

PERCEPTION OF TOURISTS AS REGARDS SATISFACTION LEVEL IN VELANKANNITOURIST SPOTS IN NAGAPATTINAM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a 'passport to development', 'Industry without smoke', 'Education without classrooms', 'Integration without legislation' and 'Diplomacy without formality'. Tourism industry is one of the key industries in India. It helps the economy in many ways such as both direct and indirect employment, development of business, transport, hotels and allied industries. It provides heritage, cultural, medical, business and sports tourism. It has emerged as an instrument for employment generation, poverty alleviation and sustainable human development. It promotes international understanding and gives support to local handicrafts and cultural activities. It is an important segment of the country's economy, especially in terms of its contribution towards foreign exchange earnings, generation of additional revenue and creation of employment opportunities.

Tourism industry generates income to our country. It is seen as an engine of development, catalyst to economic prosperity of a country. It refreshes the mind, brings happiness, relaxation, enjoyment and gives new experience etc. to the tourists. It ensures an all round growth through economic multiplier effect which percolates to various stake-holding sectors like the airlines, railways, surface transport, cruises, hotels, telecommunication etc. Apart from generating direct employment, its indirect effect ensures inclusive growth of the local community.

Tourism in India

India is one of the countries which attract more tourists internationally. The country has been divided into 29 states each state has its own culture and practices. There are many tourist places to be visited both by domestic and international tourists. The Government of India has a separate Ministry for tourism and, it assumes responsibility to manage tourism in India and development of tourism. Almost all states of India has separate department for tourism development in order to develop tourism in their own state.

Objectives of the Study

The study is made with the following objectives.

1. To study the trend and growth of tourism in India and Tamil Nadu.
2. To study the factors determining tour plan of tourist respondents.
3. To assess the perception of tourist respondents about facilities and services available in the study area.
4. To analyse the perception of tourists as regards the satisfaction level on facilities and services available in the study area.

5. To study the problems faced by tourists respondents in the study area.

Review of literature :

Renuga Devi V and Thamilselvi T (2013)¹ in their study analysed preference and satisfaction of tourists in hill stations of Tamil Nadu. For this purpose the researchers collected primary data from 500 respondents in Ooty, Kodaikanal and Yercaud. The study used Simple Percentage Analysis, Descriptive Analysis, Tables, Charts, Simple Ranking Method and chi-square test as statistical tools. The study found that 55.6 per cent of the tourists visit the tourist destination along with their family members, 61.2 per cent of the tourists are aware about the destinations through their friends and relatives, it was also found by the study that majority of the respondents preferred Government Botanical Garden in Ooty, Kodaikanal Lake and Yercaud Lake and they least concentrated in Mini Garden in Ooty, Silver Cascade in Kodaikanal and Bears Cave in Yercaud.

Angappapillai AP and Shanmugasundaram N (2013)² aimed to study trends in tourists arrival and its impact in hotel accommodation in Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu. The study used mean, standard deviation, co-efficient of variation and regression as statistical tools. The study used secondary data for analysis. The study found that the growth rate was higher among the first class hotels, followed by second class and third class hotels respectively, demand for beds is less than the supply of beds during the period under study in Thanjavur region. It indicates that there is excess supply of beds which varies from 1462 in 2002 to 3140 in 2011. The study also evidenced that that supply of beds has registered a steady increase over the years in Thanjavur.

Kumaran S, Kannan R and Milton T (2013)³ in their study analysed the satisfaction of tourists in Madurai. The study used primary data, which were collected through interview schedule from 100 respondents in the study area. The study found that majority of the tourists expressed staying in this destination was very valuable. They felt good and every rupee paid in this destination was worth. Majority of the tourists agreed that the tourist destination exceeded their expectation and they will recommend this tourist destination. Majority of the tourists were very much satisfied about the Historical places, food, accommodation and kindness of the tour operator, most of the tourists felt satisfied about the climate and kindness of the local people and most of the Tourists have dissatisfied about the tour operators communication skill, road links, local traffic, car parks, pedestrian area, Parks and green area and Quality-price ratio.

Elangovan A and Govindan P (2013)⁴ in their study analysed tourists' satisfaction in Udhamandalam. This study investigated the south Indian tourists' satisfaction towards Udhamandalam. A total 200 tourists were interviewed through structured interview schedule. There were 19 variables used to measure tourists' satisfaction. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to report demographic variables and responses to the interview schedule. The study evidenced that the respondents had high levels of satisfaction during the trip, Udhamandalam natural diversity attraction had secured first place followed by climate and weather conditions, scenic

¹Renuga Devi V and Thamilselvi T (2013), Preferences and Satisfaction of Domestic Tourists Visiting Hill Stations in Tamilnadu, Primax International Journal of Commerce and Management Research, Vol.1, No.2, pp.70-80.

²Angappapillai AP and Shanmugasundaram N (2013), Trends in Tourist Arrivals and the Impact on Hotel Accommodation in Thanjavur District, Asia pacific Journal of Marketing and Management Review, Vol.2, No.8, pp.41-50.

³Kumaran S, Kannan R and Milton T (2013), Tourist Satisfaction with Cultural/Heritage sites at Madurai, Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing & Management Review, Vol.2, No.3, pp.62-68.

⁴Elangovan A and Govindan P (2013), A Study on tourists Satisfaction with Special Reference to Udhamandalam, International Journal of Scientific Research, Vol.2, No.2, pp.46-47.

beauty, Sightseeing, flora and fauna, varieties of flowers and trees. The analyses also revealed that tourists had lower level satisfaction to the various facilities such as basic amenities, road connectivity, entrée fees, shopping facilities, medical facilities. The study concluded that 83 percentages of tourists expressed overall satisfied Udhagamandalam tour trip, 79 percentages of tourists also have mind to revisit in this place in future.

PankajMochi, NiyatShetty and DilipVahoniya (2013)⁵ in their study explained why India has emerged as destination for medical tourism. It also explored challenges and competitive advantages and future outlook of medical tourism in India. The study concluded the medical travel industry in India has been hindered by capacity and infrastructure constraints but that situation is now changing with strong economic progress in India. With more and more hospitals receiving JCI accreditations and foreign patients concern on safety and quality of care are becoming less of an issue for those choosing to travel for medical treatment at an affordable cost. The combined cost of travel and treatment in India is still a fraction of the amount spent on just medical treatment alone in western countries. Indian medical tourism is being promoted as First World Treatment at Third World Costs. Long promoted for its cultural and scenic beauty, India is now being put up on international map as a heaven for those seeking quality and affordable healthcare.

Selvam K and Ganesh A (2013)⁶ made a study entitled “An Appraisal of Natural Tourist Attractions in Tamil Nadu, India”. The study was based on secondary sources of data are used. Source of data include existing maps, textbooks, internet, policy notes, journals, and travel guides. The study found that it should be possible to spread the development of natural tourism to more parts of the region. Eco-tourism was considered one of the most viable tools to enable economic growth and ecological security. The state of Tamil Nadu had a great potential for the development of eco-tourism. The overall aim would obviously be to enhance the benefits of natural tourism and its people in terms of foreign exchange, employment generation, and income and government revenue in Tamil Nadu. The study concluded that the state has rich natural tourism resources for the promotion of natural tourism.

HiramaniKashyap (2014)⁷ in his study analysed economic development through tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The study was based on primary data collected from home stays about the number of tourists they catered, consisting 15 home stays of Kullu region and 10 from Shimla region from 2010 to 2013. The study evidenced that home stays units are the best option among the tourists to stay in rural areas and to cherish the unique beauty of local culture and cuisine. Home stays are providing essential earning to the locals. This is the tool of development in the rural areas where no other options are available. These units are also helps in the preservation of culture and environment protection.

Rajasekaran and Kannan R (2014)⁸ in their study analysed the problems and prospects of tourism industry in Andaman and Nicobar islands. The study found that access to the Andaman

⁵PankajMochi, NiyatShetty and DilipVahoniya (2013), Medical Tourism – Destination India, Abhinav – National Monthly Refereed Journal of Research in Commerce & Management, Vol.2, No.3, pp.29-39.

⁶Selvam K and Ganesh A (2013), An Appraisal of Natural Tourist Attractions in Tamil Nadu, India, International Journal of Scientific Research, Vol.2, No.9, pp.186-189.

⁷HiramaniKashyap (2014), Economic Development through Tourism- A Case Study of Home Stay scheme of Himachal Pradesh, Global Journal of Finance and Management, Vol.6, No.4, pp.345-348.

⁸Rajasekaran and Kannan R (2014), Problems and Prospects of Island Tourism Industry in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, International journal of Scientific Research, Vol.3, No.6, pp.485-487.

Islands is limited because of development issues and the security issues relating to its position as an Indian Naval base. The study concluded that the cost of flights to the Andaman has not fluctuated much since 2001 (Chaudhrey, 2008) and are substantially cheaper for local residents than international visitors. Tourists can travel by ship at minimal financial cost (from Rs.1500 or \$33 USD for 'bunk' class) but at extreme emotional and physical expense as the journey is said to be a three day torture with people falling sick, the entire ship infested with insects like cockroaches and a terrible stench from food rotting (Cotton, 2010).

MahalakshmiVenkatesh, Stanly Joseph Maicheal Raj P and Buvanewari R (2014)⁹ analysed the impact of tourism in Tamil Nadu. The study used secondary data for analysis, which were collected from various reports and websites. The study noted that in Tamil Nadu several types of tourism were there namely, adventure tourism, cruise tourism, rural tourism, responsible tourism, business tourism and adventure tourism. The study found that eventhough tourism in Tamil Nadu faced several problems it is rolling as one of the income generating industry in the state.

Shweta Mishra (2014)¹⁰ studied prospects of medical tourism in India. The study used secondary data, which were collected from various sources. The study concluded that In order for marketing India as a unique destination for medical and health tourism, mainly it is important to make out the macro and micro issues facing the industry. It is essential for the Central and State Tourism Boards to coordinate and collaborate on a set of international standards. Enhancement of physical infrastructure in the country seemed to be another unanimous recommendation made by all the respondents from Hyderabad and Bangalore to connect the potentiality with the demand. The study also suggested that the authorities are required to chalk out an effective marketing exercise in branding the country as well as executing marketing strategies in expanding the medical and wellness tourism market in the country. A nationwide promotion operation about 'Brand India' and its national standards could also be advertised both domestically and internationally.

Premakumari P and Saraswathy R (2014)¹¹ undertook a study entitled "Scenario of Online Tourism Marketing in India and in the State of Tamil Nadu". The paper reflected on how Online Tourism has caused several changes in the tourism industry in India out of which the main impact has been on the interrelation between service providers and traditional intermediaries. Moreover, it also ascertains why this scenario has given an upper hand to travel agents while looking for information or details about tourists market trends, service providers, destinations, facilities, availabilities, prices, tour packages and also in maintaining direct contacts with their partners. The study concluded that Internet enabled portals launched by various government as well as private organizations have offered a wide range of tourism products and services, viz. airlines, hotels, restaurants, adventure tours, activity centres, concerts, festivities, shopping and many more assortments of services. The performance of developed countries has been satisfactory towards online tourism marketing. However, developing countries like India need some measures to be taken.

⁹MahalakshmiVenkatesh, Stanly Joseph Maicheal Raj P and Buvanewari R (2014), A Study on Impact of Tourism in Tamilnadu with Special Reference to Trichy District, International Journal of Business and Administration Research Review, Vol.1, No.5, pp.235-250.

¹⁰Shweta Mishra (2014), Prospects in Medical Tourism – India, Journal of tourism: A contemporary Prospective, Vol.1, No.1, pp.13-17.

¹¹Premakumari P and Saraswathy R (2014), Scenario of Online Tourism Marketing in India and in the State of Tamilnadu, PARIPEX Indian Journal of Research, Vol.2, No.8, pp.1-2.

Vethirajan C and Nagavalli S (2014)¹² in their empirical study analysed trend and growth of tourism sector in India. The study used secondary data, which were collected from various reports, books, journals and internet sources. The study found that tourism is a service industry and can have a significant effect on those countries with surplus labour. To this service industry human labour is extremely important, most sector of tourism industry are labour- intensive, and require relatively short training for most jobs. Jobs in tourism were always attractive and highly respected. It is a composite sector, generating income in a large number of activities as sectors and sub sectors like, hotel and other accommodation units, travel agents and tour operators, transport services, tourist resorts and complexes, shopping facilities including sales outlets for curios, handicrafts, souvenirs, and so on. The tourism sector is often criticized for providing only low-wage, seasonal employment, but it has to be obvious that if there were no tourism many workers in India would be unemployed.

Transport Problem

Generally tourists are facing various problems. But the nature of problems varies from tourist spot to spot on the basis of facilities available and service quality. Transport problem is one of the important problems faced by tourists in the study area. Transport includes public transport, local transport, hired vehicles and so on. The results about transport problem are presented in the following table.

Table 1.1
Transport Problem

Level of Problem	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very Low	12	4.0
Low	56	18.7
Normal	44	14.7
High	107	35.7
Very High	81	27.0
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.1 shows that majority of the respondents (62.7 percent) opined that transport problem is either high or very high, of which 35.7 percent of the respondents opined it is high and 27 percent of them opined the problem is very high. 14.7 percent of the respondents opined that the problem is normal and 22.7 percent of the respondents opined that transport problem is either low or very low. It is observed that majority of the respondents opined that transport problem is high in the study area. If the transport facilities are increased in the study area by Government or Tourism Department, it may attract more tourists.

Waiting room facilities

Waiting room is one of the necessary facilities to be provided in tourist spots. Tourists want to take rest or they may wait until they would be allowed into the tourist spots, hence providing waiting rooms with necessary facilities is important one. Table 5.3 provides results related to problem of waiting room facilities in the study area.

Table 1.2

Problem related to Waiting Room Facilities

Level of Problem	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very Low	30	10.0
Low	96	32.0
Normal	94	31.3
High	61	20.3
Very High	19	6.4
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.2 shows that a considerable portion of respondents (31.3 percent) opined that the problem of waiting room facilities is normal in the study area. 42 percent of the respondents opined that the problem is either low or very low in the study area. 26.7 percent of the respondents opined that the problem of waiting room facilities is either high or very high in the study area.

Food Facilities

Tourists may spend some time in the tourist spots, hence consumption of food is very important. Very less numbers of respondents are bringing packed food. Remaining respondents seek hotels or motels for food. Hence food facility is most important one. Table 5.4 presents results related to the problem of food facilities in the study area.

Table 1.3

Problem of Food Facilities

Level of Problem	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very Low	12	4.0
Low	82	27.3
Normal	62	20.7
High	87	29.0
Very High	57	19.0
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data

It is known from table 1.3 that almost half of the respondents (48 percent) opined that the problem of food facilities is either high or very high in the study area, of which 29 percent opined that the problem is high and 19 percent opined that the problem is very high. 20.7 percent of the respondents opined that the problem of food facilities is normal in the study area. 31.3 percent of the respondents opined that the problem is either low or very low.

Availability of Water

Water is most necessary requirement for every human being. Providing pure drinking water to tourists is very important thing. Table 5.5 gives the results related to the problem of availability of drinking water in the study area.

Table 1.4

Problem of Availability of Water

Level of Problem	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very Low	21	7.0
Low	102	34.0
Normal	88	29.3
High	63	21.0
Very High	26	8.7
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.4 indicates that a considerable portion of the respondents (41 percent) opined that the problem of availability of drinking water is either low or very low in the study area, of which 34 percent opined that the problem is low and 7 percent opined that the problem is very low in the study area. 29.3 percent of the respondents opined that the problem is normal. 29.7 percent of the respondents opined that the problem of drinking water facility is either high or very high in the study area, of which 21 percent told that the problem is high and 8.7 percent told that it is very high.

Accommodation Facilities

Generally tourists plan to visit more than one tourist spots in a single trip. Availability of accommodation facilities in tourist spots is very important as they have to stay. Accommodation facilities are provided by government through tourism department as well s by private. But tourists are facing many problems related to accommodation facilities. Table 5.8 gives results related to problem of accommodation facilities in the study area.

Table 1.5

Problem of Accommodation

Level of Problem	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very Low	12	4.0
Low	101	33.7
Normal	51	17.0
High	63	21.0
Very High	73	24.3
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.5 reports that a considerable portion of respondents (45.3 percent) opined that the problems related to accommodation facilities is either high or very high in the study area, of which 21 percent opined that it is high and 24.3 percent opined that it is very high. 17 percent of the respondents opined that the problem is normal in the study area. 37.7 percent of the respondents opined that problems related to accommodation facilities is either low or very low in the study area, of which 33.7 percent opined that it is low and 4 percent opined that it is very low.

Sanitation Facilities

Sanitation facility is very important in the places where more public are present. As the places of gathering more public, in tourist spots availability of sanitation facility is very important. But tourists are facing many problems related to sanitation facilities namely availability of sanitation facility, its cleanliness and so on. Table 5.9 reveals the results about problems of sanitation facilities in the study area.

Table 1.6

Problems Related to Sanitation Facilities

Level of Problem	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very Low	22	7.3
Low	114	38.0
Normal	63	21.0
High	55	18.3
Very High	46	15.3
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.6 reports that 45.3 percent of the respondents opined that the problems related to sanitation facilities is either low or very low in the study area, of which 38 percent opined that it is low and 7.3 percent told that it is very low, 21 percent of the respondents opined that it is normal, 18.3 percent of the respondents opined that the problem is high and 15.3 percent of the respondents opined that the problem is very high.

It is identified by the researcher that there are ten major problems being faced by tourists in selected tourist spots namely VaitheeswaranKoil, Nagore, Velankanni, Poompuhar and Tharangampadi. The results related to level of problems are presented above and discussed. It is necessary to know the rank of problems faced by tourist, in order to suggest for rectification of problems in order to attract more tourists and improve service quality to tourists in the study area. For this purpose Likert's Five Point Scaling Technique is used and they are ranked accordingly **Velankanni**

Velankanni is the popular religious place for the people who follow Christian religion. It is located in Nagapattinam district aside sea shore. Eventhough many facilities are available in the spot, tourists are facing several problems. Table 5.15 reports results related to level of problems faced by tourists in Velankanni.

Table 1.7

Likert Five Point Scale Technique

Level of Problems Faced by the Respondents in Velankanni

Sl. No.	Problems	Very High	High	Normal	Low	Very Low	Total
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1.	Transport Problem	1 (1.6)	7 (11.7)	7 (11.7)	29 (48.3)	16 (26.7)	60 (100)
2.	Waiting room facilities	4 (6.7)	16 (26.7)	21 (35.0)	11 (18.3)	8 (13.3)	60 (100)
3.	Food facilities	0 (0)	14 (23.4)	6 (10.0)	23 (38.3)	17 (28.3)	60 (100)
4.	Availability of water	0 (0)	14 (23.3)	12 (20.0)	22 (36.7)	12 (20.0)	60 (100)
5.	Accommodation facilities	0 (0)	17 (28.4)	11 (18.3)	15 (25.0)	17 (28.3)	60 (100)
6.	Sanitation facilities	2 (3.3)	16 (26.7)	11 (18.4)	14 (23.3)	17 (28.3)	60 (100)

Source: Primary Data; Figures in bracket represents percentage

Table 1.7 shows that majority of the respondents (75 percent) opined that transport problem is either low or very low in Velankanni, 11.7 percent of the respondents opined that it is normal and 13.3 percent of the respondents told that it is either high or very high. Majority of the respondents (58.3 percent) opined that problem of road facilities is either low or very low in Velankanni, 18.3 percent of the respondents opined that it is normal and 23.3 percent of them it is high. A considerable portion of respondents (33.4 percent) opined that the problem related to waiting room facilities is either high or very high in the spot, 35 percent of them told that it is normal and 31.6 percent of them opined that it is either low or very low. Majority of the respondents (66.6 percent) told that the problem related to food facilities is either low or very low in Velankanni, 10 percent of the respondents opined that it is normal and 23.4 percent of them opined that it is either high or very high. Majority of the respondents (56.7 percent) told that the problem related to availability of drinking water is either low or very low in Velankanni, 20 percent of the respondents told that it is normal and 23.3 percent of the respondents opined that the problem is high.

. Majority of the respondents (53.6 percent) opined that problem related to accommodation facilities is either low or very low in Velankanni, 18.3 percent of the respondents told that it is normal and 28.4 percent of the respondents told that the problem is high. It is found that 41.7 percent of the respondents told that problem related to information from tourist department is either high or very high, another 41.7 percent of the respondents opined that the problem is either low or very low and 16.6 percent of the respondents told that it is normal. Majority of the respondents (51.6 percent) opined that problem related to sanitation facilities is either low or very low in Velankanni, 18.4 percent of the respondents opined that it is normal and 30 percent of the respondents told that the problem is either high or very high in the spot.

Suggestions

The study offers the following suggestions on the basis of findings of the study.

1. The study suggests that the Government may establish boating facilities in sea shore tourist spots Velankanni, in order to attract more tourists and improve income generation.
2. It is observed by the researcher that a considerable number of tourists visited these tourist spots from long distance such as Chennai, Coimbatore and so on. Hence it is suggested that

the Tourist Department may arrange for tourist package to these tourist spots, which will increase number of tourists and income to the Government.

3. In sea shore tourist spots Velankanni, the Government or the local authority may establish recreational facilities such as parks, gardens and so on in order to attract many number of tourists than existing visits.
4. It is suggested that the Tourist department may establish 'May I Help You' booths in most visited tourist places of Tamil Nadu to help the tourists to know these tourist spots to be visited. This may increase number of tourist visits to the selected tourist spots.

Conclusion

Tourism industry is one of the major industries in India which brings a considerable amount of foreign currency and gives employment opportunities both directly and indirectly. Tamil Nadu is the top state which brings both foreign and domestic tourists. Nagapattinam district is one of the top districts in the state which attracts more tourists. Here famous temples, church, mosque are available for all people of major religions and famous and historical sea shores are also have attractions. Velankanni are holy places for Hindus, Muslims and Christians respectively apart from Poompuhar and Tharangampadi which are coastal and historical places, these spots are attracting more tourists. The study was made with the analysis of perception, satisfaction and problems faced by tourists in the study area. The study identified that Velankanni are the tourist spots which almost fulfilled all expectations of the tourists visited these places and most of the services namely transport, road facilities, accommodation and food are good in these study area, It is also evidenced by the study that transport, information boards, food and accommodation facilities are the major problems faced by tourists and waiting room facilities, and availability of water are the least severe problems in the study area. The study suggests that improvement of existing services and introducing new services and facilities in the selected tourists spots of the study will attract more tourists and will result in economic development in these areas through employment opportunities to the people of this area.

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