



REVIVAL STRATEGIES FOR FORGOTTEN PLACES OF IMPORTANCE IN TELANGANA: A TOURIST REVIEW OF CHALUKYA NAGAR ALAMPUR

Dr. A. Sita Madhavi

Professor, Department of Management Studies Geethanjali College of Engineering and Technology, Hyderabad

ABSTRACT This article is written to encourage tourism in Telangana, India. Tourism showcases the local monuments, religious places, nature's beauty, trade and merchandise, food, culture and tradition. India's rich heritage is hidden in it. World looks at India for a holistic lifestyle. Sadly, most of the Indian's need to be reminded of their history, rich and varied heritage, customs, culture and traditional lifestyle. Encouraging tourism helps in understanding one's own culture, it is a window which shows a great deal of technology which existed then but is now lost. Everything old is not worn-out and rotten. Technology which once existed is neither known nor recreated. However this article intends to apply concepts of visual merchandise to popularize a "place". Its objective is to improve marketing for a tourist destination. As a sample, Jogulamba temple of Alampur, Telangana, India has been considered in this paper. Visual merchandise is normally applied in retail sector. This article borrows its concept and tries to apply to tourism. This article assumes that if local tourism improves, its economy improves, standard of living improves, scope for employment improves and ancillary industries may also improve. It could mean improvement in connectivity, logistics and more.

KEYWORDS : Tourism, Alampur, Jogulamba temple, Visual merchandise, World travel and tourism council, Nava Bhramma temples, Shakti peetha, multi-sensory experience, Lighting, Food, Training, Policy making.

Introduction:

India is called "A Land of Mystery". Though its people travel West in search of Science, people all over the world travel towards India for wisdom and spirituality. Management and Technology has redefined itself in the present era. Total quality finds its new definition in satisfying one's internal self before meeting a quality standard or set norms. In this context, digging into our own history to know and inspire ourselves is not strange but obvious. It could be a gateway to identifying or rediscovering ourselves. Encouraging tourism may therefore be considered to be a need and not just a business.

The word "tourism", reminds of monuments and temples, natures beauty, people and food. This study considers Alampur as a sample because Alampur is an important place with a "place value" and a message to convey to the society at large. It hopes to identify scope for improvement in showcasing it and marketing for it.

Some of the reasons for under developed tourism include poor transport, few hotels, lack of connectivity, unstructured human resources, poor hygiene, poor health facilities and others issues such as inadequate infrastructure, beggars, slum, language and tourist harassment.

But Alampur's glory is beyond this. It has many anecdotes and messages to convey.

Literature review:

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, India is on track to build the world's fourth-largest travel and tourism industry by year 2027 AD. It is trailing behind China, the United States and Germany. In fact, in 2016, India's travel and tourism industry outperformed its economy as a whole, and in 2017, the sector generated more than \$230 billion. The country has 36 World Heritage sites and 103 national parks. Visitors visit India for a plethora of reasons, including medical tourism, eco-tourism, natural beauty and religion. The government aims to realize a one percent share in global international tourist arrivals by year 2020, and a two percent share by year 2025. Moreover, India's 2018-19 budget allots nearly \$184 million for the integrated development of tourist circuits. The country also plans to expand its e-Visa program, through which tourists from select countries can apply for visas to visit India entirely online. India's government aims to double the nation's tourist inflow by simplifying the visa application process.

Smriti Chand in her article titled, "Growth of Tourism in India: Its impact on Employment and Economic Development", writes that the root of tourism in India can be traced to pilgrimage. Places of pilgrimage provided a firm ground to tourism in the beginning and still continue to be one of the most effective factors of promoting tourism in India. Further, Domestic tourism is an important segment of the overall tourist scenario although no reliable data are available in this regard.

Anushree Banerjee (2014) stated that the major issues that are restraining the industry from achieving high economic value are shortage of qualified personnel, shortage of tourism training institutes, shortage of well qualified trainers, working conditions for the employees. Policies which can help the employees to work in supportive environment are also a point of concern.

Profile of Alampur Jogulamba temple:

Alampur is a town located at Jogulamba Gadwal district of Telangana state. It is about 210 kms away from Hyderabad. It is situated on the left bank of the river Tungabhadra. Sacred rivers Tungabhadra and Krishna are in confluence near Alampur, mentioned as Dakshina Kashi (also known as Navabrahmeshwara Theertha). The reason for calling Alampur as southern Kashi is because Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers meet in this holy town, just like 'trivenisangamam' in Kasi. It is considered to be Western Gateway of Srisailem.

Alampur is home to the very ancient Navabhramma temples, which date back to the 7th century AD. Nava Bhramma temples of Alampur are dedicated to Lord Shiva. The Nava Bhramma temples are Taraka Bhramma, Swarga Bhramma, Padma Bhramma, Bala Bhramma, Kumara Bhramma, Arka Bhramma, Vira Bhramma and the Vishwa Bhramma. Each of the Shiva Linga in these temples has an aushadha (ancient medicinal herb) installed along with them. One can see Lord Brahma's sculptures in this temple which is not commonly found in other holy places. Puranas also state that the ashram of Jamadagni was located here. It is also said that the head of Renuka, Jamadagni's wife, was severed, and the torso was immortalized and placed in Brahmeswara temple after Parashuram, Renuka's son asked his father Jamadagni to immortalise his mother Renuka as 'Yellamma' by making her the village deity. People come here to offer prayers to Goddess Yellamma to be blessed with progeny. It is believed that people visiting this place will be freed from all sins (paapanaasini), as this is the fifth of the 18 shaktipeethas in India.

The temple's sacredness is mentioned in the Skanda Purana. The prime deities at Alampur are Lord Brahmeswara and Goddess Jogulamba Devi. It is surrounded by the Nallamala hills.

Badami Chalukyas build the Nava Bhramma temples, who ruled for 200 years from the middle of the sixth century. They built many other temples in Karnataka and Alampur in Telangana. There are many beautiful carvings on the temple walls which show perfection of the sculptor and the meticulous efforts made by the invaders to destroy them. The archaeological remains of the temples exhibit a hybrid style of architecture – dating back to the 6th-7th centuries. Each of them narrates a story.

After the defeat of the Kakatiya dynasty, Muslim saints and pahlwans had come to propagate Islam in this region. One of them was Shah Ali Pehelwan, who came along with his followers to Kurnool. After

coming to know about the greatness of the temples in Alampur, he decided to demolish them but during a fight with the villagers of Alampur, Pehelwan and his followers were killed. His body was laid to rest close to the main entrance of Brahmawara temple and every year, "urs" is held in this dargah. One can witness the coexistence of Hindus and Muslims in this location.

Lord Narasimha's temple built in 9th century inside Alampur fort, Surya NarayanaSwamy temple, PaapaNasini temples, KoodaliSangameshwara temple, Yoga NarasimhaSwamy temple, KanchiKamaakshi temple and many other temples built in this holy town make it one of the must-see religious destinations in India.

There are many architectural marvels and mythological mysteries which can be uncovered on a trip to Alampur, which is located close to NH44, Bangalore highway. The book titled 'Dakshina Kasi Alampur Kshetram,' written in Telugu by famous writer, poet, freedom fighter, reformer and history researcher Late Gadiyaram Ramakrishna Sharma is a good guide for a tourist visiting Alampur.

Research Methodology:

This article is conceptual. It dares to apply concepts of Visual merchandise found in retail sector to Tourism development. This article treats "Place" as a product and tourism development as a service. It proposes a descriptive research design.

Data Collection:

Primary data was collected through observation, capturing observations in photographs, meeting current local residents as well as those who spent a significant period of their life in Alampur. Interviewing small businesses, traders, hotel managers and transporters. Secondary data was collected from websites, journals and books.

Concept: Visual merchandising "AlampurJogulamba temple":

Visual merchandising is a marketing practice to attract customer attention. Its purpose is to use the retail space to generate more sales in retail management. In this article this technique has been employed to popularize a tourist destination. It proposes to attract the customer towards the given location by re-creating the story around it with the help of websites, pamphlets, brochures and local guides.

Visual Merchandising suggests: Begin with target customer on top of the mind. The target customer in this case is the local, national or international tourist. A quick survey of a few localities in the Jogulamba temple showed their awareness on it being a Shaktipeeth. They were aware of the festivities around it. The non locals were ignorant of the festivals but were aware of the importance of Shaktipeeth. International travelers were hardly found.

Most of the tourists came there to visit the Jogulamba temple. A deeper study of their psychographic behavior may help in improving the quality of the tourist experience. Sanity, cleanliness, pure drinking water, proper disposal system for garbage, silence in the temple sanctum and devotional music in the vicinity may add flavor to the experience. Tourists of this type can be attracted in better numbers when appropriate stories are displayed in a trustworthy form without disturbing the temple architecture. Sound and light programs may be held to show the importance of each temple. Tasty and hygienic food may be kept available at a reasonable cost. Ultimately the temple experience has to be made a multi-sensory experience.

Local youth may be trained to become better guides and not just petty sellers of low quality stuff. Language and presentation skills may be imparted to them to ensure ease of communication. They may be trained to ensure quality standard in food and water.

Lighting the temple:

Lighting creates an engaging customer experience. Different moods and emotions may be created based on sunlight or temple's lighting. The tourist may be made to feel like they're in a temple, monument, court or fort, depending on the kind of environment created. Alampur, Jogulamba temple is a rare location with all the above flavors. Lighting each location differently can create different experiences at the same time.

Spotlights may be used to highlight certain areas where people pay attention or to which attention has to be diverted. The lighting and

decorum may create different themes within the temple, like socio-cultural gathering, festival, history, religion, ethos and nostalgia.

Four elements of visual merchandising which may be adopted to glorify the place include:

- Exterior surrounding: Creating a focal point
- Temple layout: Exposing customer to maximum possible details of temple layout, using empty spaces effectively, removing junk and keeping the place as original and clean as possible.
- Interior of the temple: Showing the evidences and creating an experience. Avoiding telling a story.
- Display of artifacts within the temple: Putting words together to explain the significance of each artifact through display. It may be noted the artifacts are preserved in a museum within the temple premises.

CONCLUSION:

Techniques of visual merchandising may be applied to develop tourism in Telangana, India. Each and every tourist destination has a unique method of popularizing itself, Its uniqueness may be publicized effectively by creating a unique image for itself. Showcasing each destination is essential for its popularity. Once the image is created, the focus has to shift to tourist convenience and experience of the tour. Multiple experiences may be created by stimulating each of the sensory receptors. After this target is achieved, the concept of exploration and internalization of the local culture among the localities can add to the value offered in tourism. In a nutshell with the pretext of tourism, the inner strength and values of a nation may be built stronger.

Annexure 1:

Our Duties towards Our Cultural Heritage as per Government of India:

Dos:

- Help in keeping the monuments clean.
- Help in maintaining the natural environment around the monuments.
- Help in preventing and avoiding any kind of destruction of a monument by any one. Report any such matter to the concerned staff.
- Keep distance while looking at any displayed or easily reachable antiquity and painting etc.
- Help in protecting unprotected monuments/ antiquities/ etc.
- Help in creating cultural awareness among the masses.
- Help in maintaining the sanctity of the monuments.

Don'ts:

- Don't litter or spoil any monument.
- Don't pluck flower etc. from monument-garden.
- Don't paint, draw or whitewash any wall etc. in and around the monuments.
- Don't touch any painting etc. and neither throw, nor divert any water, flash - lights and use ritual objects etc. over them.
- Don't hamper or spoil the originality of any artifact /antiquity of an unprotected area/ monument.
- Don't underestimate the importance of any cultural heritage.

Annexure 2:

Sample of observations captured through Photographs












Exhibit 1:



Courtesy: www.vanithatv.org

Rare sight of Shiva Lingam: The Lingam seems to have the foot print of hove of a bull (Assumed to be Nandi, Lord Shiva's Vahana) and water seems to be always oozing out.

Exhibit 2: Source <https://www.inrootz.in/historic-places/religious-spiritual-temples/pl132/Navabrahma-&-Jogulamba-Temples-Alampur-Mahbubnagar/information-history-significance->

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| Arkabrahma temple  | Kumara Brahma  | |
| Padma brahma  | Vishwa brahma  | |
| Veera brahma  | Swarga brahma  | |
| Taraka brahma  | Bala brahma  | |
| Garuda brahma  | Papanashini group of temples  | KundaliSanga meshwara  |

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Exhibit 3: Temple town of Alampur- Jogulamba temple (Photographed during survey)









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| Sculpture and Artifacts  | Sequence of similar temples  |
| Saptamatrikas  | Coexistence of Hindus and Muslims  |
| Gateway to temple courtyard  | Kameshwaridevi  |
| Fort walls around the temples  | Visuals which depicting defense against destruction  |

Image built for the Place (Jogulamba temple): It is a Mythological, Historical, Monumental, Cultural, Scientific, Heritage of India. A multisensory tourism experience may be created on similar line. Kindly note the researcher has deliberately displayed only a sample of pictures to create and retain tourist curiosity