



TOURIST PERCEPTION TOWARDS AMENITIES IN MARIAMMAN TEMPLE CAR FESTIVAL-A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO UDUMALPET

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Abstract: Tourism is associated with the enjoyment by human wandering around the globe in want of acquiring knowledge and site seeing; this is the case of modern tourism. Actually, human being have been moving around the earth for settlement, food, water, etc, as the days and years are gone by, an inquisitiveness in human have made him to wander for conquering the places with richness by all means, besides education, employment, peace, of residing, etc, influenced human to settle in some places as he liked. Modern tourism is associated excitement and learning new culture and history.

Key words: Mariamman car festival, Amenities, human settlement, culture, knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is associated with the enjoyment by human wandering around the globe in want of acquiring knowledge and site seeing; this is the case of modern tourism. Actually, human being have been moving around the earth for settlement, food, water, etc, as the days and years are gone by, an inquisitiveness in human have made him to wander for conquering the places with richness by all means, besides education, employment, peace, of residing, etc, influenced human to settle in some places as he liked. Modern tourism is associated excitement and learning new culture and history.

The mobility of human was higher since 1811 AD for trade, later the purpose of the mobility was associated with recreation and site seeing. According to Herman V. Schuler, an economist, he believed that 'economic culture was the foundation of tourism' and added that when a tourist visits another place, it always results in an economic exchange.

Today tourism is called as the travel for pleasure, however, in recent times tourism has been associated with medical, ecology, pilgrimage, etc.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As for as India is concerned, pilgrimage has been part of the life since ancient days to the citizen. The habit of visiting to various pilgrim centers is part and parcel of once life in India, this may be varying from person to person and family. Udumalpet or Udumalaipettai is one of the place which has a name for cotton crops and coconut crops besides Pollachi. Udumalpet has many spinning mills and agro based industries, a small town in Tiruppur District of Tamil Nadu. It is also called the 'poor-man's Ooty, the geographical location factor has influenced such name. Udumalai Mariamman temple is very famous, the goddess is swayambu, and a resemblance of Thiruvalluvar's wife 'Vasuki', else, 'Nagavali' the wife of 'Piruhu Maharishi' got the punishment from the 'Thirumoorthi' for the sake of changing them into children. The curse was to evade her beauty, she was caught with small pox, which is a common cause during summer, in order to protect the people from the disease, festival is celebrated during the month of April every year. People of various religion worship this Mariamman, During these fifteen days of festival the place looks like a pilgrimage place, people throng from various places during this period to enjoy the festival. The temple is government by a trust, and the temple is under the control of Hindu Religious

Endowment Board, this study is undertaken to evaluate the tourist perception towards the amenities, growth and development initiatives undertaken by the temple administration and to suggest measures for the promotion of the pilgrimage tourism.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the management of udumalai Mariamman pilgrimage sites and government efforts to promote pilgrimage at the udumalpet.
- To study supporting facilities available around the udumalpet pilgrimage.
- To find out the problems of basic infrastructure facilities in udumalai Mariamman temple.
- To suggest the ways for the better management of pilgrimage tourism in udumalai Mariamman temple.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study, based on both primary and secondary sources of data, is descriptive and analytical in architecture, nature, and worship. The problem under research is to describe certain characteristics such as initiatives of the extent of implementation of these initiatives, problems associated with the implementation of, awareness of pilgrimage visitors, the attitude of pilgrimage visitors towards etc. The researcher has brought out the existing nature of these characteristics of the subject matter with respect to the study area, with the help of a detailed analysis of the collected data.

The implications and outcome of the research are tested by using the set of hypotheses already outlined from the collected primary data of the sample units. The major contribution of the literature review has been the development of the variables used in the study.

SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION

As per the convenient of the researcher, 150 samples were decided to take opinion from the tourists in the study area. A structured interview schedule was used to collect primary data. Both open and closed question was included in the schedule.

PRE-TEST

In order to study the suitability of the framed interview schedule, the researcher has conducted a pre-test, for this pre-testing, the researcher has investigated 5 tourists. In the light of the pre-test, the necessary modification was incorporated in the schedule and standardized.

DATA COLLECTION

The data collection was carried out in the month of April 2019. The researcher has collected the necessary information from pilgrimage tourism in Udumalai Mariamman. Before collecting data. The purpose of the importance of this study was explained to the respondents. By establishing a good rapport with them, the researcher could be able to collect the data without much difficulty. The collected data were processed and tabulated with needed classification.

SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data refers to the compilation or the assembling of the existing information or data, for the purpose of a particular investigation. Prominent secondary sources include census data, municipal reports, literature, newspaper, magazines, maps, reports of various departments.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

In this study we collect the primary data of 150 members in various places. Statistical analysis purpose we used the method is weighted average technique the formula for the weighted average is

$$\text{Weighted average} = \frac{\sum WX_i}{\sum W_i}$$

$\sum WX_i$ = The sum of weights (let $x_1, x_2, x_3 \dots x_n$)

$\sum W_i$ = occur with weights ($w_1, w_2, w_3 \dots w_n$) respectively.

Based on this technique we implement the 5 point scale with ranking system for maximum scale point to minimum scale point which is case

(i) Highly Satisfied - 5, Satisfied - 4, Moderate - 3, Dissatisfied- 2,

Highly Dissatisfied - 1

(ii) Excellent- 5, Very Good- 4, Good- 3, Average- 2,

Poor- 1 respectively.

Weighted Score values are calculated by the procedure out of 150 members giving the source in various scale point. In that scale point's are multiplied by the allotted ranks, in this way we get the weighted score value. After this step we calculate Mean value based on weighted score and finally we giving the Rank score, the above procedure is same in both Case (i) and Case (ii), the results are discussed in the fourth coming sections.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Since the study is confined to pilgrimage tourism in udumalai Mariamman, the result of obtains could be applied only to udumalpet locations. The result obtained in this study, thus, cannot be extended to the whole udumalpet

- Due to the cost and time constraints, a year-round participation observation could not be made.
- The study is restricted to the area of udumalpet so it cannot be generalized to the entire area.
- The study is based on primary data; accuracy and reliability depend on the information provided by the respondents.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

R.Mishra (2000)¹ in his thesis entitled "Pilgrimage Tourism-A Case Study of Brajmandal" has stated that with the increased mobility of urban class, more and more people are undertaking weekend trips. The study has also highlighted the main problems regarding poor infrastructure and facilities such as accommodation, quality food, shopping areas, public convenience, and communication and cheating and misguiding etc, faced by. The author has suggested both operational measures like restructuring tourism in accordance with laws, need for systematic approach in managing tourism development, interacting with tourists in a healthy manner and supportive role of non-governmental organizations and operative measures like strategy for tourism development, creation of a Development Board and creation for the region on the line of Vatican City to increase the tempo of pilgrimage tourism.

Singh (2002)²in his research paper highlighted the need for managing the impact of tourist and pilgrim mobility in the Indian Himalayas. The objective of this study was to reduce ecological degradation and erosion of cultural values in Garhwal Himalayas with the help of the management of visitors. The study revealed that heavy flow of pilgrims and tourists during the peak season from April to June lead to problems relating to accommodation, catering, sewage, sanitation, water supply, tariff, and ecological degradation. It also revealed that at religious places, entrepreneurs did not differentiate between pilgrims and tourists. Thus, they did not differentiate between their needs and abilities to pay for accommodation and food. The study suggested the need for travel regulation, education of visitors, marketing of alternative destinations and targeted marketing to get rid of problems relating to mass tourism and pilgrimage in Garhwal.

Bar and Hatab (2003)³in this study examined the present condition of tourism in Palestine by comparing the unique characteristics of modern-day tourism and traditional pilgrimage tourism. They stated that tourism and pilgrimage tourism stood at opposite ends of a continuum with a wide range of journey within these two ends. They highlighted five factors i.e. motives, duration, religious affiliation and social background, travelers' reaction and services used by tourists which differentiated pilgrims from tourists. The authors revealed that the main reason behind modern tourists' traveling was cultural curiosity, education and desire to enrich themselves. Despite this, they found that pilgrims preferred to visit holy sites only during religious festivals. The study concluded that while pilgrims most of the time visited only religious places the modern tourists visited the holy places and secular places equally.

Bleie (2003)⁴in his study discussed pilgrimage tourism in the central Himalayas with the help of the Manakamana temple in Nepal. He highlighted that traditional ways of pilgrimage contributed to a strong

¹ R. Mishra, "Pilgrimage Tourism -A Case Study of Brajmandal", Ph.D. Thesis Submitted to Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, 2000.

² Singh, S., "Tourism in India: Policy Pitfalls", Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, Vol.7, No.1, 2002, pp.45-59.

³ Bar, D. and Hatab, K., "A New Kind of Pilgrimage: The Modern Tourist Pilgrim of Nineteenth-Century and Early Twentieth-Century Palestine", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 39, No. 2, April 2003, pp. 131-148.

⁴ Bleie, T., "Pilgrimage Tourism in Central Himalayas: The Case of Manakamana Temple in Gorkha, Nepal", Mountain Research and Development, Vol.23, No.2, May 2003, pp.177-184.

religious belief towards any religious site as these ways interconnected persons, place and time very deeply. However, the present scenario of pilgrimage tourism was changing due to the frequent use of modern mechanical transport. The author also evaluated local people's perception of the socio-cultural, economical and environmental risk associated with modern mechanical transport. He viewed that social dimensions must be considered while replacing modern means of transport with the traditional path. The study suggested that pilgrimage tourism must build on principles of sustainable tourism to overcome the cultural, developmental, conservational and commercial risk associated with it.

Murgan (2005)⁵in his article highlighted that the main reason behind the explosion of domestic tourism in India was world famous pilgrimage sites. Further, till 1980 it was the North that dominated the Indian tourism industry with 70 percent market share but now it declined to 49 percent. He viewed that the main reason behind this declining trend was more focused on tourism development in the Southern region. The author highlighted that Indian tourism industry was facing several challenges like scarcity of hotel rooms, high taxes, sick aviation policies and unnecessary delay in visa etc.

Distribution of the respondents by attributes

Attributes	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Weighted Score	Mean	Rank
Facilities	150	236	129	30	3	548	54.8	1
Clean Lines	185	144	135	56	4	524	52.4	2
Accessibility by Road/Air/Net	100	172	135	72	6	485	48.5	4
Attitude of Locals	120	96	192	66	5	479	47.9	5
Package available	40	112	189	88	7	436	43.6	6
Food/Drinking Water	120	140	162	54	10	486	48.6	3
Accommodation	55	124	162	78	15	434	43.4	7
Tourism Information Centre	55	108	126	94	23	406	40.6	9
Working Guides	30	80	111	120	27	368	36.8	10
Emergency Helpline	120	68	138	90	18	434	43.4	7

It is observed from the above table that to mention the attributes of Udumalpet Mariamman temple, Facilities were given the first rank with a weighted average score of 54.8, Clean Lines obtained the second rank with a weighted average score of 52.4, Food/Drinking Water obtained the third rank with a weighted average score of 48.6, Accessibility by Road/Air/Networks obtained fourth rank with weighted average score of 48.5, Attitude of Locals obtained fifth rank with weighted average score of 47.9, Package available obtained sixth rank with a weighted average score of 43.6, Accommodation and Emergency Helpline obtained seventh rank with a weighted average score of 43.4, Tourism Information Centre obtained ninth rank with a weighted average score of 40.6 and Working Guides tenth rank with a weighted average score of 36.8.

Distribution of the respondents by services and facilities

⁵ Murugan, A., "Challenges and Changes in Indian Tourism", South Asian Journal of Social Political Sciences, Vol.6, No.1, Dec.2005, pp. 103-107.

Services and Facilities	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Weighted Score	Mean	Rank
Accommodation	75	296	96	22	18	507	50.7	7
Parking Facilities	145	360	63	18	1	587	58.7	3
Dharsana Facilities	285	272	45	18	1	621	62.1	2
Guidence	55	268	117	42	12	494	49.4	8
Emergency Facilities	85	264	117	44	6	516	51.6	6
Drinking water and Rest room Facilities	145	264	102	36	4	551	55.1	4
Safety	110	324	78	30	6	548	54.8	5
Medical Facilities	40	216	135	60	13	464	46.4	9
ATM / Banking Facilities	40	168	108	94	17	427	42.7	10
Transport Facilities	345	228	39	10	6	628	62.8	1

It is observed from the above table that to mention the services and facilities provide by Udumalpet Mariamman temple , Transport Facilities was given the first rank with a weighted average score of 62.8, Dharsana Facilities obtained the second rank with a weighted average score of 62.1, Parking Facilities obtained the third rank with a weighted average score of 58.7, Drinking water and Rest room Facilities obtained the fourth rank with a weighted average score of 55.1, Safety obtained the fifth rank with a weighted average score of 54.8, Emergency Facilities obtained the sixth rank with a weighted average score of 51.6, Accommodation obtained the seventh rank with a weighted average score of 50.7, Guidance obtained the eighth rank with a weighted average score of 49.4, Medical Facilities obtained ninth rank with a weighted average score of 46.4 and ATM / Banking Facilities obtained tenth rank with a weighted average score of 42.7.

FINDINGS

Findings are the statement arrived from the analysis, and the respondent's opinion, most of the respondents are highly satisfied with the amenities like, water, rest room, transport, etc are good, emergency help lines are very much useful and available at call. Further, safety, Police help line, local peoples friendly behaviors are very much impressive and satisfactory. Recreation for the tourists and local are well arranged and appreciable. In general, the marriamman car festival is well planned and pleasurable.

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