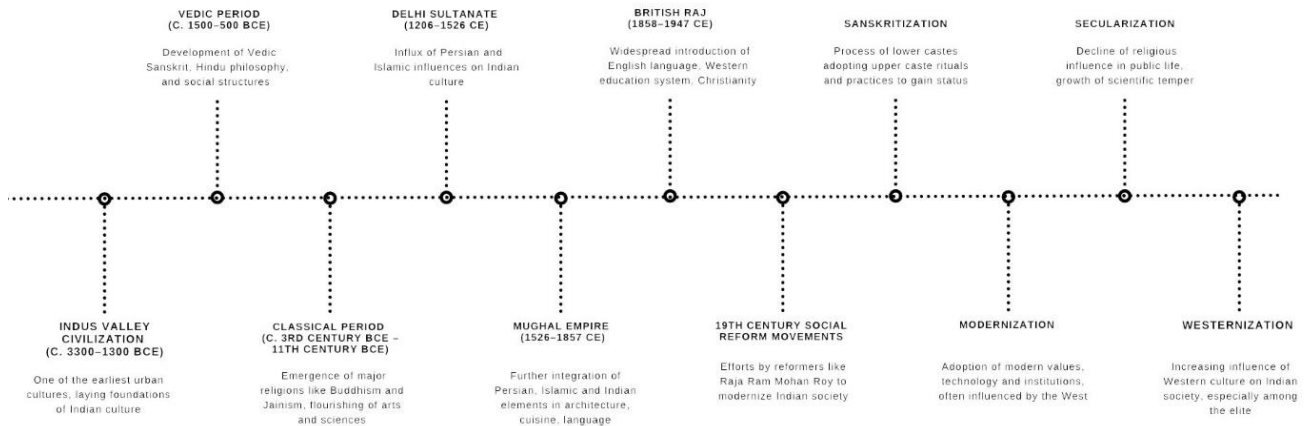


Figure 1 Indian history timeline

Kerala's culture is rich and diverse, having grown over ages under the influence of numerous civilizations. The culture combines Aryan, Dravidian, Arab, and European components, resulting in a distinct and composite identity. Kerala's culture has evolved significantly over time, as seen by the Sanskritization of Dravidian ethos, the resurrection of religious groups, and reform initiatives to combat caste inequality. This cultural evolution has produced a distinct lifestyle, art, architecture, language, literature, and social institutions that distinguish Kerala from the rest of India.

Thrissur, known as Kerala's "cultural capital," exemplifies the unique blend of modernity, heritage, and culture characteristic of traditional Indian cities. Centered around the ancient Vadakkunnatha Temple, Thrissur is surrounded by significant places of worship such as the Basilica of Our Lady of Dolours and the Thiruvambady and Paramakkavu temples. The city also hosts famous temples like Guruvayoor Sree Krishna Swamy Temple and Sree Kurumba Bhagavathy Temple. Historically, Kodungallur (formerly Muziris) was a crucial port in global trade and a political hub under the Chera dynasty. Thrissur thrives as a center for performing arts, preserving traditions like Kathakali and Mohiniyattam through institutions like Kerala Kalamandalam. The city's vibrant literary scene is supported by cultural societies such as the Kerala Sahitya Akademi. Thrissur's museums, including the Kerala Lalithakala Akademi Art Gallery and the Archaeological Museum, showcase its rich heritage. The city's cultural vibrancy is celebrated in festivals like the Thrissur Pooram and Onam, which attract tourists and foster community spirit. These festivals, along with everyday cultural hubs like the bustling markets, reinforce Thrissur's cultural rhythm. Blending ancient traditions with modern sensibilities, Thrissur is a testament to Kerala's resilient and adaptable culture, offering a timeless and transformative cultural experience.

Thrissur has a diverse range of cultural features, however they are not properly documented or valued, limiting its use to certain locations and activities. The cultural mapping approach is used to mark the cultural features and generate a zone that can be converted into a community activity zone. Cultural mapping is a valuable tool for identifying a community's cultural assets and resources. It is a process that involves documenting and analysing a community's cultural resources, including tangible assets like

places, spaces, and heritage sites, as well as intangible assets like traditions, values, and relationships. It is a powerful tool for preserving cultural heritage, informing policy, enhancing community engagement, and promoting cultural diversity. Its systematic approach to documenting and analysing cultural resources is crucial for sustainable cultural development and the overall well-being of communities.

Mapping is based on the principles of UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) 2009, This framework helps to categorizes cultural aspects depending on the context of Thrissur, which serves as the foundation for cultural mapping. 2009 UNESCO Framework is a comprehensive methodological tool designed to standardize the collection, analysis, and reporting of cultural statistics across countries. It aims to provide a consistent framework that captures the multifaceted nature of culture and its impact on economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

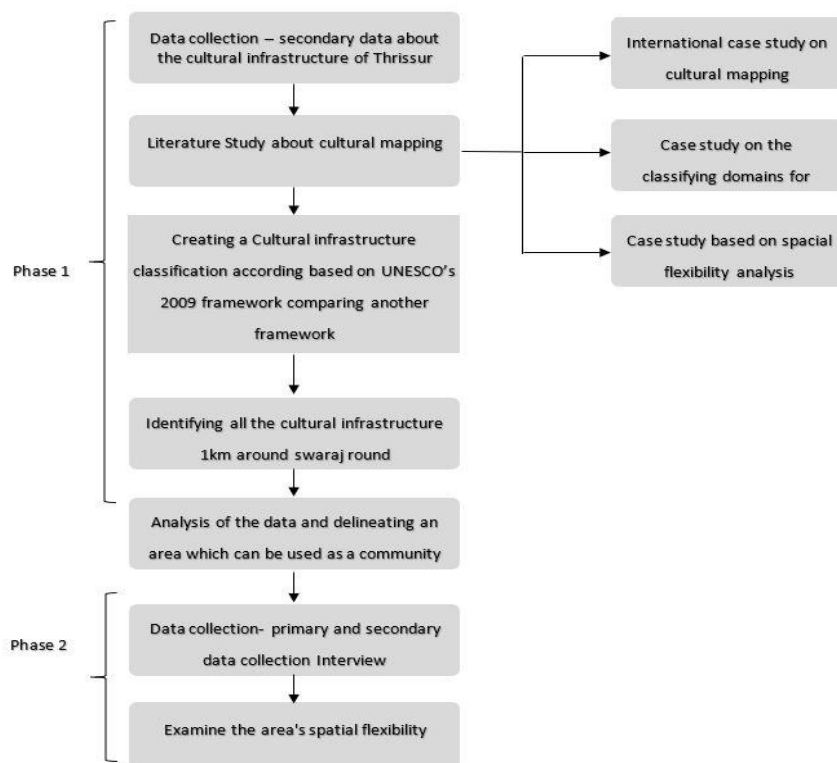
Aim

To produce a cultural map of Thrissur covering a distance of one kilometre, utilizing the 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS). Delineating a community activity zone and evaluating the area's spacial flexibility

Objective

- Learn about the cultural mapping technique
- Examine the 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS)
- Cultural Asset Identification and Geospatial Mapping
- Delineating an area for community activity zone
- Examining the region's spatial adaptability flexibility

Methodology



Literature Review

Cultural Mapping in the City of Sydney

Cultural mapping is crucial in urban planning and cultural policy, helping cities leverage their cultural assets for sustainable growth. The report "Mapping Culture: Venues & Infrastructure in the City of Sydney," by Western Sydney University's Institute for Culture and Society, provides an in-depth analysis of Sydney's cultural landscape. The report underscores the importance of cultural mapping in urban planning. It offers valuable guidance for enhancing Sydney's cultural landscape and highlights the broader role of cultural mapping in sustainable urban development and fostering an inclusive cultural community.

Methodology- The report uses a mixed-methods approach, blending quantitative data collection with qualitative insights. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) were used to map cultural venues and infrastructure, offering a detailed spatial representation of Sydney's cultural assets. Additionally, interviews and surveys with cultural practitioners, policymakers, and community members were conducted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the cultural dynamics in the city.

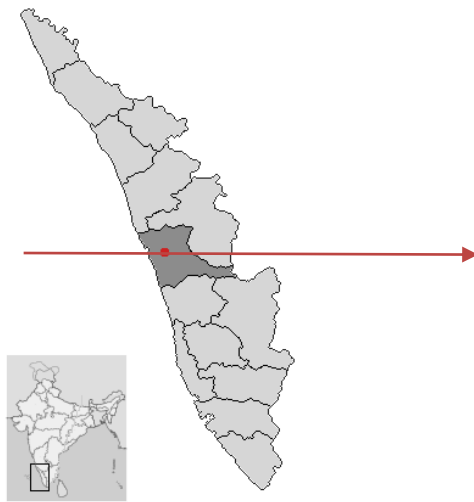
Findings- The report reveals a diverse array of cultural venues and infrastructures spread across Sydney, with certain areas showing high concentrations and others showing scarcity. Key cultural hubs were identified as vibrant centers for artistic and community activities, contributing to the city's social cohesion and economic vitality. However, the report also highlights disparities in cultural infrastructure, identifying underserved areas that require strategic investment.

Significance- Cultural mapping goes beyond merely identifying cultural assets. It is a critical tool for policymakers, aiding in informed decision-making regarding cultural development and resource allocation. By visualizing the distribution of cultural venues, the report provides a framework to address inequities and promote inclusivity in the cultural sector. Additionally, cultural mapping fosters community engagement, empowering residents to partake in cultural planning and advocate for their needs.

Study Area

Thrissur

Thrissur is a revenue district of Kerala situated in the central part of that state., India. It is known as the "Cultural Capital of Kerala" and is renowned for its rich cultural and religious heritage, Cultural mapping is done on 1km radius from Swaraj round. It is Kerala's third largest urban agglomeration, following Kochi and Calicut, and India's 21st largest overall. Thrissur district covers around 3,032 square kilometre and is home to more than 10% of Kerala's population. To the north, Thrissur district borders Palakkad and Malappuram, and to the south, Ernakulam and Idukki. The Arabian Sea lies to the west, and the Western Ghats stretch to the east. It is located in southwestern India (10.52°N 76.21°E), in the central region of Kerala. According to the 2011 census, the Thrissur district has a population of 3,110,327. This places it 113th in India (out of 640). The district's population density is 1,026 people per square kilometre (2,660/square mile). From 2001 to 2011, its population increased by 4.58%. Thrissur has a sex ratio of 1109 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 95.32%. The city has a -0.61% growth rate and a population density of 3,115 people per square kilometre. The city has 74,848 households, with an average household size of 4.27. The slum population in the city is 0.30%. As of 2024, the city has 55 wards. The city grew along a network of roads in a circular and radial design, starting from the 65-acre centre hilltop.

**Figure 2 Location map****Figure 3 1km radius from Swaraj Round**

History of Thrissur

Thrissur has a rich and long history dating back to ancient times. Originally known as "Vrishabhadripuram" and "Then Kailasam", the city has played a significant role in the political history of South India, with various rulers and dynasties shaping its development over the centuries. The modern city of Thrissur rose to prominence under the rule of Sakthan Thampuran, the King of Cochin, in the late 18th/early 19th century. Sakthan Thampuran transformed Thrissur by clearing the surrounding forests, inviting Syrian Christian families and Brahmins to settle in the city, and making it a major financial and commercial hub of South India. Thrissur is renowned for its vibrant cultural and religious heritage, with historic temples like the Vadakkumnathan Temple, Thiruvambady Temple, and Paramekkavu Temple being central to the city's identity. The famous Thrissur Pooram festival, one of the largest temple festivals in South India, is a major cultural attraction. The urban structure and development of Thrissur is intrinsically linked to its commercial, socio-economic, and cultural activities. The city's proximity to the Vanchikulam Port and the markets and godowns built by Sakthan Thampuran contributed to its growth as an important economic center. In summary, Thrissur has a rich and multifaceted history, evolving from an ancient temple town to a major cultural and commercial hub in Kerala, shaped by the influence of diverse religious, political, and economic forces over the centuries.

Culture Mapping

Defining Culture

Culture is the result of people's reciprocal engagement with a certain environment over time. This interaction provides cultural knowledge with factual information, methods, and abilities developed throughout time in response to the setting. Cultural knowledge includes, among other things, the inhabitants' understanding of the space they live in, their understanding of the actors who influence the space's underlying dynamics and characteristics, as well as vernacular skills and practices, philosophy, belief, and value systems, perceptions, and instincts developed in relation to the place.

Culture has both tangible and intangible qualities. The physical part of culture exists in the form of objects and artifacts that can be perceived with the senses, whereas the intangible aspect of culture exists mentally in the brains of the bearer.

Cultural Mapping

Cultural mapping is a process that identifies and records the presence of tangible and intangible cultural elements within a geographical area. This includes synthesizing and interpreting data to reveal the cultural significance, character, and patterns related to the people, place, and environment. The analysis of collected cultural data illustrates how cultural practices and mindsets influence the site and its social, economic, and environmental dynamics.

Cultural mapping is employed in both urban planning and academic research to document and analyse cultural assets. In urban settings, it is typically managed by consulting firms hired by governments or municipalities, resulting in inventories, cultural statistics, site plans, analyses, and recommendations. Academically, experts such as linguists, archaeologists, anthropologists, and sociologists focus on specific communities or issues, producing papers, articles, and books for deeper cultural understanding. Community-initiated mapping projects, especially those aimed at reviving traditional arts or conserving sacred sites, leverage local familiarity, experience, and historical knowledge, promoting effective cultural preservation.

Overall, cultural mapping offers a comprehensive understanding of a community's cultural resources and creative potential. It enhances the visibility and significance of cultural assets, contributing to the development and sustainability of cultural industries by enabling more targeted and authentic products, services, and experiences.

Classification of cultural elements

In the process of cultural mapping all the cultural elements are classified in to different cultural domains. A domain can include all cultural activity under the appropriate heading, including informal and social activities. Cultural domains are classified based on the site context.

Types of buildings included in cultural mapping often encompass a wide range of structures that have historical, artistic, social, or cultural significance. These can include:

Historical Monuments: Forts, Palaces, Temples, Mosques, Churches, Synagogues, Memorials

Museums and Galleries: Art museums, History museums, Science museums, Cultural centres, Art galleries

Libraries and Archives: Public libraries, University libraries, National archives, Historical archives

Theatres and Performance Venues: Opera houses, Theatres, Concert halls, Amphitheatres, Cultural centres

Traditional and Vernacular Architecture: Heritage houses, Traditional cottages, Ancestral homes, Unique regional architectural styles

Community and Cultural Centres: Community halls, Cultural clubs, Heritage centres

Educational Institutions: Historic schools and universities, Art and music schools

Religious and Spiritual Buildings: Temples, Churches, Mosques, Synagogues, Gurudwaras, Monasteries

Cultural Landscape Features: Heritage gardens, Historical parks, Sacred groves

Marketplaces and Bazaars:

Traditional markets, Historic bazaars

These buildings and structures collectively represent the cultural and historical fabric of a community or region, making them essential components of cultural mapping.

UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) 2009

The UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) 2009 provides a comprehensive structure for the collection, analysis, and reporting of cultural data, with the aim of enhancing the understanding and promotion of cultural diversity globally. The FCS categorizes cultural activities into domains and cycles, facilitating systematic data collection across various cultural sectors.

1. Cultural Domains:

Cultural domains – This are a common set of economic and social activities that have been regarded typically as cultural. The 6 domains included in UNESCO's 2009 framework are

Cultural and natural heritage: Includes museums, libraries, archives, and heritage sites.

Performance and Celebration: Encompasses performing arts, festivals, and other cultural events.

Visual Arts and Crafts: Covers visual arts, photography, crafts, and design.

Books and Press: Involves publishing, printing, and distribution of books, newspapers, and other periodicals.

Audio-visual and Interactive Media: Includes film, television, radio, and new media.

Design and Creative Services: Encompasses advertising, architecture, and other creative industries.

Relative domains - This are consisted of the activities that may have a cultural character, but their main components are not regarded as principally cultural.

Tourism: travel and tourist services, hospitality and accommodation

Sports and recreation: sport, physical fitness and well-being, amusement and theme parks, gambling.

Transverse domains – It can be applied to all cultural and relative domain. The elements in the transversal domains are of importance to cultural activities, for UNESCO they may be considered as only partially cultural.

Intangible cultural heritage: oral traditions and expressions, rituals, languages social practices,

Education and training: learning activities that support culture, dance schools,

Archives and preservation: collection and repository of cultural forms. preservation of historic sites and buildings, sound archives, picture libraries

Equipment and supporting materials: supporting industries and ancillary services that can be used as 'tools' for cultural products and activities, such as IT, computer, internet.

2. Cultural Cycle:

Creation: The process of creating cultural goods and services.

Production/Publishing: The production and dissemination of cultural content.

Distribution/Trade: The distribution and trading of cultural goods and services.

Preservation: The preservation of cultural heritage.

Education and Training: Cultural education and training programs.

Archiving and Preservation: Includes all activities related to the archiving and preservation of cultural heritage.

Building upon the concept of the 'culture cycle' of the sector, this framework captures all phases of cultural creation, production and dissemination, as well as both economic, market related activities and social and non-market activities, and allows all these cultural activities to be mapped. This approach helps us to understand the relationships between the different cultural processes and resources that are required to transform ideas into cultural goods and services to be used by consumers or participants.

The UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) 2009 is characterized by several key features that enhance its utility and applicability.

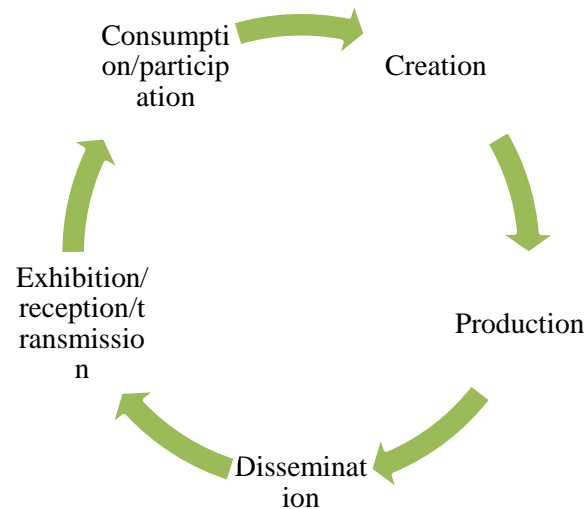


Figure 4 Cultural cycle -UNESCO FCS 2009

Standardization: Establishes standardized categories for cultural statistics, enabling international comparability.

Comprehensive Scope: Addresses a wide range of cultural expressions, from traditional arts to modern digital media.

Policy Relevance: Provides data essential for informed cultural policy-making and planning.

Data Integration: Integrates cultural statistics with economic and social data, highlighting the broader impact of culture.

The FCS 2009 is pivotal in promoting cultural statistics as a critical tool for policy formulation and cultural development. By offering a detailed classification of cultural activities, the FCS enables policymakers to better understand the cultural sector's contributions to economic and social development. The framework also supports the identification of gaps in cultural data, fostering improved data collection methods and the development of more targeted cultural policies.

Furthermore, the FCS emphasizes the importance of cultural diversity, encouraging countries to recognize and value their unique cultural assets. This helps in preserving cultural heritage, promoting cultural industries, and fostering cultural participation.

However, the implementation of the FCS can be challenging due to differences in national statistical systems and the availability of data. Ensuring consistent and comprehensive data collection across diverse cultural domains requires substantial resources and coordination among various stakeholders.

UNESCO FCS 2009 is a significant step towards a more structured and insightful approach to cultural statistics. It enhances the ability of governments and organizations to measure, analyse, and promote cultural activities, thereby supporting sustainable cultural development and diversity.

DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport) cultural data framework

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) in the UK has established a comprehensive framework for classifying cultural data. This framework helps in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data related to the cultural and creative sectors. Here are the main classification categories based on the DCMS framework:

Cultural Sector: This includes industries and activities that contribute to cultural expression and heritage. Key components are:

Museums, galleries, and libraries, Archives, Cultural education, Heritage and historic environment, Performing arts, Visual arts, Literature and publishing

Creative Industries: These industries focus on the creation, production, and distribution of creative content. The DCMS classification for creative industries includes:

Advertising and marketing, Architecture, Crafts, Design: product, graphic, and fashion design, Film, TV, video, radio, and photography, IT, software, and computer services, Publishing, Museums, galleries, and libraries (shared with the cultural sector), Music, performing, and visual arts

Digital Sector: Although not exclusively cultural, the digital sector overlaps significantly with the creative industries, particularly in areas such as software development, gaming, and digital media production.

Sport Sector: This includes activities related to sports and physical recreation, which are often linked with cultural and community identity.

Heritage Sector: Encompassing historical sites, buildings, landscapes, and archaeological sites, this sector emphasizes the preservation and promotion of the UK's heritage.

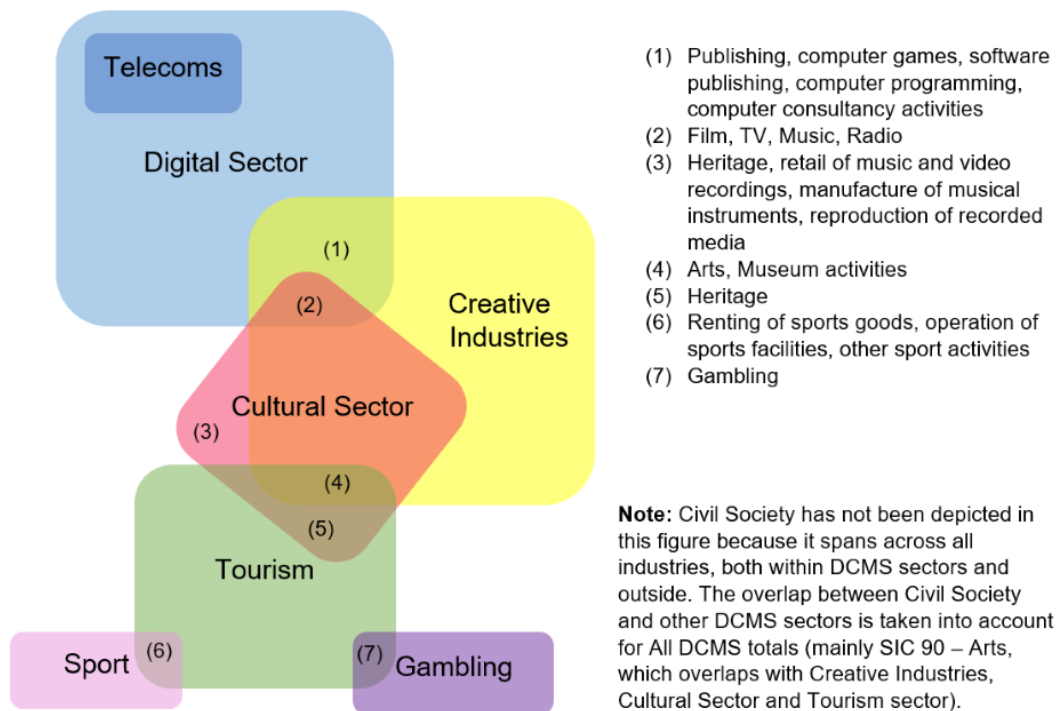


Figure 5 Cultural domain – DCMS cultural data framework

Economic Estimates and Metrics: Gross Value Added (GVA): Measures the contribution of each sector to the economy.

Employment Statistics: Tracks the number of jobs and demographic information within these sectors.

Business Demographics: Analyses the number, size, and type of businesses operating within the cultural and creative industries.

Overlap and Integration: The DCMS framework recognizes overlaps between different sectors, such as between the cultural and creative industries, and aims to integrate data across these areas to provide a

comprehensive understanding of their economic and social impact.

Cultural and Heritage Capital Programme: This initiative aims to quantify the value of cultural and heritage assets, providing tools and data to support investment decisions in these areas.

Valuation Techniques: Economic valuation techniques such as contingent valuation and choice modelling are used to measure the economic value and welfare impact of cultural assets.

The DCMS classification system provides a detailed and structured approach to understanding and supporting the cultural and creative sectors in the UK through robust data collection and analysis

Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS)

The Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS) provides a structured classification for cultural mapping, helping to systematically capture and analyze cultural activities and their impacts. This classification is organized into various domains and sub-domains, each representing distinct cultural sectors. The primary domains within the CFCS include:

Heritage and Libraries: Archives, Libraries, Museums, Heritage Sites and Buildings

Live Performance: Theatre, Music Performances, Dance, Opera, Circus

Visual and Applied Arts: Visual Arts, Crafts, Design, Photography

Written and Published Works: Books, Periodicals, Newspapers, Other Published Works

Audio-visual and Interactive Media: Film and Video, Broadcasting, Interactive Media

Sound Recording: Music Publishing, Sound Recording, Distribution

Education and Training in Culture: Formal and Informal Cultural Education and Training

Culture Domains					
A. Heritage and libraries	B. Live performance	C. Visual and applied arts	D. Written and published works	E. Audio-visual and interactive media	F. Sound recording
Core Culture Sub-domains					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Archives• Libraries• Cultural heritage• Natural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performing arts• Festivals and Celebrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Original visual art• Art reproductions• Photography• Crafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Books• Periodicals• Newspapers• Other published works	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Film and video• Broadcasting• Interactive media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sound recording• Music publishing
Ancillary Culture Sub-domains					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advertising• Architecture• Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collected information		
Transversal domains					
G. Education and training					
H. Governance, funding and professional support					
Infrastructure domains					
I. Mediating products					
J. Physical infrastructure					

Figure 6 Cultural domains- Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS)

This comprehensive classification system is designed to encompass the wide variety of cultural activities and industries, facilitating detailed analysis and enabling better policy-making and resource allocation. The CFCs integrates cultural statistics with broader economic and social data, highlighting the significant impact of culture on the overall societal framework

Cultural classification and mapping

Cultural elements in Thrissur

Thrissur, similar to many temple towns, boasts a rich concentration of natural, built, and intangible heritage elements, which contribute to its unique urban spatial entity. The town harmonizes seamlessly with its geography, featuring intact drainage systems and kol wetlands that effectively manage heavy monsoon rains. The historic core of Thrissur retains numerous heritage components, encompassing traditional housing, rituals, festivals, and customs. The traditional housing stock, characterized by two-storied buildings with attic spaces, significantly contributes to the town's identity.

Thrissur's commercial buildings exhibit architectural styles influenced by Dutch colonial design, particularly evident in the "shop house" and "godown" typologies. These structures offer significant potential for adaptive reuse, with many upper floors remaining unused yet structurally sound. The diverse community and their varied housing styles impart a distinct character to each street, such as Erinjeri Angadi, which is renowned for its traditional cuisine.

The religious buildings in Thrissur's city core are not merely places of worship but also architectural marvels, centers of learning and culture, and integral parts of the city's urban planning and identity. The city's layout is centered around the Vadakkunnathan Temple, integrated into the urban landscape with the 65-acre Thekkinkadu Maidanam. The Vadakkunnathan Temple, believed to have been founded by the legendary saint Parasurama, exemplifies Kerala's architectural style and houses several sacred shrines and murals. Other prominent temples, such as the Thiruvambadi Sri Krishna Temple and Paramakkavu Bagavathi Temple, also contribute to the city's cultural and religious significance. With the decline of Buddhism and Jainism and the revival of Hinduism, Thrissur became a major center for Sanskrit learning, with Adi Shankaracharya and his disciples establishing important Mathams that continue the tradition of Vedic chanting. Additionally, Christian places of worship, such as the Martha Mariyam Church and the Lady of Lourdes Metropolitan Cathedral, enhance the city's cultural diversity and solidify its historical and cultural significance.

The Thekkinkadu Maithanam, a 65-acre ground encircling the 1,300-year-old Vadakkunnathan Temple in Thrissur, serves as a notable cultural and ecological landmark. Literally meaning "forest of teak wood trees," the maidan features lush trees providing ample shade and a cool environment for visitors. This area is central to the Pooram festival, a vibrant cultural competition among temples surrounding Vadakkunnathan. Even outside of festival times, the maidan remains a tranquil spot, underscoring its integral role in the city's daily life and cultural heritage.

Thrissur is home to several notable museums, each contributing to the cultural and historical tapestry of the city. The Kerala Lalithakala Akademi Art Gallery showcases a wide array of art forms, including paintings and sculptures, celebrating the visual arts. The Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi focuses on the preservation and promotion of traditional music and dance forms of Kerala, ensuring that these cultural expressions continue to thrive. The Kerala Sahitya Akademi is dedicated to the promotion of Malayalam literature, providing a platform for literary works and fostering literary talent. The Archaeological Museum, situated within the Thrissur Zoo compound, exhibits artifacts and historical

items from various periods, offering insights into the region's rich history. Additionally, the Kollengode Palace, also known as the Mural Art Museum, is renowned for its collection of murals and other traditional art forms, highlighting the artistic heritage of Kerala. These museums collectively play a vital role in preserving and promoting the diverse cultural heritage of Thrissur.

Thrissur, historically known for its numerous tanks, has approximately 40 well-planned ponds that reflect the town's meticulous layout. Key tanks such as Vadakkechira, Padinjarechira, Palliklulam, and Irattachira have played a vital role in the town's water management, especially during monsoon rains. Despite urban development, many of these tanks remain, although some are neglected, such as Pallikkulam, now used as a dump yard, and the Sakthan bus stand built over Irattachira. Vadakkechira, however, is well-maintained by the municipal corporation. Thrissur's historical significance is further marked by the establishment of Christian places of worship by Sakthan Thampuran, such as the Martha Mariyam Church and the Lady of Lourdes Metropolitan Cathedral. Thrissur is also known for the Sakthan Thampuran Palace, once the summer residence of Kochi kings. As the cultural capital of Kerala, Thrissur is home to academic and research institutions, a renowned jewelry industry, and serves as the headquarters for several leading private sector banks in India and numerous chit funds.

Classification of cultural elements

Based on Thrissur context the classification domains are

Cultural and natural heritage

Religious and festival spaces

Old market and participatory spaces

Educational and sports spaces

Classification is primarily based on the foot print pattern and street type. This classification excludes fully modified cultural and traditional markets, which can be added after careful consideration of the detailed build use. Some classifications, such as traditional houses, can be introduced following a detailed build usage assessment.

Cultural and natural heritage

Cultural and natural refers to which show case the history and its richness to the people, which mainly include the following category of spaces-

Heritage gardens, Historical parks, Community halls, Cultural clubs, Heritage centres, Forts, Palaces, Memorials, Public libraries, Art museums, History museums, Cultural centres, Art galleries,

Religious and festival spaces

Religious and spiritual spaces refer to places which have religious value and also the spaces where the festivals are celebrated. This category includes following spaces-Temples, Churches, Mosques, Synagogues, Monasteries, Ritual paths, Festival paths

In the context of Thrissur this category includes all the religious spaces, swaraj round and routes where Thrissur pooram ceremonies take place.

Old market and participatory spaces

Old market and participatory spaces refer to traditional markets with their own distinct culture and architecture, as well as nearby interactive spaces. This category includes the following spaces- Traditio-

nal markets, Historic bazaars

In Thrissur, traditional markets such as Ariyangadi, Nayirangadi, Eranjeri angandi, Palakkal angadi, Chettiyangadi, Vellapangadi, and Sakthan are all marked and traditionally follow a pattern. Traditional marketplaces that have lost their typical patterns are not included, but can be included after appraisal, such as the jewelry market on High Road and Pallikkulam Road.

Educational and sports spaces

Educational and sport spaces refer to spaces that are dedicated for educational and sport used, which mainly following spaces- Historic schools and universities, Art and music schools, University libraries, Open grounds, Indoor stadiums, Sport institutions

In Thrissur context, there are several old educational spaces that play an essential part in the urban fabric, such as St Thomas College, St Mary's College, and numerous schools. Sports venues such as Thrissur Corporation Stadium and Palace Ground.

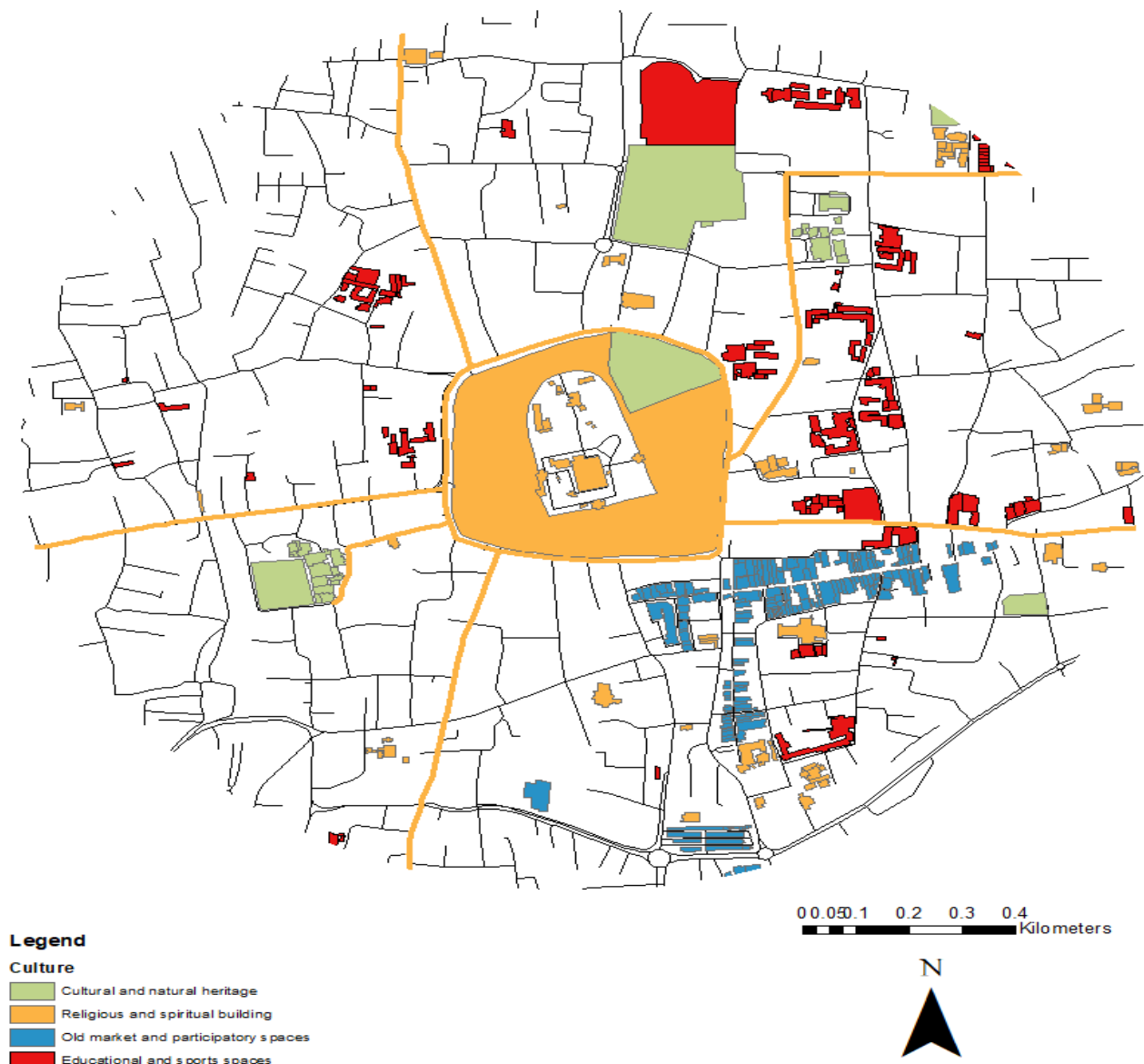


Figure 7 Cultural map of Thrissur

Limitation

Due to time constraints, we were only able to generate a basic map for the cultural mapping process; overlaying values such as environmental and economic valuation proved challenging to calculate due to limited time and data availability. According to the UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) 2009, we need employment data, gross value added, exports, and investment to determine economic value.

This study does not take into account newly emerging cultural identities, such as new commercial and food zones.

Findings

Religious and festival spaces dominate the urban landscape, followed by old market and participatory areas, cultural and natural heritage, and educational and sporting spaces. There are numerous old market areas, each with its own set of traditional products. In most cases, the old buildings are in disrepair and the traditional market has changed, resulting in the loss of their cultural essence. In certain situations, such as in jewellery Street neighbourhoods, the market has been completely transformed into new buildings, but the occupational character has not altered, which made hard to mark on the map.

By analysing the cultural elements, we can see that there is a large presence of cultural infrastructure in the Thrissur. The map shows that the cultural elements are more concentrated on the left side of the map, where there is a high population density with markets, educational spaces, museums, and heritage spaces. We can also notice that there is a significant gap in the presence of interactive areas in the town other than the Swaraj Round and Park, as well as the decentralisation of these spaces. There is also the potential for constructing areas that can connect these cultural spaces and evolve into walking corridors that can showcase people's interaction.

Delineation of space

The amount of cultural element connected by palace road is very high, from Swaraj round, Paramakkavu Bhagavathi Temple to the Ramaneelayam, Heritage Garden, Thrissur corporation stadium, town hall, Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi, Jawahar Balabhavan, Kerala Lalithakala Akademi, Vadakkechira, Sakthan Thampuran Palace, Kerala State Museum and Zoo Thrissur and Thrissur District Heritage Museum. The amount of cultural value carried by this place is very high which can be utilized and transformed into community participative space which effect the town in a many positive ways. The delineated space is being shown in Figure 8.

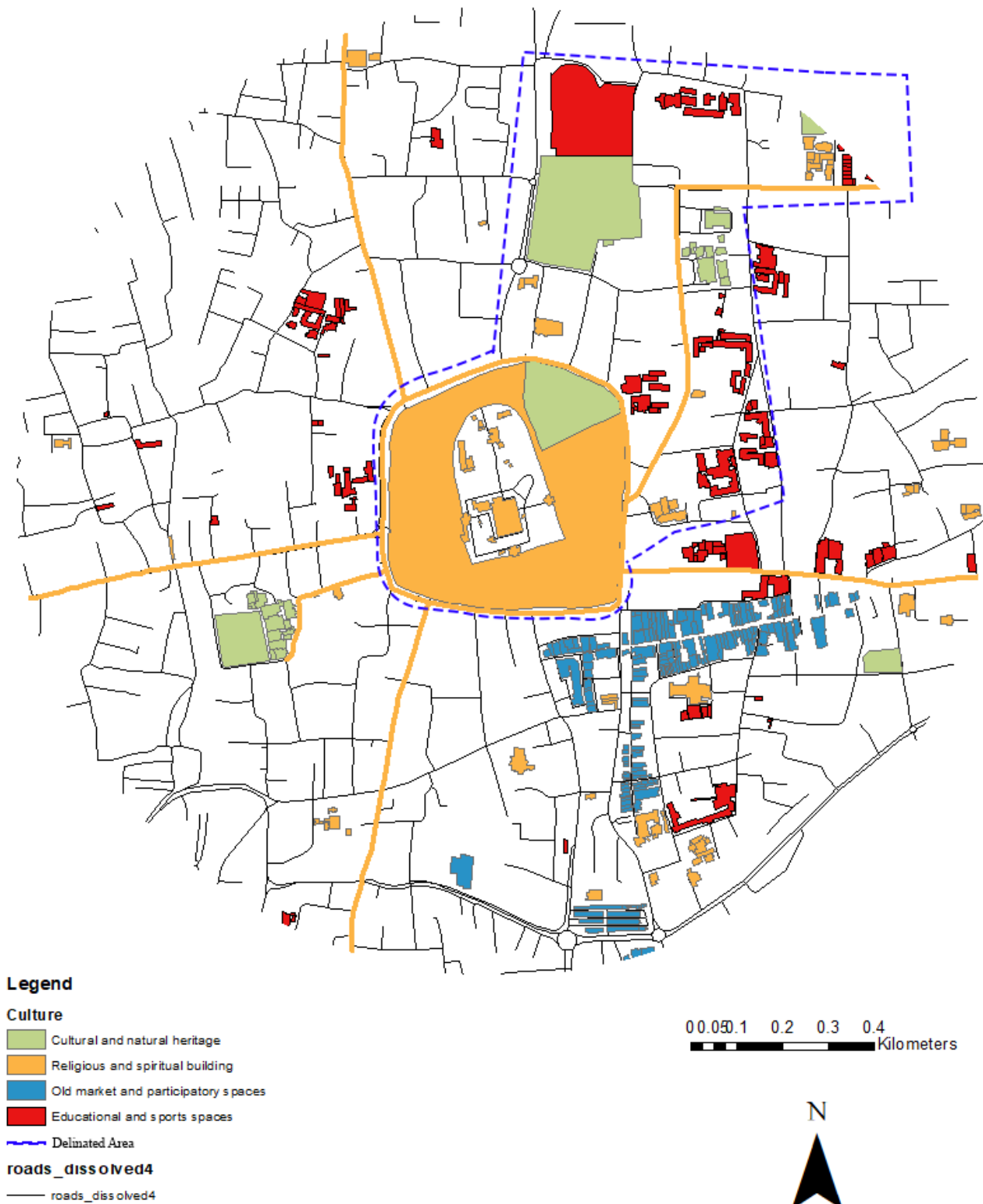


Figure 8 Delineated area

Conclusion

The cultural mapping initiative in Thrissur highlights the importance of documenting and analysing both tangible and intangible cultural elements to preserve and enhance the city's unique heritage. By employing the 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS), the study provides a structured

approach to capturing the multifaceted nature of Thrissur's cultural assets. Thrissur, known as the "Cultural Capital of Kerala," boasts a rich blend of historical, religious, and artistic elements, which are integral to its identity and community well-being.

Thrissur's heritage, including temples, palaces, and colonial-era buildings, reflects its historical evolution and cultural richness. Key landmarks like the Vadakkunnathan Temple and Thekkinkadu Maidanam are central to the city's identity. The city is a hub for performing arts, literature, and festivals. Institutions like Kerala Kalamandalam and Kerala Sahitya Akademi play crucial roles in preserving traditional art forms and promoting literary activities. Festivals such as Thrissur Pooram and Onam foster community spirit and attract tourists. Despite its rich cultural assets, Thrissur faces challenges in documenting and valuing its cultural elements, limiting their utilization. The cultural mapping approach aims to address this by identifying and zoning cultural features, potentially transforming these zones into community activity areas.

The study categorizes Thrissur's cultural elements into domains such as cultural and natural heritage, religious and festival spaces, old markets and participatory spaces, and educational and sports spaces. This classification helps in understanding the spatial distribution and significance of various cultural assets. Utilizing frameworks like UNESCO FCS and DCMS, the study integrates cultural data with economic and social statistics, highlighting the broader impact of culture. This approach aids in policy formulation and sustainable cultural development.

The cultural mapping of Thrissur provides a comprehensive understanding of its cultural landscape, offering valuable insights for preservation and development. Recognizing and supporting the city's cultural assets is essential for maintaining the social fabric and well-being of its communities amidst rapid urbanization. The study underscores the need for continued efforts to document, value, and promote Thrissur's unique cultural heritage for future generations.

The city requires more and decentralization engaging locations to increase people's participation in the city's core and attract more economic opportunities. We can also see a lack of connection and interaction between these cultural elements, despite the fact that these areas are within walking distance. There is an excellent chance to establish a cultural walkable corridor that will improve the city's image. We have also identified a region that can be altered at the end of phase 1, and the spatial flexibility analysis will be completed in the next phase 2.

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