

Development Of Pilgrimage Tourism In Tuticorin District – Empirical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes briefly development of pilgrimage Tourism in Tuticorin District – empirical Analysis. The purpose of this paper is to present Growth of Tourism sector in Indian economy. This paper also provides an overview about scope of the Spiritual Tourism, Evolution of the tourism sector. An attempt has been made to explain challenges in Indian tourism sector. Indeed, a further aim of the paper is need of promoting Spiritual Tourism in India.

Key words: Pilgrimage, Tourism, Development, Sector, Economy

Introduction

Tourism Industry occupies an important place in the world's economy. It is the fastest growing sectors of the economy now-a-days and is expected to generate more income and employment as well as foreign exchange. Tourism can be broadly categorized into international tourism and inter-regional tourism. Both the types hold better prospects and contribute towards the economic development of a particular national region Tourism is of major economic and social significance in both developed and developing countries. It provides direct and indirect employment opportunities and raises the standard of living and quality of the resident population. It also support and helps to fund arts, folk traditions, festivals and events and provides a market for local crafts and manufacturing

Tourism Industry in India

The tourism industry in India is substantial and vibrant and the country is fast becoming a major global destination. India's travel and tourism industry is one of the most profitable industries in the country, and also credited with contributing a substantial amount of foreign exchange. This is illustrated by the fact that during 2006, four million tourists visited India and spent US \$8.9 billion. In 2006, tourism as an industry offered employment to 41.8 million people, and accounted for 5.9 percent of the GDP. Also tourism benefits are conferred on all classes, sections and regions. The contribution of travel and tourism to gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to be at 6.0 per cent (US\$ 67.3 billion) in 2009 rising to US\$ 187.3 billion by 2019. By 2020, Tourism in India could contribute Rs 8,50,000 crores to the GDP. (Source WTTC).

Tourism in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu or "the land of Tamil" a beautiful state nestled in the southern Indian peninsula, on the shores of the Bay of Bengal and the deep blue Indian ocean is known for its cultural heritage and temple architecture. Tamil literature is amongst the oldest in India and in the world. According to history the ancient Tamils had traded more than 2000 years ago with civilizations of East and West Asia who sought its spices, sea wealth, silk and textiles. Tamil Nadu is a land of all kinds of tourism.

Statement of the Problem

The national economy becomes increasingly dependent on the growing size of the tourist market. Tourism gains economic and social significance for its potentials to provide employment, generate income, earn foreign exchange, contribute towards regional development and encourage cultural exchange and national integration. Tourism industry is thus a highly complex one of many groups of firms contributing different products and services to the tourists.

Thus growth of tourism industry creates market for different industries and thus it contribute towards the development overall economy of a nation. For our country tourism has immense importance in the context of promoting 3 E's employment, (foreign) exchange and entrepreneurship which are very much lacking, inspite the country has avenues for multiple varieties of tourism. They are still unexploited to the optimum level. Many factors hamper the growth of the tourism industry in India. Moreover the profile and problems of tourism

vary type to type. These need a serious and focused study and suitable solutions. Spiritual tourism is an important component of Indian tourism industry as India is a land of spirituality endowed with many places of worships, pilgrim centers, religious monuments etc., Thoothukudi district of the Tamil Nadu is also blessed with many search places. However spiritual tourism in this district has not been paid due special attention by the government and the researchers. The avenues for the spiritual tourism in this district are not fully explored and the deficiencies and problems are not much assess. An in-depth study on the spiritual tourists, spiritual tourism avenues, spiritual tourism amenities and spiritual tourism issues and problems in the districts will help to promote spiritual tourism in the district in specific and the tourism industry in general. This prompted the researcher to choose this topic for his study.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the specific objectives of this study.

- 1) To study the demographic profile of the spiritual tourists in the study area.
- 2) To examine the factors influencing spiritual tourism and the pattern of visits by the tourists.
- 3) To trace out the specific problems of spiritual tourism in the study area.
- 4) To give suggestions for further growth and development of spiritual tourism in Thoothukudi district.

Methodology of the Study

This empirical and exploratory study is based on both primary data and secondary data. Primary data has been used as the main source of the study and it was collected from 150 visitors of the spiritual tourist spots in Thoothukudi district such as Tiruchendur, Manappadu, Nava Thirupathi and Thoothukudi our lady of Snows church. The primary data was collected through a pre-structured interview schedule carefully designed after a pilot study and the several discussions with research guide, co-researchers and officials of tourism department. The secondary data was collected from various books, journals, published materials and websites. The respondents were selected on quota sampling and convenience sampling methods. The quota of respondents varied according to importance and popularity of the places on the basis of number of people visiting these places.

Accordingly 100 respondents were selected from Tiruchendur and 20 respondents each were selected from Thoothukudi and Nava Thirupathi and 10 respondents were selected

from Manappadu. The data collected from them were duly edited and tabulated in a such a way of analyzing and interpreting them in the context of the objectives of the study. Different statistical tools such as Simple percentage analysis, Chi square test, Garrat ranking, Central tendency analysis and Factor analysis are suitably used in the study. The inferences of the analysis are presented with the help of tables, diagrams and charts.

Scope of the study

In this study an effort had been taken to examine the dimensions of spiritual tourism in Thoothukudi District. This study covers the important spiritual tourist places in Thoothukudi District such as Tiruchendur, Manapad, Nava Thirupathi and Thoothukudi. It is confined to study the profile of the spiritual tourists, factors influencing their tour decisions pattern of their visits and the problems of spiritual tourism in the study area.

Data Analysis

- Profile of tourists and pattern of their visits

This chapter attempts to analyse the profile of the spiritual tourists and pattern of their visit in Tuticorin district based on the primary data collected through the pre-structured interview schedule. The profile of the spiritual tourists has been analysed in terms of demographic variables such as age, sex, education occupational status, religions, level of income, marital status and nativity. Simple percentage analysis has been used as a tool for this. The source of information about the spot, the purpose of the visit, factors influencing the tour, type and frequency of their visit and their ways of arranging the facilities are that different dimensions of the analysis. In identifying the factors influencing their tour, Factor analysis has been used. The relationship between the purpose of tourists and various demographic variables such as age, sex, level of education, occupational status, annual income and religions also has been analysed through application of this Chi - square test. The inferences of these various analysis are discussed below.

Demography of the Tourists

The tourists selected from the study areas as respondents for on the study are classified on the basis the demographic variables such as age, sex, marital status, educational level, occupational status, income levels, religions and nativity of the tourists. Such an analysis reveals the following:

An overall majority of 33 percent of the tourists to spiritual spots belong to middle-age and old-age groups. within this group, middle-age people are more in number than old age people. It is significant to note that a very significant portion of the tourists are belonging to young age also among which most of them belong to the age group of 21 to 40 (vide table 4.1) sex-wise analysis of the respondents shows that around 80% of tourists are male and 20 percent are female (vide table. 4.2)

Table 1
Classification of Respondents according to Age

Age	No of Respondents	Percentage
Below 20	12	8%
21 – 30	28	19%
31 – 40	30	20%
41 – 50	24	16%
51 – 60	32	21%
Above 60	24	16%
Total	150	100

Note : Those who belong to the age group of upto 40 are classified as “youth”, 41-60 as middle age group and above 60 as old age group.

Source : Primary data.

Table 2
Classification of Respondents according to Sex

Sex	No of Respondents	Percentage
Male	120	80%
Female	30	20%
Total	150	100

Source : Primary data.

Most of them (84%) are married and only 16% of tourists in the study area are unmarried (vide table 4.3)

Most of the tourist interviewed are educated and only (10%) of them have no formal education. Among the educated tourists, those who belong to higher education category (above higher secondary level) are more in number (55%) than the other categories (Vide Table 4.4)

Another classification based on the occupational status of the respondents shows that most of the tourists (46%) to the spiritual spots are the 'salaried class' belonging to government as well as private sectors among which government employees are high in number. Next to salaried class, most of the tourists (25%) are businessmen. Thus nearly three fourth of the tourists to the study area are either salaried class or businessmen (vide table 4.5

Table 3

Classification of Respondent according to marital status

Marital Status	No of Respondents	Percentage
Married	120	80%
Un Married	30	20%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary data.

Table 4

Classification of Respondents according to Educational level

Educational Level	No of Respondents	Percentage
No Formal Education	15	10%
Primary Education	24	16%
Higher Secondary Education	28	19%
Vocational Education	36	24%
Post Graduation	35	23%
Professional courses	12	8%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary data.

Table 5

Classification of Respondents according to Occupational status

Occupational status	No of Respondents	Percentage
Students	12	8%
Businessman	38	25%
Professional	12	8%
Salaried class – Government	38	25%
Salaried class - Private	32	21%
Agriculturists and coolies	18	12%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary data.

The analysis on the basis of the level of income shows that there is a direct relationship between the level of income and the number of tourists visiting the study areas. Around 39% of tourists visiting these places belong to middle income group (ie Rs.50000 to 100000) and 35 percentage of the tourists belong to higher income group (ie above Rs. 100000). The tourists belonging to lower income (ie Rs.24000 to 50000) is only 19 percentage and those who belong to below poverty line (ie Rs. 24000) is only 8 percent (vide table 4.6)

Table 6
Classification of Respondents on the basis of Annual income

Annual Income	No of Respondents	Percentage
Below poverty line (Below Rs.24000)	12	8%
Lower income (Rs. 24000-50000)	28	19%
Middle income (Rs.50000 to 100000)	58	39%
Higher income (above Rs.100000)	52	35%
Total	150	100%

The above classification of income group is based on Tamil nadu government revenue department

Source : Primary data.

Eventhough the religious spots are visited by the tourists irrespective of their religions to some extent, spots relating to Hinduism are mostly visited by the Hindus and spots relating to the Christianity are mostly visited by Christians. The classification of the respondents of the study based on their religion shows that most of them (67.67%) are Hindus and rest of them (33.33%) are Christians. (vide table 4.7)

Tourists are classified generally on the basis of their nativity. The tourist visiting the spiritual tourist centers are classified into foreign tourists, tourists from other states, tourists from other districts and tourists belonging to the local district (Tuticorin)

The simple percentage analysis shows that only seven percentage of the tourists visiting the spiritual tourist spots are Foreigners. A Majority of the visitors (61%) are domestic tourists belonging to the other states and other districts of Tamil Nadu. Within this group visitors from other districts of Tamil nadu are high in number. Nearly one-third of the visitors are the natives of Tuticorin district. (vide table 4.8)

Table 7

Classification of Respondents according to the Religion

Religion	No of Respondents	Percentage
Hindu	100	67.67%
Christian	50	33.33%
Muslim	-	-
Buddist	-	-
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary data

Table 8

Classification of Respondents according to Nativity

Nativity	No of Respondents	Percentage
Other country	10	7%
Other state	24	16%
Other District	68	45%
Local	48	32%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary data

Table 9

Source of information about Spiritual tourism spots

Sources	No of Respondents	Percentage
Friends and Relatives	94	63%
Tour Operators / Travel Agents	26	17%
Advt. of Tourism Department	18	12%
Websites	12	8%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary data

Table 10

Respondent according to the purpose of visiting

Purpose of Visit	No of Respondents	Percentage
Fulfilling a religions Vows / obligations	65	43%
Pilgrimage	13	9%
Leisure / recreation	8	5%
Mental Relief / relaxation	42	28%
Spiritual enlightenment	22	15%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary data

The relationship between purpose of the visit and the demographic variables such as age, sex, level of education, occupational status, the economic position (level of income) and

religions were analysed with the help of Chi-square test and the results of the analysis have been summarised below.

In order to find out whether there is any relationship between age and purpose of visit, Chi-square test has been applied as below.

TABLE 11
AGE OF THE TOURISTS AND PURPOSE OF VISIT
- CHI-SQUARE TEST

O	E	(O-E)	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
2	5.2	3.02	10.24	1.96
2	1.04	0.96	0.92	0.88
2	0.64	1.36	1.85	2.89
4	3.36	0.64	0.40	0.12
2	1.76	0.24	0.05	0.028
10	12.13	2.13	4.53	0.37
4	2.42	1.58	2.49	1.03
2	1.49	0.51	0.26	1.17
10	7.84	2.16	4.66	0.59
2	4.10	2.1	4.41	1.075
13	13	0	0	0
3	2.6	0.4	0.16	0.061
1	1.6	0.6	0.36	0.22
9	8.4	0.6	0.36	0.042
4	4.4	0.4	0.16	0.036
12	10.4	1.6	2.56	0.246
2	2.08	0.08	6.4	3.076
0	1.28	1.28	1.64	1.28
8	6.72	1.28	1.60	0.244
2	3.52	1.52	2.31	0.656
16	13.86	1.15	1.32	0.095
1	2.77	1.77	3.13	1.129
3	1.70	1.3	1.69	0.99
8	13.44	5.54	29.59	2.20
4	4.69	0.69	0.48	0.102
12	10.4	1.6	2.56	0.246
1	2.08	1.08	1.16	0.557
0	1.28	1.28	1.64	1.281
3	6.72	3.72	13.84	2.060
8	3.52	4.48	20.07	5.701
				31.037

Ho : There is no significant relationship between the Age of the respondents and their purpose of visit

Degree of freedom = 20

Level of significance = 5%

The calculated value (31.037) is lesser than the Table value (32.67). So the Null hypothesis is accepted and the differences is insignificant. It infers that there is no relationship between the age and the purpose of the visit.

TABLE 12
SEX OF THE TOURIST AND PURPOSE OF VISIT
- CHI-SQUARE TEST

O	E	(O-E)	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
48	52	4	16	0.30
8	10.4	2.4	5.76	0.55
5	6.4	1.4	1.96	0.30
38	33.6	4.4	19.36	0.57
21	17.6	3.4	11.56	0.65
17	13	4	16	1.23
5	2.6	2.4	5.76	2.21
3	1.6	1.4	1.96	1.22
4	8.4	4.4	19.36	2.30
1	4.4	3.4	11.56	2.62
				9.95

H₀ : There is no significant relationship between the sex of the respondents and their purpose of visit

Degree of freedom = 4

Level of significance = 5%

The calculated value (9.95) is lesser than the Table value (11.07). So the Null hypothesis is accepted and the differences is insignificant. It infers that there is no relationship between the sex and the purpose of the visit.

TABLE 13
EDUCATION LEVEL OF TOURIST AND PURPOSE OF VISIT
- CHI-SQUARE TEST

O	E	(O-E)	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
4	6.5	2.5	6.25	0.96
2	1.3	0.7	0.49	0.37
1	0.8	0.2	0.04	0.05
6	4.2	1.8	3.24	0.77
2	2.2	0.2	0.04	0.018
10	10.4	0.4	0.16	0.01
3	2.08	0.92	0.84	0.40
2	1.28	0.72	0.51	0.39
4	6.72	2.72	7.40	0.10
5	3.52	1.48	2.19	0.62
13	12.13	0.87	0.75	0.061

2	2.42	0.42	0.17	0.070
2	1.49	0.51	0.26	0.17
6	7.84	1.84	3.38	0.43
5	4.10	0.9	0.81	0.19
15	14.7	0.3	0.09	6.12
3	2.94	0.06	3.6	1.22
1	1.81	0.81	0.65	0.35
12	9.52	2.48	6.15	0.64
3	4.98	1.98	3.92	0.78
18	15.16	2.84	8.06	0.53
3	0.03	0.03	9	2.97
0	1.86	1.86	3.45	1.85
12	9.8	2.2	4.84	0.493
4	5.13	1.13	1.27	0.247
5	5.2	0.2	0.04	7.692
0	1.04	1.04	1.08	1.038
2	0.64	1.36	1.84	2.875
2	3.36	1.36	1.84	0.547
3	1.76	1.24	1.53	0.869
				32.831

Ho : There is no significant relationship between the education level of the respondent and their purpose of visit

Degree of freedom = 20

Level of significance = 5%

The Calculated value of 32.831 is higher than the table value 32.67. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the differences is significant. It infers that relationship between education level of the respondents and the purpose of visit.

TABLE14
THE RELIGIONS OF THE VISITORS
AND THE PURPOSE OF VISIT -CHI-SQUARE TEST

O	E	(O-E)	(O-E)²	(O-E)²/E
45	43.33	1.67	2.79	0.064
8	8.66	0.66	0.43	0.050
5	5.33	0.33	0.11	0.020
30	28	2	4	0.142
12	14.67	2.67	7.13	0.49
20	21.67	1.67	2.79	0.128
5	4.33	0.67	0.45	0.104
3	2.67	0.33	0.11	0.041
12	14	2	4	0.285
10	7.33	2.67	7.12	0.971
				2.295

Ho : There is no significant relationship between the religions of the respondent and their purpose of visit

Degree of freedom = 4

Level of significant = 5%

The calculated value (2.295) is less than the table value (11.07), So the null hypothesis is accepted and the differences is insignificant it infers that there is no relationship between religions of the tourist and their purpose of visit.

Conclusion

In spiritual tourism a tourist seek for peace of mind and a sense of spiritual satisfaction. Even though the visitors to the spiritual tourism spots of Thoothukudi district are satisfied with peaceful atmosphere they experience and the friendliness of the local people, they are dissatisfied with the basic infrastructures like sanitation and drinking water facilities, lack of cleanliness and exploitation by the local vehicle operators. If these problems are addressed properly and enough publicity is given the spiritual tourism avenues of the Thoothukudi district shall be explored to the optimum level.