

FACTORS DETERMINING GROWTH OF TOURISM SECTOR IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract: Tourism is a highly labour intensive industry offering employment to both the semi-skilled and unskilled human beings. It is a major source of income and employment for individuals. This aspect of provision of employment becomes more important in a developing country where the level of unemployment and under-employment tends to be high. In addition to providing employment to a large number of people, tourism can be the instrument of regional development aimed at achieving an equitable balance between major industrial areas and the rest of the country. Tourism enables the wealth earned in one part of the country to be transferred to another part of the country.

Index Terms - Tourism, Employment, Regional Development

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry is the highest generator of employment. Out of every nine persons, one person earns a living from tourism. For every million rupees of investment, 13 jobs are created in manufacturing industries, 45 jobs in agriculture and 89 jobs in hotels and restaurants. Tourism is considered to be an important area for intensive development for all governments. As the fastest growing foreign exchange earner, especially, in developed countries, it is being given priority. The service providers play a vital role in ensuring a safe and comfortable trip for the tourists.

Statement of the problem

Modern tourism has been a movement, function, nobly and an industry also. As an economic enterprise, tourism has been labour intensive, smokeless, income generating and foreign exchange earner too. There are 'Three Es' pertaining to tourism. They are Employment, Entertainment and Entrepreneurship. The vibrating influence of tourism could be felt in its ramifications of change. A small step of a single man in the remotest past, proved to be a great leap forward today.

Tourism in India was seen as a mere service sector for a long time. It has now been recognized as an export industry due to its multiple advantages. Though tourism gained importance belatedly, it has grown at a rapid pace and enhanced its share in international tourist arrivals as well as in foreign exchange earnings. Now, it is one of the largest service industries in India, with a contribution of 6.23 per cent to the national GDP and 8.78 per cent of the total employment in India. According to World Travel and Tourism Council, India will be a tourism hot spot from 2009 to 2018 having the highest tenyear growth potential. The Travel and Tourism Competitive Report 2007 ranked tourism in India sixth, in terms of price competitiveness

Tourism is a basic and most desirable human activity deserving the praise and encouragement of all people and all Governments. It is an industry concerned with attracting people to a destination transporting them their housing, feeding and entertaining them upon their arrival and returning them to their income accredited to the opening up of the economy and multinational corporations has led to the steep growth of tourism industry. For many major economies of the world tourism is an integral part and is an important source of foreign exchange. The travel and tourism sector creates more jobs per million rupees of investment than any other sector of the economy and is capable of providing employment to a wide spectrum of job seekers from the unskilled to the specialized even in the remote part of the country.

Tamil Nadu is a State with several distinguished tourism centre. It has cerulean mountains, Silver Falls, verdant vegetations, sandy beaches, mammoth monuments, timeless temples, fabulous wildlife, scintillating sculptures and reverberating rural life. It has picturesque spots, continuing heritage, cultural confluence and aesthetic magnificence.

Tourism enhances the performance of the tourism sector in an environmentally and culturally sustainable and socially inclusive manner.

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.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vikas Sharma and Sunil Giri¹ (2009) in their study stated that the pilgrims of all castes and classes of different states and countries have devotion and faith in the matter of religious worship. It is believed that there is a sacred aim behind this and that aim is to fulfill the desire of obtaining “Punya” (merit) and to get rid of ‘Paap’ (sin) apart from their personal motives. They concluded from the analysis that the pilgrim tourists to Shiv Khori and Jwalaji have been facing many problems regarding transport and transport infrastructure facilities during their pilgrimage to these Holy Shrines. It has been observed that after the incorporation of a separate government body for the shrines, flow of pilgrims to Shiv Khori and Jwalaji increased substantially during the past decade (as compared to previous decades). But concrete steps have not been taken for the development of a better transport infrastructure, which has consequently resulted in lesser popularity of these shrines among non-local pilgrims. The poor infrastructure has led to a decline in the number of pilgrims visiting these shrines and hence, these shrines have not contributed much towards the state’s economy.

Sheba Rani, (2007)² opines that marketing is a critical aspect of tourism development plans as it links the supply of tourism products to demand for the same and thus facilitates the capturing value. Marketing includes identification of the target market, creating awareness of the destination and specific sites, disseminating information to the target customers to facilitate itinerary planning and promoting tourism demand through various means. So the author suggests that in-order to attract the target segments, an aggressive marketing and promotional plan should be implemented using a mix of media. In line with the latest developments, an attractive, interactive website can be designed to arouse interest in the potential tourist and enable him to plan his itinerary.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the specific objectives of the study

1. To assess the demographic features of tourist visiting the study area.
2. To study the factors and facilities which influence the development of tourism in Tirunelveli District
3. To make a few suggestions to further promote tourism in the study area.

SOURCES OF DATA

This research study is based on empirical evidence. Necessary primary and secondary data were collected systematically. To collect the relevant primary data, well structured and pre-tested schedules were duly employed. In addition, a few personal discussions and conversations were conducted to fish out the facts and processed them promptly. The primary data pertain to the infrastructure facilities such as attraction, accessibility, accommodation and amenities were collected from the sample tourists through pre-structured interview schedule carefully designed after a pilot study made by the researcher.

Secondary data were collected from newspapers, journals, periodicals, published statistical report on tourism by Government of Tamil Nadu and Government of India. Booklets, brochures and other materials circulated by the Department of Tourism were also considered for the gathering of pertinent data. Internet is yet another major source of second hand information for this study.

Garrett’s Ranking

Garrett’s Ranking was used in the opinion about the respondents to select the tourists places under the ranking technique. This technique was used for knowing about the priorities given by the respondents for the various places. The following formula was to convert the order of the opinions in to rank.

$$Per\ cent\ Position = \frac{100 (R_{ij} - 0.5)}{N_j}$$

R_{ij} = Rank given by the *ith* factor

N_j = Number of factors ranked by the *jth* individual

Thus the per cent position of each rank was obtained and it was converted into scores using Garrett's ranking Table. After that, the scores of the individual respondents for each of the factors were added and then divided by the total number of respondents who had responded. The mean scores for all the reasons were analysed in the descending order. Ranks were assigned and the important reasons were identified.

Age-wise Classification

Age is an important factor to decide the nature and type of tourist places visited by the tourist. In fact age either promotes or discourages tourism activity. Table 6.2 explains the age wise classification of the sample tourists.

AGE-WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE TOURIST

Age	No. of Tourists		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total
Below 15	5 (2.50) –	5 (25.00)	
16 – 30	62 (31.00)	48 (24.00)	110 (27.50)
31 – 45	77 (38.50)	128 (64.00)	205 (51.25)
Above 45	56 (28.00)	24 (12.00)	80 (20.00)
Total	200 (100)	200 (100)	400 (100)

Source: Survey Data.

Note : Figures in parenthesis are the percentage to total.

The largest age group between both the foreign and domestic tourists was 31-45 years of age, followed by 16-30. Evidently, youth whether foreign or domestic have a greater fascination for travel. Among the foreign tourists, 12.00 per cent were above 45 years of age, but among the domestic tourists, this percentage was significantly at 28.00 per cent. It is also found from the table the children group particularly among foreign tourists does not show interest in visiting places in India. This may be because of the changed ecological factors, which be unfit to the children of foreign tourists.

Motivating Factors to Visit Tirunelveli District

The factors motivating the tourists to take a tour to Tirunelveli are of immense importance for tourism promotion. The factors, which the respondents consider important places are including hill resorts, beach resorts, historical monuments, wild life sanctuaries, pilgrimage centres. When the tourists entered the state they were very interested to visit some major tourist places which they had in their mind. In that way this study explained how the respondents select the places, which they desired to visit in Tirunelveli.

MOTIVATING FACTORS TO VISIT TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

Factors	No. of Tourists		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total
Business and industrial centres	43(21.50)	24(12.00)	67(16.75)
Pilgrimage centres	59(29.50)	13(6.50)	72(18.00)
Hill stations	45(22.50)	56(28.00)	101(25.25)
Historical places	33(16.50)	75(37.50)	108(27.00)
Water Falls	17(8.50)	31(15.50)	48(12.00)
Wild life sanctuaries	3(1.50)	1(0.50)	4(1.00)
Total	200 (100)	200 (100)	400(100)

Source: Survey Data.

Note : Figures in parenthesis are the percentage to total.

Table explains the motivational factors to visit Tirunelveli. Among the total tourists 29.50 per cent of the domestic tourists interest is to visit to pilgrimage centres in Tirunelveli. Nearly 37.50 per cent of the foreign tourists are interested in visiting Historical monuments. Only a small number of domestic and foreign tourists shows their interest to visit wildlife sanctuaries in the percentage of 1.50 and 0.50 respectively.

Garrett’s ranking table was used to find out the places selected by the tourists according to the rank basis. The places are classified into six categories. The tourists were asked about the various places according to their priority preferences. The following formula had been used to convert the order of the places into ranks.

GARRETT’S RANKING TABLE FOR DOMESTIC TOURISTS

Factors	Total Score	Mean Score	<i>Rank</i>
Business and Industrial Centres	8599.99	63.85	III
Pilgrim Centres	4699.73	91.67	I
Hill Stations	7833.30	69.39	II
Historical places	9316.66	56.03	IV
Water Falls	9616.82	54.03	V
Wild life sanctuaries	12466.71	27.15	VI

Source: Computed value.

GARRETT’S RANKING TABLE FOR FOREIGN TOURISTS

Factors	Total Score	Mean Score	<i>Rank</i>
Business and Industrial Centres	7266.58	76.12	IV
Pilgrim Centres	12360.18	27.15	V
Hill Stations	5916.52	84.56	II
Historical places	5616.62	86.89	I
Water Falls	6516.44	81.99	III
Wild life sanctuaries	13266.73		VI

Source: Computed value.

Thus, the per cent position of each rank was obtained and it was converted into scores using Garrett’s rank table. After that, the scores of the individual respondents for each of the factors were added and then divided by the total number of respondents who had responded. The mean score was the rank in the descending order of magnitude.

The factor which was assigned the first rank was given to the pilgrimage centers and the second was the hill stations followed by business and industrial centers historical places, waterfalls and wild life sanctuaries. Similarly, for the foreign tourists with the help of the Garrett’s ranking table the factor which was assigned the first rank was given to the historical places, and second was hill stations followed by water falls, business, industrial centers, pilgrim centers and wild life sanctuaries. From this table most of the foreign tourists were prepared to visit the historical places and hill stations.

It was observed from Garrett Ranking, the factor which was assigned the first rank was given by domestic tourist to the pilgrimage centers and the second was the hill stations followed by business and industrial centers historical places and wild life sanctuaries. Similarly, for the foreign tourists with the help of the Garrett's ranking table the factor which was assigned the first rank was given to the historical places, and second was hill stations followed by waterfalls, business and industrial centers. It was found that the most of the foreign tourists were prepared to visit the historical places and hill stations.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ The tourism department should take all necessary steps to provide basic facilities like power, transportation, roads, drinking water, waste management and health care at all the tourist place in Tirunelveli District.
- ❖ The department of tourism Government of Tamil Nadu may operate chartered buses to places of tourism importance in the District for the easy movement of the tourist both domestic and overseas.
- ❖ The officials of the department of tourism should be friendly towards tourist.
- ❖ Efforts should be taken maintain cleanliness and hygienic in and around tourist places.

CONCLUSION

Tourism is a key sector of the economy and contributes significantly in the country's GDP as well as Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE). Tourism has the potential to not only be the economy driver, but also become an effective tool for poverty alleviation and ensuring growth with equity. Tirunelveli District has enormous growth potential to develop. The tourism sector has a few problems like Government apathy, poor infrastructure, lack of professionalism, low priority accorded to tourism. These problems are to be solved for the development of Tourism industry in Tirunelveli District. This seems to be the appropriate time to revise and redesign the Central and State Governments' policies pertaining to tourism.

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