



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Arts

A STUDY ON PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION OF TOURIST VISITING HILL STATIONS IN TAMIL NADU

KEY WORDS: Tourism, Hill stations, Tourism industry

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ABSTRACT

Tourism has become a popular global leisure activity largely affecting the cities, states and countries' economics. Gone are the days when people heisted to travel due to numerous difficulties faced during travel. Now is the era where more and more people want to move out and see the world. This makes the people to visit many places. The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as people who "travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for more than 24 hours and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited". Tourism at hill stations plays very important role in the tourism industry. Shimala, Kulu, Manali, Ooty, Kodaikannal, yerkaud, Udmangalam are the famous hill stations having a lot of development.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism encompasses travel for pleasure during holiday, health, business and trade, pilgrimage and social purpose, historical and geographical research, educational purpose, foreign offices and other official functions. Tourism industry has the capacity to transform certain apparent goods/ services that are economically useless into marketable attraction.

The present study provides a platform for the tourism industry and related sectors to elaborate the business focus on specific needs of both domestic and foreign tourists. The study provides an understanding of the preferences and satisfaction of the tourists which can act as a base for the tourism industry to attract and retain tourists and also supports service industries associated with tourism to strategize for better business.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Tourism plays an important role in maintaining peace and world unity by building bridges between different cultures and encouraging tolerance through cultural exchange. The tourism sector is a huge employer, creator of economic security and contributor to society. Tourism is not only an economic activity of importance in as much as it earns a country, the foreign exchange and provides employment; it can also correct adverse trade balance and regional imbalances, as they are both labour-intensive and capital intensive activities. It is an important medium of social cultural development, capable of promoting lasting goodwill and friendship among the nations of the world.

At this juncture the researcher is interested to study about growth of tourism in Tamil Nadu and influencing factors of the tourist for the selection of the hill stations of Tamil Nadu as a tourist destination.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives formulated for the purpose of the study

- To trace the growth of tourism taking into account both domestic and foreign tourist
- To elaborate the factors influencing the domestic and foreign tourists for the choice of tourists destinations hill station tourism in Tamil Nadu.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

V.Renuga devi and T.Thamilselvi (2013) undertook a study on preference and satisfaction of domestic tourists visiting hill stations in Tamil Nadu. The development of tourism industry in general and in particular, mainly depends on the level of satisfaction of tourists during their visit which includes attractions, appropriate hotel accommodation, transport facility, medical and communication facilities, etc. Therefore, the present study has aimed to measure the level of attractions and level of satisfactions towards the tourist destinations. Tourist behaviour is determined by various factors that include perceptions and preferences. So an attempt is made

to study the tourists' preferences, perceptions and problems faced by the tourists while touring.

Elangovan. A and P. Govindan (2013) this study focuses on tourists satisfaction with special reference with to udhagaman dalam. This study investigated the south Indian tourists' satisfaction towards Udhagamandalam. A total of 200 tourists were interviewed through structured interview schedule. The study was concluded with the findings that 83 percentages of tourists are satisfied Udhagamandalam tour trip, 79 percentages of tourists also have mind to revisit this place in future. This study suggested for improvement of various infrastructure facilities like Parking facilities, Road connectivity, Shopping facilities, Medical facilitates and Basic amenities for of various facilities like create and drinking water facilities, road connectivity and other facilities which will brings more tourist from the different part of India and rest of the world in future.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Area of the study – Tamil Nadu

Data Sources - Both primary data and secondary data have been used for the study purpose.

Sample size and Sampling method

A selection of 100 domestic and foreign tourists has been chosen for the study. For the purpose of the study, convenient random sampling technique has been adopted.

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

- Percentage Analysis
- Average ranking analysis

INDIA TOURIST ARRIVALS

Tourist Arrivals in India increased to 550000 in June 2016 from 529000 in May of 2016. Tourist Arrivals in India averaged 418991.21 from 2000 until 2016, reaching an all time high of 913000 in December of 2015 and a record low of 129286 in May of 2001. Tourist Arrivals in India is reported by the Department of Tourism, India.



The Indian tourism and hospitality industry has emerged as one of the key drivers of growth among the services sector in India. The second-largest sub-segment of the services sector comprising trade, repair services, hotels and restaurants contributed nearly US\$ 295.7 billion or 19.2 per cent to the Gross Domestic Product

(GDP) in 2015-16, while growing at 8.9 per cent year-on-year. Tourism in India has significant potential considering the rich cultural and historical heritage, variety in ecology, terrains and places of natural beauty spread across the country. Tourism is also a potentially large employment generator besides being a significant source of foreign exchange for the country.

Analysis and Interpretations

Table: 1 Demographic characteristic of sample and journey features

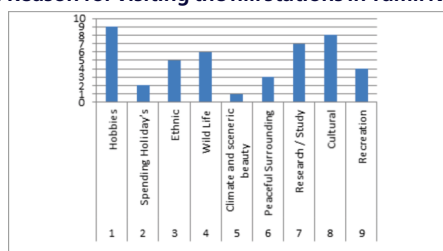
Characteristics	Distribution of answer
Tourist's gender	Female: 46 %; Male: 54%
Tourist's age	15 – 24: 16%; 25 –44: 52%; 45 – 64: 29% ; older than 65: 3%
Tourist's educational qualification	Elementary: 6%; Secondary: 42%; College or higher: 52%
Tourist's nationality	Indian tourists: 85%; Foreign tourists: 15%
Tourist's marital status	Married: 57%; single: 43%
Tourist's occupation	Employee: 30%; Businessman: 33%; Others: 37%
No. of days of visit	1-3: 85%; 4-6: 11%; 7-9: 4%
Main travel motivation	Leisure/recreation/holidays: quoted by 82% of respondents; visiting Friends and family: quoted by 11% of respondents; Business: quoted by 4% of respondents; Health: quoted by 3% of respondents
Main form of Transportation used in the journey	Rental Vehicle : 29%; Own Vehicle: 40%; Public transports: 26%; Others: 4%

Table: 2 Reason for visiting the hill stations in Tamil Nadu

Sl. No	Reason	Rank
1.	Hobbies	9
2.	Spending Holiday's	2
3.	Ethnic	5
4.	Wild Life	6
5.	Climate and sceneric beauty	1
6.	Peaceful Surrounding	3
7.	Research / Study	7
8.	Cultural	8
9.	Recreation	4

The above table explains sceneric beauty received the first rank the major reason for popularity of hill tourism.

Chart 1 Reason for visiting the hill stations in Tamil Nadu



Suggestions

- Cleanliness and hygiene and public utility services at every tourist complex are much important from tourist point of view. These have been widely quoted as a major shortcoming by the tourists.
- The need for close co-ordination between private and public sector tourism organisations at different levels. It is the key to success in tourism development where State tourism must play a central role.
- Lack of supervision by the local authorities in the pay and use public toilet which dismays the tourists with foul odour. Suitable steps need to be taken to alleviate these problems.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes tourism being the main source of income

after agriculture and economy majorly depends on it along with all entrepreneurs of all types and size. Still it is worthwhile to identify the areas requiring special attention; the level of satisfaction of the tourist by noting their views about the facilities provided to them is assessed. The major reason for people being attracted to Hill stations is the calm, cool and serene environments and scenic beauty they offer. The natural environment being the mainstay of hill tourism and a supporting and causal factor of many other forms of Tourism. The preservation of natural environment and ecosystem becomes of paramount importance.

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