

A Study on Pilgrims' Satisfaction with Special Reference to States of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

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Abstract:

Travel from the ancient time has held a fascination for mankind. The urge to explore new places and seek a change of environment is not new. In all the epics whether it is "The Ramayana", or "The Mahabharata", or "The Bible" or "The Khuran", everywhere travel has been mentioned, but only the reasons were different. Tourism is emerging as a leading global economic driver for the 21st century and has enormous potential to become as a catalyst for future social development. Tourism is travel for recreational, leisure or business purposes.

Each region of the world is seeking to exploit its strength. India's competitive advantage lies in the area of religious tourism because of its religious heritage and culture is unique. India is richly endowed with ancient temples and religious festivals. Religions originating in India, be it Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism or Buddhism, have a vibrant culture and spiritual philosophy. Thus, it provides excellent opportunities for pilgrimage tourism.

In this regard, the present study is an attempt to identify demographic and travel pattern of religious tourists, to identify level of satisfaction and difficulties of religious tourists pertaining to facilities like temple darshan, transportation, accommodation, and boarding. And to identify the expenditure patterns of pilgrims, to identify difficulties faced by pilgrims during pilgrimage.

Keywords: Demographic characteristics, Facilities, Pilgrimage, Problems, Tourism

Introduction - Tourism and Religious Tourism:

Travel from the ancient time has held a fascination for mankind. The urge to explore new places and seek a change of environment is not new. In all the epics whether it is "The Ramayana", or "The Mahabharata", or "The Bible" or "The Khuran", everywhere travel has been mentioned, but only the reasons were different (Manish Srivastava, 2006).

In India, the origin of the concept of "Tourism" can be observed in Sanskrit literature. It has given three terms derived from the origin word "Atana" which means going out and accordingly have the terms:

- Theerthatana - It represents going out and visiting places of spiritual or religious merit.
- Deshatana - It represents going out of the country primarily for financial gains.
- Paryatana - It represents going out for pleasure and knowledge.

Tourism is emerging as a leading global economic driver for the 21st century and has enormous potential to become as a catalyst for future social development. Tourism is travel for recreational, leisure or business purposes.

According to Australian economist, Hermann Von Sehillard (1910, in Manish Srivastava, 2006) tourism defined as, “sum total of operators, mainly of an economic nature, which directly relate to the entry, stay and movement of foreigners inside and outside a certain country, city or a region”.

Hunziker and Kraph (1942, in Manish Srivastava, 2006), defined tourism as, “tourism is the totality of the relationship and phenomenon arising from the travel and stay of strangers, provided that the stay does not imply the establishment of permanent residence and is not connected with their remunerative activities”.

As per the definition of Tourism Society of England (1976, in Beaver and Allan, 2002), “tourism is the temporary, short term movement of people to destination out the places where normally live and work and their activities during the stay at each destination. It includes movements for all purposes”.

The most widely accepted definition is given by the World Tourism Organization (WTO). This was standardized by United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) in its 27th session held from 22nd February to 3rd March 1993.

“Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes”.

The United Nations (1994) categorized three types of tourism in its recommendations on tourism statistics:

- Domestic tourism, involving residents of the given country traveling only within the country
- Inbound tourism, including non-residents traveling in the given country
- Outbound tourism, including residents traveling in another country

Importance of Tourism:

It is true that tourism stirs brisk activity in various spheres of the economy of the host region. The service sector contributes more than 70% of the Gross Domestic Product of advanced countries. Tourism is the chief basis of income to countries like Maldives, Greece, Bermuda, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and Caribbean islands. It is the top employer in Australia, Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, France, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Japan, Italy, Singapore, the UK, and the USA. Number of tourists who visited countries like Hong Kong, Singapore, and Seychelles has even outnumbered their population.

Tourism – A Panacea for Economic Development:

Tourism industry provides a number of economic benefits. Some of them are given below.

1. Generation of employment opportunities. Being highly labor-intensive tourism creates employment opportunities both direct and indirect
2. Earns foreign exchange without exporting anything tangible. Tourism is considered to be ‘invisible export’ as it brings immense foreign exchange earnings without exporting anything tangible
3. Leads to balanced regional development
4. Facilitates development of basic infrastructure amenities
5. Promotes a hub by economic activities
6. Tourism promotes related industries such as handicrafts, spices, coir, textiles, gems, jewellery and furnishing goods
7. With the active involvement of private entrepreneurs and new tourism related business will come up
8. Generates income for the government

Characteristics of Religious Tourism:

Defining religious tourism seems often a tough task. The tourism has got numerous literatures in which different authors had been categorized differently, where religious tourism, spiritual tourism, pilgrimage tourism, cultural tourism and cultural heritage tourism are often referred as synonyms. Because, in most cases cultural tourists prefer to visit pilgrimages as part of their travel, thus they often referred named as religious tourists. Religious tourism is the area where very less studies had been undertaken and interestingly it is a very old form of tourism.

1. To perform pilgrimage as an act of worship
2. To express gratitude, confess sin and to perform a vow
3. To achieve social and spiritual salvation
4. To commemorate and celebrate certain religious events
5. To be in communication with co-religionists

Categories in Religious Tourism:

Religious tourism can be categorized into three categories. They are

1. Pilgrimages
2. Volunteer or Missionary travel
3. Religious events and Fellowship travel (Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996 in Katri Nieminen 2012)

A Brief Note on Select Temples in this Study

According to Andhra Pradesh Endowment Department information and other literature this study has been undertaken on 20 prominent temples in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana.

Table 1: List of Temples undertaken in the study

S. No.	Name of the Temple	Location	State
1	Lord Swayambhu Sri Varasiddi Vinayaka Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Kanipakam	Andhra Pradesh
2	Sri Nettikanti Anjaneya Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Kasapuram	Andhra Pradesh
3	Sri Mahanandeeswara Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Mahanandi	Andhra Pradesh
4	Sri Srikalahastheeswara Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Srikalahasti	Andhra Pradesh
5	Sri Bramaramba Mallikarjuna Swamyvarla Devasthanam	Srisailam	Andhra Pradesh
6	Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Devasthanam	Tiruchanoor	Andhra Pradesh
7	Sri Venkateswara Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Tirumala	Andhra Pradesh
8	Sri Veera Venkata Satyanarayana Swamy Vari Devasthanam,	Annavaram	Andhra Pradesh

9	Sri Kanaka Maha Lakshmi Amma Vari Devasthanam	Burujupeta	Andhra Pradesh
10	Sri Venktesawara Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Dwaraka Tirumala	Andhra Pradesh
11	Sri Tirupatamma Amma Vari Devasthanam	Peruganchiprolu	Andhra Pradesh
12	Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Simhachalam	Andhra Pradesh
13	Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanams	Vijayawada	Andhra Pradesh
14	Sri Gnana Saraswathi Amma Vari Devasthanam	Basara	Telangana
15	Sree Seetha Ramachandra Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Bhadrachalam	Telangana
16	Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Devasthanam	Komaravalli	Telangana
17	Sri Anjaneya Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Kondagattu	Telangana
18	Sri Ganesh Temple	Secunderabad	Telangana
19	Sri Raja Rajeshwara Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Vemulawada	Telangana
20	Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Vari Devasthanam	Yadagirigutta	Telangana

Research Methodology:

Each region of the world is seeking to exploit its strength. India's competitive advantage lies in the area of religious tourism because of its religious heritage and culture is unique. India is richly endowed with ancient temples and religious festivals. Religions originating in India, be it Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism or Buddhism, have a vibrant culture and spiritual philosophy. Religious tourism has not only emerging as booming domestic tourism market, but also a major draw for international visitors. The religions of Indian origin are also proving to be an attraction to many persons of non-Indian origin because these religions advocate a pacifist and inclusive approach to life.

Research Gap & Uniqueness of the Study:

There are studies in Indian context on concept of Origin And Emergence Of Pilgrimage Tourism Management (S.Vijayanand, 2012 and Himadri Phukan, Z. Rahman & P. Devdutt, 2012)), Social And cultural Impact On Spiritual Tourism (Gupta V. 1999; Monika Pandey and Arunesh Parashar, 2012) Pilgrimage and the Environment/Infrastructure: Challenges (V. Gupta, 1999; Kiran Shinde, 2007 and Ian D. Rotherham, 2007). There are few studies on Problems and prospects by pilgrims (Madhavi Chockalingam and A. Auroubindo Ganesh, 2010; S. Vijayanand, 2012 and Dr. Pujari Krishnaiah, 2012). S.Vargheese Antony Jesurajan and S.Varghees Prabhu (2012) conducted a study on have made a study on Dimensions of Spiritual Tourism in Tuticorin District of Tamil Nadu in India. Ministry of tourism-market research division (2010) made Tourism survey for Andhra Pradesh.

Evidently, there is no study in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana context that is comprehensive in its approach by identifying the views of pilgrims on religious tourism, eliciting the demographic and travel patterns involved in identifying level of satisfaction and difficulties of the religious tourists. The present study finds relevance in view of such gap in research.

Need for the Study:

Within its distinct segment, religious tourism in India offers a variety to attract different kinds of tourists. In the course of time, India has potential to become a commercially viable destination. According to the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2013 brought by World Economic Forum, India is ranked 11th in the Asia-Pacific region and 65th rank overall (with score of 4.11) in a list of 133 assessed countries in 2013, up three places since 2011. The report also stated that the total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was Rs. 6385.1 billion (6.6% of GDP) in 2012, and is forecast to rise by 7.3% in 2013, and to rise by 7.9% per annum to Rs. 14722.3 billion in 2023. Export earnings from international visitors and tourism goods generated 6.0 percent of total exports (almost US\$ 16.9 billion) in 2009, growing to US\$ 51.4 billion in 2019. So it is necessary for India to strengthen its marketing efforts constantly even to maintain its existing market share (UNWTO, 2013).

India is a home of different religions and thereby a large number of world famous pilgrimage sites. Thus, it provides excellent opportunities for pilgrimage tourism. Though there are many sacred sites in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to brighten the pilgrimage tourism prospects, the pace and growth of domestic tourism is India's dues and commensurate with the same. It is worth mentioning that there is a lack of tourism infrastructure facilities like transport, accommodation, food, drinking water and sanitation, etc. The State Governments and Indian Government and their Tourism Ministries have started taking a keen interest in developing pilgrimage tourism. The literature review has revealed that no comprehensive research work has been undergone to study the growth and potential of pilgrimage tourism in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana. Considering these facts and importance of pilgrimage tourism activities for Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and at National level, the present study is an attempt to evaluate the Religious tourism in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana.

Objectives of the Study:

- i. To identify demographic pattern of pilgrims in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana states
- ii. To identify level of satisfaction of the pilgrims pertaining to facilities around temple
- iii. To identify the expenditure patterns of pilgrims
- iv. To identify difficulties faced by pilgrims during pilgrimage in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana

Research Hypothesis

Five hypotheses are proposed based on the earlier studies as described below.

Dr. G.Sridhar M. Ravindranath Dr. G. Narasimha Murthy's (2008) found that there is a significant impact of age on pilgrims' satisfaction regarding temple visit. Therefore the third hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1:

There is marked influence of the age of pilgrims on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple.

Dr. G.Sridhar M. Ravindranath Dr. G. Narasimha Murthy's (2008) found that pilgrims' satisfaction gets influenced by gender. Hence the fourth hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 2:

There is significant influence of the gender of pilgrims on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple.

Dr. G.Sridhar M. Ravindranath Dr. G. Narasimha Murthy's (2008) study found that there is a significant impact of income on pilgrims' overall temple satisfaction and. Therefore the fifth hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 3:

There is substantial influence of the pilgrim's household income on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple.

Dr. G.Sridhar M. Ravindranath Dr. G. Narasimha Murthy's (2008) study has found that size of the group significantly influences the pilgrim satisfaction on temple facilities. Thus, the sixth hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 4:

There is definite influence of the pilgrims' group size on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple.

Dr. G.Sridhar M. Ravindranath Dr. G. Narasimha Murthy's (2008) survey has shown that there are significant influences on pilgrim temple satisfaction across the occupational categories. Hence, the seventh hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 5:

There is an apparent influence of the occupation of pilgrims on satisfaction on facilities regarding at the temple.

Sources of Data:

Primary Data:

1. Personally administered questionnaire
2. Structured interview

Secondary Data:

1. Central and State Government policies regarding tourism Industry
2. Ministry of Tourism reports, Ministry of Endowments reports
3. Published information of various temples, Journals of various institutions
4. Websites

Sampling Decisions:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------|
| A. Temples | : | Judgment sampling |
| B. Pilgrims | : | Convenience sampling |
| C. Temple Authorities | : | Convenience sampling |

Sample Size:

- A. Temples: 20 temples across Andhra Pradesh
- B. Pilgrims: 800 respondents (40 respondents from each temple)
- C. Temple Authorities: 40 respondents (2 respondents from each temple)

Data Analysis Tools:

1. Percentage
2. Mean
3. Standard deviation
4. T test
5. F test
6. Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT)

Limitations of the Study:

1. The study is limited to 20 Hindu religious temples in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana.
2. The study is limited to Hindu domestic pilgrims.
3. Nevertheless, it is hoped that such limitations could suggest and encourage additional directions and guidelines for future study.

Summary of Findings:

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Pilgrims

Variable	Features	N	%
Gender	Male	550	68.7
	Female	250	31.3
Marital status	Married	767	95.9
	Single	33	4.1
Educational qualifications	No Primary education	147	18.4
	Primary school	191	23.9
	High School	211	26.4
	Diploma/Intermediate	140	17.5
	Graduate and above	111	13.9
Age	21 - 30 years	39	4.9
	31 - 40 years	149	18.6
	41 - 50 years	392	49.0
	Above 50	220	27.5
Occupation	Central Govt. Services	42	5.3
	State Govt. Services	63	7.9
	Quasi Govt. Services	6	0.8
	Private Service	91	11
	Industrialist	7	0.9
	Self-employed	136	17
	Agriculturist	268	34
	Housewife	172	22
Annual household income	Others	15	1.9
	Less than Rs.100000	200	25.0
	Rs.100001 - 200000	246	30.8
	Rs.200001 - 300000	234	29.3
	Rs.300001 - 400000	68	8.5
	Rs.400001 - 500000	13	1.6
	Above Rs.500000	39	4.9

It is evident from analysis that 68.7% of the respondents are male and 31.3% of the respondents are female. Regarding marital status, 95.9% of respondents are married. Regarding age group of respondents, 49% of respondents are in the age group of 41-50 years, 27.5% of respondents age is 50 years and above. 30.8% and 29.3% of respondents

annual household income is Rs. 1,00,001 - Rs. 2,00,000 and Rs. 2,00,001 - Rs. 3,00,000 respectively. And 25% of respondent annual household income is less than Rs. 1,00,000.

It is marked from study that 27.6% of respondents visit temple to pray for fulfillment of a wish, and 26.8% of respondents visit temple to fulfill owes. In addition, all pilgrims are traveling in groups.

Table 3: Expenditure during Visit on Accommodation, Food and Drinks, Transport, and Shopping (Including Pre And Post Expenditure)

	Expenditure on accommodation		Expenditure on food & drinks		Expenditure on transport		Expenditure on shopping	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than Rs.1000	504	63	492	62	440	55	501	63
Rs.1001 - Rs.2000	208	26	222	28	241	30	211	26
Rs.2001 - Rs.5000	60	7.5	68	8.5	76	9.5	62	7.8
Above Rs.5000	28	3.5	18	2.3	43	5.4	26	3.3
Total	800	100	800	100	800	100	800	100

Table 4: Expenditure on Others (Newspapers, Magazines, And Medicines Etc)

Expenditure on Others	N	%
Less than Rs. 100	270	33.8
Rs. 101 – Rs. 250	151	18.9
Rs. 251 – Rs. 500	199	24.9
Above Rs. 500	180	22.5
Total	800	100.0

Table 5: Total Expenditure during Trip (Including Pre And Post Expenditure)

Total expenditure during trip	N	%
Less than Rs. 2000	222	27.8
Rs. 2001 - Rs. 10000	423	52.9
Rs. 10001 – Rs. 20000	119	14.9
Above Rs. 20000	36	4.5
Total	800	100.0

From the above table 3 it is evident that 63%, 61.5%, 55% and 62.6% of respondents spend less than Rs.1000 on accommodation, Food and Drinks, transportation, and shopping respectively. In addition, 26%, 28%, 30% and 26% of respondents spend between Rs.1001 and Rs. 2000 on accommodation, food and drinks, transportation, and shopping respectively.

Table 4 exhibits that 33.8%, 18.9%, 24.9% and 22.5% of respondents spend less than Rs.100, Rs. 101 to Rs. 250, Rs. 251 to Rs. 500 and more than Rs. 500 respectively on newspapers, magazines and medicines etc.

When it comes to table 5 total expenditure on trip 27.8% spend less than Rs. 2000, 52.9% spend between Rs. 2001 to Rs. 10000, 14.9% spend between Rs. 10001 to Rs. 20000 and only 4.5% spend more than Rs. 20000.

From the analysis it is clear 46.5%, 42.6%, 37.8%, 38.6%, 49.6%, 37.4%, 49.9%, 48.8%, 50.6%, 50.6%, 44%, 46.5%, 38.3%, 39.3%, 41.9%, 39.9%, 51.6%, 56.9%, and 61.4% of respondents are satisfied with facilities like Indications (Way marks), Queue line management, Pilgrim management in the queue line, Water facilities in Queue line, Cleanliness of inside the temple, Temple Staff helpfulness / courtesy, Spiritual feel inside the temple, Working of information centre, Shoe keeping / Mobile Keeping / Clock Room facilities, Assistance and Guidance in the Temple, Prasadam quality, Services of First aid centre, Toilet facilities around the temple, ATM facilities, Shopping facilities (choice), Courtesy of Sellers at Shopping Area, Refreshment /tea stalls around temple, Money spent/ Value of Service, and Overall consent respectively.

It can be surmised from the analysis that 10.8% of respondents faced problems regarding details provided at minimum number of places, Notices are in local language, Notices were not updated, and Temple staff not responded to queries.

Hypothesis Testing:

Table 6: Summary of One-Way ANOVA and DMRT by Age on Overall Satisfaction Regarding Facilities at the Temple

	Age	N	Mean	SD	F-value	p-value
Satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple	21 - 30 years	39	66.3590 a	8.82129	2.875*	0.035
	31 - 40 years	149	70.0201 b	9.56872		
	41 - 50 years	392	67.9056 a	10.09286		
	Above 50	220	66.8636 a	12.77339		
	Total	800	67.9375	10.79255		

From the above table 6, it can be surmised that there is significant influence of age on satisfaction regarding facilities at (p-value 0.035 and F-value 2.875) at 5% level of significance.

DMRT explains that the age groups of 21 - 30 years (mean = 66.3590), 41 – 50 years (mean = 67.9056) and above 50 years (mean = 66.8636) are comparatively less satisfied than age group of 31-40 years (mean = 70.0201) regarding satisfaction of facilities at the temple.

Table 7: T-Test Results of Gender on Satisfaction Regarding Facilities at the Temple

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple	Male	550	67.5291	11.81128	1.589	0.112
	Female	250	68.8360	8.06208		

From the above table 7, it can be appreciated that there is no significant influence of Gender on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple (p-value 0.112 and t-value 0.589).

Table 8: Summary of One-Way ANOVA DMRT of Annual Income on Satisfaction Regarding Facilities the At Temple

	Annual Income	N	Mean	SD	F-value	P-value
Satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple	Less than Rs.100000	200	68.6000 a	12.00251	3.244**	0.007
	Rs.100001 - Rs.200000	246	67.8293 a	9.40404		
	Rs.200001 - Rs.300000	234	66.3846 a	11.19192		
	Rs.300001 - Rs.400000	68	70.9853 b	9.12679		
	Rs.400001 - Rs.500000	13	70.3846 b	13.91365		
	Above Rs.500000	39	70.7436 b	9.97291		
	Total	800	67.9375	10.79255		

From the above table 8, it can be inferred that there is significant influence of income on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple (p-value 0.007 and F-value 3.244) at 1% level of significance.

DMRT explains that the satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple of income groups of Rs. 300001-400000 (mean = 70.9853), Rs. 400001-500000 (mean = 70.3846) and above Rs.500000 (mean = 70.7436) are comparatively higher than other income groups.

Table 9: Summary of One-Way ANOVA and DMRT of Size of Group on Satisfaction Regarding Facilities at the Temple

	Size of group	N	Mean	SD	F-value	p-value
Satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple	2 - 4 members	359	68.6657 a	11.24410	12.000**	0.000
	5 to 7	245	69.4204 a	8.84328		
	8 and more	196	64.7500 b	11.54762		
	Total	800	67.9375	10.79255		

From the above table 9, it can be inferred that there is highly significant influence of size of group on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple (p-value 0.000 and F-value 12.000) at 1% level of significance.

DMRT explains that the size of groups of 2-4 members (mean = 68.6657) and 5-7 members (mean = 69.4204) are significantly more satisfied than size of group of 8 and more (mean = 64.7500) regarding satisfaction of facilities at the temple.

Table 10: Summary of One-Way ANOVA and DMRT of Occupation on Satisfaction Regarding Facilities at the Temple

	Occupation	N	Mean	SD	F-value	P-value
Satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple	Central Govt. services	42	64.3095 c	16.41755	7.571**	0.000
	State Govt. services	63	71.7302 b	7.78586		
	Quasi Govt. services	6	78.0000 d	.00000		
	Private service	91	61.8352 a	10.50742		
	Industrialist	7	69.0000 c	9.43398		
	Self employed	136	67.1176 c	10.88870		
	Agriculturist	268	68.2127 c	12.03753		
	Housewife	172	70.1977 c	5.54687		
	Others	15	71.2667 c	9.30028		
	Total	800	67.9375	10.79255		

From the above table 10, it can be professed that there is highly significant influence of occupation on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple (p-value 0.000 and F-value 7.571) at 1% level of significance.

DMRT explains that the satisfaction regarding facilities at temple is significantly less in the case of private services groups (mean = 61.8352) than other occupation groups.

Table: 11: Gist of Hypothesis Testing

S. No.	Hypothesis	Accepted / Rejected
H1	There is marked influence of the age of pilgrims on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple.	H1 is accepted
H2	There is significant influence of the gender of pilgrims on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple.	H2 is rejected
H3	There is substantial influence of the pilgrim’s household income on satisfaction regarding facilities at the temple.	H3 is accepted
H4	There is definite influence of the pilgrims’ group size on satisfaction regarding facilities inside and outside the temple.	H4 is accepted
H5	There is an apparent influence of the occupation of pilgrims on satisfaction on facilities regarding at the temple.	H5 is accepted

Observations from Interview with Temple Officials**Table 12: Designations of Temple Officials**

S. No.	Designation	N	%
1	AEO	7	17.5
2	Superintendent	12	30
3	Asst. Superintendent	11	27.5
4	Office assistant	10	25
5	Total	40	100

Table 13: Department Wise Number of Employees

S. No.	Department	N	%
1	Administration	17	42.5
2	Finance and Accounts	12	30
3	Security	7	17.5
4	Others	4	10
5	Total	40	100

➤ Coordinated Effort:

All respondents expressed that there should be a coordinated effort from all related departments to promote religious tourism and events of the temple. Majority of respondents expressed that there is no coordinated effort among the various departments like Endowment department, Tourism department, Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC), Indian Railways, local government bodies, etc.

➤ Master Plan:

Except Tirumala temple and Tiruchanoor temple, Under Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams management, other 18 temples do not have master plan. Besides, all respondents expressed that every temple must have a master plan for promotion of religious tourism.

And they also shared that master plan should focus on development of amenities inside and outside the temple for next 25 years. Majority of respondents said that Information Technology (IT) must be part of master plan. And majority of respondents said that active private participation also consider in master plan in development of accommodation facilities, transportation facilities, boarding facilities for pilgrims.

➤ Problems Affecting Religious Tourism Industry:

As per the analysis, the following seven chief hurdles were identified, which affect the progress of religious tourism in Andhra Pradesh. They are

1. Lack of serious publicity for religious events

2. Inter-departmental non cooperation
3. Lacking of facilities at temples
4. Political influences and corruption at all levels in administration
5. Engagement and appointment of temporary and out-source staff
6. Inefficiency in forecasting crowd on special occasions and weekends

➤ **Private Participation in Religious Tourism:**

Larger number of respondents strongly favor prominent role to the private sector in maintaining and development of infrastructure and acting as facilitators. Private participation creates more infrastructures in turn more employment opportunities can be created.

In addition, more than half of respondents cautioned temple administrators must be careful with private participation, as private sector will exploit the resources for their profit motive. All the respondents thought that Endowment department and temple authorities should come with clear policies and truly transparent contracts while allowing private sector.

➤ **Staff Training:**

All respondents strongly favor training of staff for achieving business results. However, very few respondents attended training programs organized by endowment department. And training programs were not conducted to temporary and out-source employees.

➤ **Festival Calendar:**

Every temple has festival calendar. In addition, all respondents said that temple authorities were taking keen interest in preparing festival calendar. Most of respondents expressed that festival calendar plays a key role in promoting temple as a pilgrims' destination. But they also said that it is not circulated properly to pilgrims in various locations across the state and the country. In addition, many of them suggested to circulate festival calendar through website of temple, Tourism websites of various states, and through various website dedicated to sharing information to tourist like www.yatra.com, www.makemytrip.com, etc. In addition, synchronize with APSTC website, Indian Railways official website, IRCTC website.

➤ **Problems in Promoting Temple as Destination:**

In addition, all respondents said there is a serious vacuum in promotion of religious tourism. Majority of respondents stated that temple administration and government is failing in promoting various religious festivals and events of temple across the country.

- a. Failing in communicating with pilgrims about religious festivals and events due to lack of sufficient knowledge in marketing aspects, not able to use social media and other e-marketing techniques
- b. Promotion only through wallpapers in select places within district or few districts, as print and broadcasting media is costly. Except TTD (as it has own television channel SVBC), all other temples has to depend on private television channels for promoting their festivals and events

➤ **Other Problems in Providing Better Service to the Pilgrims:**

1. Problems with temporary and out-source employees
 - a. As temporary employees are not enough qualified
 - b. Lack of proper training programs for temporary employees
 - c. Less commitment levels from temporary staff
 - d. No fear of failures or punishments

2. Very less flexibility in changing the budget plans and could not able to spend money accordingly.
3. Problems in decision making
 - a. Less workforce
 - b. Lack of supervision at different levels
 - c. Influence and pressures from political leaders in conduct of work

Suggestions:

Andhra Pradesh, Telangana has abundance of religious centers spread across the states. Hence, the necessity to generate either specific or general products is not a priority. Of immediate concern is the need to explore and develop ancillary products. However, considering the prevailing situations and divergent issues that are specific to a particular destination, the task will not be simple. To the zealous faith and cultural observer, Religious tourism in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana can boast of providing a unique experience. Hence one should plan and implement strategically along with professionalism regarding the development of tourism products to enhance the growth level of tourism sector.

The seeds will have to be sown and the saplings will have to be nurtured if this motive is to bear fruit. The presence of religious tourism throughout the country invariably means immense potential for development in this sector. It is significant that paving the way to get attention for the development of this niche religious tourism sector in India, it is essential to identify the lacking areas, the products that are required to facilitate and should overcome the issues of pilgrims subsequently. If these issues were addressed efficaciously, religious tourism can be the paramount industry for domestic and foreign tourists. The below given points can lay concrete on the route for beginning of a prospective development phase to the pilgrimage or religious tourism in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and also in India.

1. A Hub and Spoke Model for developing effective religious tourism circuits is one of the first steps to create nodes near religious centers, where fundamental infrastructure facilities are provided and day visits or trips are planned from the centre.

For instance, Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh can be a node for excursion to Srikalahasthi, Kanipakam and Narayanavanam. With a sizeable influx of crowd bursting into famous spots, where in which a hub and spoke model can provide an assurance for the tourist to visit all nearby attractive tourist spots.

2. A holistic experience on tourism can influence the visitor sections that are not paying attention to religious destinations. Tourists may find it worthwhile if a holistic package in the region of spiritual sites is included along with the main destination of a religious site. A novel method has been introduced in marketing recently to generate enhanced for the pilgrimage tourism through alternative or optional tourism destination. For instance, Simhachalam is a destination which is promoted as for both a Religious and Beach tourism destination, Srisailam is also promoted as both a Religious and a Recreational tourism spot. Also Srikalahasti marketed as Religious and Shopping Tourism spot for Kalankari Art work. And Sri Ganesh Temple in Secundrabad can be marketed as Religious and City tourism destination. And another example, Tirupati is marketing multiple tourism opportunities like Religious to Religious (Thiruchanur, Srinivasa Mangapuram etc.) and Religious to Heritage Tourism (Visit of Chandragiri Fort).
3. Making non-religious strata of the population inclusive marketing pilgrimage tourism sites requires unique guidance as fairly a main element of the tourists are paying attention to these religious spots because, the causes include old culture based studies, research and practice evolution. Merely religious trust and faith may not be

the magnetism of the religious destinations. These are the significant elements to attract the non-religious group. The creativity in this sort of case can be amalgamating the ritualistic portion of the pilgrimage tours with the experiences of education, novel art and philosophy. Classical dance, classical music and theatre arts must be given enhanced prominence in the religious shrine as it attracts more tourists. Conversational programs, course developments on the spiritual values, workshops and seminars on Ayurveda and Yoga practices can generate enormous spiritual belief and pleasure to pilgrimage tourism.

4. Fixing reasonable price for the religious products can avail with easy access to all the sections of tourists when they visit pilgrimages. Actually, in India, the high prices are paid for the tertiary services and it is not for the real services of the spiritual essence that an individual desires to make known. Therefore, it is necessary that there is commensuration of price of the tourism products with the cultural and educational services given to those tourists who are paying attention. However, it requires enhanced concern when determining the pricing since majority of the pilgrims are from middle class, the pricing should suit their budgets.
5. Establishing a Strategic Management Committee at temple level consisting of a core group of professionals is needed to advise the temple administration in devising plans and strategies needed in the religious tourism. These professionals with expertise in temple administration, archeology, electricity, public transport, cultural affairs, district and local governing bodies, tourism, hotel industry, tour operators and tourism educators can find worthwhile solutions to various problems like inter departmental rivalry, early clearance of proposals, environmental problems and objections that may be raised under various legal obligations, The team can be made responsible to conduct SWOT analysis, develop strategies, implement strategies and evaluate them. A quarterly meeting or anything appropriate as per the exigencies of the case can be arranged.
6. Communal riots and terrorists activities are the bane of India's world image. Visitors hesitate to visit places where there is threat to peace and harmony. Declaring snap hartal (alternative name for 'Bandh', which is prohibited by the Supreme Court of India) by political parties to air their protest against their opponents creates unexpected hardship to pilgrims and tourists due to stoppage of normal civil life. In Andhra Pradesh, this has become common feature and no political party is an exception from this shameful act. So both central and state governments and other administration authorities must focus to minimize hartals and disturbances to the pilgrims and tourists.
7. Complaints of the pilgrims need special attention and redressal cells. The state government bodies like Endowment department, Tourism department and Cultural department etc., and local administrative bodies like Municipality, Panchayath etc. must take Infrastructure, security and general problems faced by pilgrim. temple administration, tourism department, local tourism related service operators and in some case local police must take responsibility in solving problems of pilgrims this regard.
8. "Quality tourism" should be realized both in letter and spirit. Staff working in temples, transport organizations, hotels and other related tourism related organizations have to undergo periodical updating and refresher programmes to suit them better in their roles. Information centre at temples and other tourist locations should employ trained staff with proficiency in English, Hindi and one or two south Indian languages. Necessary on-the-job training and off-the-job training shall be rendered to the staff to equip them better in the job situations.

9. The pilgrims' views, complaints and suggestions must be heard and reflected to the possible extent. While leaving a temple, necessary feedback from pilgrims must be ascertained to know their problems and complaints about the pilgrimage.

Conclusion

The topic of research study "A Study on Religious Tourism in India with special reference to states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana" was undertaken by the researcher as a comprehensive study covering the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana. It required extensive travelling in 13 districts of Andhra Pradesh in order to collect primary data from pilgrims and temple authorities. Every effort was made collect secondary data relevant to this study.

Because this study revealed that there were differences in the overall satisfaction of pilgrims in terms of gender, type of tourist, age, education, occupation, income, type of travelling group, size of travel group and type of approach, it is hoped that the results of the study will provide some insights that may help tourism marketers develop specific promotional strategies. For example, according to the pilgrims who visit Andhra Pradesh, Telangana family vacation plans to visit pilgrimage destinations are typically made by women. The study revealed that female tourists were more satisfied than male tourists. Therefore, tourism marketers may keep this in mind as they develop special products and services for their market. Furthermore, the study compared means in an analysis of variance through Duncan's Multiple Range Test. This comparison will help tourism marketers and planners to maintain or enhance their strengths and improve their weaknesses.

In spiritual tourism, a tourist seeks for peace of mind and a sense of spiritual satisfaction. Even though the visitors to the spiritual tourism spots of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana states are satisfied with peaceful atmosphere they experience and the friendliness of the local people, they are dissatisfied with the basic problems regarding high prices, safety & security respectively, infrastructure like sanitation and drinking water facilities, lack of cleanliness and exploitation by the local vehicle operators. If these problems are addressed properly and enough publicity is given the spiritual tourism avenues of the Andhra Pradesh, Telangana states shall be explored to the optimum level.

For example, the study identified that pilgrims' satisfaction is dependent on transportation, accommodation, boarding facilities and facilities at temple.

To conclude, in order to create effective marketing strategies for services in the religious tourism market, a better understanding of tourists who visit to the religious destinations is necessary.

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