

A Study on Determinant Factors of Spiritual Tourist Expenditure in Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

This study concentrates on the economic analysis of determinant factors of spiritual tourist expenditure in Tirunelveli District. In this study an effort has been taken to examine the dimensions of spiritual tourism in Tirunelveli District. This study covers the important spiritual tourist place of Tirunelveli district. It is confined to study the determinant factors of spiritual tourist expenditure, factors influencing their tour decisions and patterns of their visits. In spiritual tourism a tourist seeks peace of mind and a sense of spiritual satisfaction. Even though the visitors to the spiritual tourist spots of Tirunelveli are satisfied with peaceful atmosphere, they experience the unfriendliness of the local people, they are dissatisfied with the basic infrastructures 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 Tiruchendur shall be explored to the optimum level. The study reveals that the regression analysis shows that the educational qualification, monthly income, stays in days and size of family are determined the total tour expenditure.

Key Words: Spiritual Tourist, Expenditure and Education.

Introduction

Tourism has led to manifold increase in the per capita income, improving balance of payment as well as gave strength to the earning power of Indian domiciles. High class infrastructure facilities are being created to cater to the needs of high profile foreign tourists which are increasing in number day by day. Massive buildings, neat and clear roads, pure and hygienic food availability of water and power to a large extent have become available because of tourism. Increase in accommodation and accessibility and other infrastructural facilities have become available to almost all the tourist spots spread in different parts of our country. In addition to it, tourism is one of the best tools for creating communal harmony, universal brotherhood, and creating a friendly image in the world scenario.

Review of Literature

Mudarra Fernandez, et al., (2018) in their study reveals that there is abundant scientific literature on tourist expenditure and the factors which determine spending. The purpose of this paper is to systematize, present and analyze the results obtained from a comprehensive review of scientific literature on the variables that affect tourist expenditure for different tourism typologies. It has been possible to discover which factors influence expenditure in the different types of destination, which is of enormous interest for two reasons. Firstly, research opportunities have been identified with respect to the variables and types which have not been closely studied. Secondly, this research will facilitate decisions by policymakers and destination managers, providing information about the factors which generate greater spending and which are those that they should act to strengthen.

Rasmita Nayak et al., (2022), in their study using the micro level data on households' tourism expenditure, examines the level of impoverishment in India caused by tourism spending. The result shows that the mid-aged people were dragged into poverty due to tourism spending. Hindus are more prone to poverty due to tourism spending compared to Muslims and other religious groups. There is higher percentage impoverishment of the rural population than the urban. There is no gender difference. Overall impoverishment added by tourism expenditure is about three percent. These findings suggest that drivers of domestic tourists' expenditure should not be underestimated by the policymakers in India while designing the policy for poverty reduction. Moreover, policymakers and researchers need to analyse the monthly spending behaviour of mid-aged people, Hindus and the rural population in India as they are more likely to be dragged into poverty due to their tourism spending.

Statement of the Problem

This study concentrates on the economic analysis of determinant factors of spiritual tourist expenditure in Tirunelveli District. In this study an effort has been taken to examine the dimensions of spiritual tourism in Tirunelveli District. This study covers the important spiritual tourist place of Tirunelveli district. It is confined to study the determinant factors of spiritual tourist expenditure, factors influencing their tour decisions and patterns of their visits.

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To study the determinant factor of expenditure of spiritual tourism and the pattern of visits by the tourists.
- 2) To give suggestions for further growth and development of spiritual tourism in Tirunelveli district.

Methodology

Tirunelveli spiritual tourism centre of Tirunelveli district has been taken as the area of study. This study is based on primary data. The data are confined to the financial year from April 2022 to March 2023. Universe of the present study is infinite. It is decided to use convenient sampling method. Originally it was planned and data was collected from 520 sample respondents. Different statistical tools such as simple percentage analysis and multiple regression analysis are suitably used in the study.

Result and Discussion

Estimation of Total Tour Expenditure

This study is devoted to identify the factors which determine the expenditure of tourists. For this, the following multiple linear regression model was estimated separately for foreign tourists, other state tourists and domestic tourists by the method of ordinary least squares.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + u$$

where

Y = Total expenditure of tourists (in Rs.)

X₁ = Income of the tourists (in Rs.)

X₂ = Family Size (in Nos.)

X₃ = Age (in years)

X₄ = Educational Qualification (years)

X₅ = Duration of Stay (in Nos.)

u = Disturbance term

Estimated Results of Determinants of Tour Expenditure

The total expenditure of overall tourist arrival in Tirunelveli is regressed upon many interdependent variables and finally five variables are selected namely, monthly income, size of family, age, educational qualification and stay in days by their families. The results of the estimated multiple regression is given in table 1.

Table: 1 - Estimated Results of Determinants of Tour Expenditure

Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.790	0.624	0.621	66941.60543

a Predictors: (Constant), STDAYS, SFAMILY, AGE, MINCOME, EDUCA.

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.83E+12	5	7.655E+11	170.830	.000
Residual	2.30E+12	515	4481178538		
Total	6.13E+12	520			

a Predictors: (Constant), STDAYS, SFAMILY, AGE, MINCOME, EDUCA.

b Dependent Variable: TOEXPEN

Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
Intercept	-127006	13053.114		-9.730	.000
MINCOME	.268	.036	.240	7.509	.000
SFAMILY	10282.533	2134.467	.131	4.817	.000
AGE	337.373	252.496	.039	1.336	.182
EDUCA	8356.902	635.725	.455	13.145	.000
STDAYS	16650.056	2567.160	.218	6.486	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TOEXPEN

It has been found that the multiple regression is significant in terms of its 'F' value which is calculated to be 170.830 with an R^2 value of 0.624 explaining nearly 62.40 per cent of the variations in the tour expenditure of tourists. All the co-efficients are found significant at 5 per cent level except the age of the tourists. According to the estimated model, the total tour expenditure increases by 0.240 per cent for every one per cent of the increase in the monthly income. For one per cent of increase in the size of family the total tour expenditure increases by 0.131 per cent. Every one per cent increase in the educational qualification increases the tour expenditure by nearly 0.455 per cent and every one per cent increase in the stay in days increases the tour expenditure by 0.218 per cent. Thus it is inferred from the analysis that the variable, educational qualification and monthly income had a greater influence on the tour expenditure followed by the variable, stay in days among domestic tourists. As per F value (170.830), the fitted regression model was found to be significant at five per cent level.

Therefore, the educational qualification, monthly income, stays in days and size of family are determined the total tour expenditure. Hence the hypothesis that 'the total income, family size, age, educational qualification and stay in days are independent of the level of total tour expenditure' is proved.

Suggestions

1. Tourists seek to visit religious centres or carry out a pilgrimage to a place in order to relieve themselves from stress. Hence, if counseling centres would be established in the premises of sacred centres, the tourists would be free to share the issue with the counsellor. The counsellor may then suggest an appropriate rejuvenation programme for betterment.
2. There can be focused promotion of various places to get attention of the travellers by using aids like short films, photographs, etc and clearly planned, focussed tour packages can be introduced which may attract the travelers.
3. The policymakers can use the findings of substitution between expenditure categories better to evaluate the impact of policy measures on household expenditures. As the consumer budget is limited, tourism spending can be well managed. The higher probability of poverty level due to tourism spending can be eradicated by the proper attention of India's policymakers and governments.

Conclusion

In spiritual tourism a tourist seeks peace of mind and a sense of spiritual satisfaction. Even though the visitors to the spiritual tourist spots of Tirunelveli are satisfied with peaceful atmosphere, they experience the unfriendliness of the local people, they are dissatisfied with the basic infrastructures 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 Tiruchendur shall be explored to the optimum level. The study reveals that the regression analysis shows that the educational qualification, monthly income, stays in days and size of family are determined the total tour expenditure.

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