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Problems encountered by tourists

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Tourism is an upcoming and fast growing industry in developing countries like India. Due to its newness in nature, there are some hurdles that the tourists face. This will affect the national economy and the growth of this industry may get affected. This paper focuses on identifying such problems and their intensity level. This also attempts to study whether there is any significant difference in the problem faced by respondents based on demographic factors. Convenient samples of 150 respondents have been selected for this study. Suitable statistical tools such as Cluster analysis, Chi-square test and multiple regressions are used.

JEL Classifications: M10, M31, I11

Keywords: Tourists, tourists' problem, tour planning and tour arrangements.

Tourism has witnessed a dramatic transformation into a multifaceted economic and social activity. Travel and tourism have been confined to a privileged few, namely the rich, at the time of independence of India. Tourism is now an industry with many facets and varied activities. It calls for a perfect co-ordination among diverse segments that go to structure this industry.

Tourism has now grown to such dimensions and importance that it has become the largest industry in the world. The tourism industry is the third highest foreign exchange earner in India. This remarkable growth is not due to any particular phenomenon but only the result of evolutionary process. This upcoming industry needs focus on many dimensions such as promoting the industry, developing newness in the industry and improving the industry. This paper focuses on various problems expressed by tourists in Tamil Nadu¹.

Limitations

This study is conducted in the Chennai area and hence the result cannot be generalized without reconfirming the result in another area. The sample size is limited to 150 respondents due to constraints. Furthermore, the limitation of applying questionnaire as a tool for data collection is applicable here too. However, the bias is minimised because the respondents are those who have willingly participated in the study.

Problem statement

Tourism industry is a booming industry that enriches knowledge, brings social development and economic growth also. Service industries are of recent development in India compared to developed nations. Nowadays, tourism and medical tourism are fast growing areas. But, there are lots of problems faced by tourists during their tour due to poor facilities, uncertainties, cleanliness, safety, etc. Dailies bring out reports on such issues. Previously, people used to tour mainly on pilgrimage. But now, the culture has changed. In our country also, many people plan for their tour as a regular affair may be

¹ Operational definitions used in this study: Tour - visit to a place of spiritual importance, sight seeing, historical importance etc., for a duration of more than a day. Tourists - in this study the respondents are those who have been on a tour within the past six months before the survey.

once in a year. In this growing field, it is highly important to study the major issues faced by tourists and to take necessary steps to reduce such problems.

In this paper fifteen exclusive tourist problems are listed and the intensity of problems is measured using five a point scale. This study has most relevance to India and particularly to Tamil Nadu.

Research objectives and methodology

The study intended to identify the problems intensity faced by tourists; to observe whether there is any difference in the problems based on demographic factors; and to measure the impact of tour problems on tour satisfaction.

This study is descriptive in nature, because, it describes whether there is any difference in the problem level due to selected demographic factors. It also measures the level of satisfaction due to these tour problems considered. These problems have been mainly identified based on pre-test approaching thirty respondents to list the problems encountered and also based on reviews.

The study area has been fixed as Chennai because city respondents have more experience on tour and they have the practice of touring periodically. The respondents are those who have gone on tour in the last six months. The sample size was 150 as it was convenient sampling. This is the most suited sampling technique because the respondents have been those who volunteered to provide data. This will definitely reduce the bias in their responses.

A questionnaire was prepared to collect the primary data from the public. Content validity has been ensured by the consultation with subject experts. Cronbach's alpha value is collected and the range is between 0.782 and 0.815. The tool was pre-tested and few corrections have been made based on the suggestions given by the respondents. Suitable analysis has been carried out to study the stated objectives.

Findings

The tourists may experience problems relating to various factors such as unexpected expenses, pollution, safety and security, etc. In this study there are fifteen problems and tourists are grouped based on their problem intensity using cluster analysis.

The respondents have formed three clusters based on their experience with various problems during their tour.

The first group consists of respondents who have stated that they faced low intensity of problem relating to service, safety and security, poor infrastructure, unwanted expenses and arrangements. They have experienced moderate level of problems with regard to transport facility, guidance and accommodation. Comparatively high level of problems are reported pertaining to factors such as corruption, pollution, heavy rush, beggars, health care, local language and sanitary conditions. They are characterized as perfectionists. They might have well planned tours and hence the problems relating to the factors under their control are minimized. Apart from that, environmental factors are viewed as highly problematic by them. They would like to have everything perfect under the sky.

The second group of respondents is characterized with low level of dissatisfaction with regard to accommodation facilities during their tour; language, beggars, guidance, pollution and health related factors. They express moderate level of dissatisfaction towards infrastructure, sanitary condition, safety and security, transport facility, arrangements, unexpected expenditure and service related factors. The highest levels of dissatisfaction have been in connection with heavy crowd. They face moderate dissatisfaction even due to factors which are under their perusal and slightly higher level of dissatisfaction relating to environmental factors. Therefore, they might behave as accommodators; they do not control what is feasible for them also.

The third group of respondents experience low level of hurdles due to accommodation, safety and security and service. They also express slightly higher dissatisfaction due to transport facility, arrangements, guidance, language, infrastructure, sanitary conditions, pollution and unexpected expenses. They have also specified moderate level of hurdles relating to crowd, health hazards, and corruption, beggars as well. They are “laissez-faire” people; correspondingly, they perceive a lower level of dissatisfaction towards all dimensions.

Around 50% of the respondents are “laissez-faire” and they do not give much focus to the problems they experience.

TABLE 1. TOURISTS CLASSIFICATION BASED ON PROBLEMS VIEWED

Factors	I	II	III
Unwanted expenses	3.44	2.56	4.03
Heavy rush	2.42	1.85	3.95
Sanitary condition	1.98	2.82	4.24
Infrastructure	3.46	2.96	4.24
Arrangements	4.00	2.78	4.35
Transport facility	3.40	2.81	4.35
Safety and Security	3.13	2.81	4.56
Service	3.46	2.15	4.56
Accommodation	3.60	4.04	4.64
Guidance	2.90	3.48	4.35
Beggars	2.94	3.70	3.73
Corruption	2.35	3.19	3.77
Pollution	2.50	3.07	4.16
Health Care	2.46	3.00	3.83
Local Language	2.19	3.78	4.32
Number of respondents	48	27	75
N = 150 Chi Sq = 212.664 d.f = 14 Sig = 0.000			

Source: Computed

TABLE 2. DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND PROBLEM INTENSITY

Factor	Chi-Square value	d.f.	Sig.
Gender	26.905	2	.000**
Age	46.203	6	.000**
Nationality	28.687	2	.000**
Qualification	6.332	6	.387 (N.S.)
Occupation	25.225	2	.000**
Income	45.596	6	.000**
Location	65.817	6	.000**
Family size	74.412	6	.000**
Frequency of tour	28.132	4	.000**
Purpose of tour	26.725	6	.000**

Note: ** - 1% Level of significance; N.S. - Not significant.

Source: Computed.

Demographic factors and tour problems

Association between demographic factors and the problem intensity are tested using chi-square test. Chi-square test result based on gender indicates that there is significant

difference in the type of people with respect to tour problems based on the frequency male are more of laissez-faire and majority of the females are perfectionists.

Based on age, it is observed that the aged people have also found major problems due to pollution, beggars, etc. But, youngsters are found to be less problematic viewers compared to other groups, and middle aged respondents are accommodators. Based on nationality, it is observed that foreigners express problems mainly relating to pollution, health hazards, beggars and corruption. Indians are very laissez-faire and accommodate themselves with all problems during their tour.

Qualification level is not found to have association with problem intensity. Employees are laissez-faire and they are found to have problems concerning to almost all factors, as self-employed are found to have problems only to the factors which are not under their control. The lower income tourists have, the more problems related to out of their control factors they express. The more income they have, the more their dissatisfaction relating to all factors. It might be due to their expectation that things should be perfect and hence the deviations may be found to be problematic.

Urban and semi-urban people are found to be dissatisfied with accommodation, safety, and other factors which are manageable by them. The larger the family, the more they expressed problems pertaining to their uncontrollable factors such as beggars, corruption, pollution, etc. Small family size expresses unhappiness even to the factors such as safety, accommodation, etc. People who go for recreation and pilgrimage view that problems are more relating to accommodation, safety transport, unexpected expenses, etc.; whereas people traveling to places of historic importance express problems related mainly with environment. The more touring person experiences the complexity of tour problem. So, it is expected that tourists traveling more frequent would have less problems.

Tour problems and tour satisfaction

The effect of various tour problems identified on the tour dissatisfaction level has been studied using regression analysis.

Model	R	R-square	Adj. R. Sq.	S.E.	F	Sig.
1	.943	.889	.876	.22145	71.401	0.000

Coefficients

Factors	B	S.E	Beta	T	Sig.
Constant	3.794	.192	-	19.749	.000**
Unwanted expenses	-.218	.036	-.267	-6.039	.000**
Heavy rush	-.167	.029	-.275	-5.793	.000**
Sanitary conditions	-.060	.037	.094	1.605	.111
Infrastructure	-.169	.034	-.326	-4.896	.000**
Arrangements	-.552	.047	-1.082	-11.758	.000**
Transport facility	.505	.047	.797	10.790	.000**
Safety and security	-.216	.058	-.325	-3.733	.000**
Service	-.081	.052	-.129	-1.546	.125
Accommodation	.021	.024	.038	-.904	.368
Guidance	-.006	.021	-.011	-.262	.794
Beggars	.143	.034	.237	4.206	.000**
Corruption	.104	.029	.162	3.525	.001**
Pollution	-.067	.028	-.114	-2.378	.019*
Health care	-.015	.025	-.029	-.599	.551
Local language	.133	.040	.252	3.349	.001**

Source: Computed. ** 1% level of significance *5% level of significance.

The F - value is found to be 71.401 and significant at 1% level. It implies that there is a significant effect of these tour problems on tour satisfaction level. Adjusted R square value is 0.876 which indicates that these problems predict 87.60% of the satisfaction level of the tour. But, the effects are negative.

Constant α -value is 3.794 and it is significant at 1% level. Further, unexpected expenses, heavy rush, infrastructure, arrangements, transport, safety, beggars, corruption and local language are found to have negative significant effect on tour satisfaction at 1% level. The corresponding effect of these problems on one unit of tour satisfaction are -0.218, -0.167, -0.169, -0.552, -0.505, -0.216, -0.143, -0.104, -0.133. For example, if the unexpected expense increases by 0.218, the tour satisfaction level decreases by one unit. Pollution effect on tour satisfaction is also found to be significant at 5% level and the effect is -0.067.

Conclusion

The problem intensity experienced by tourists differs depending on various factors influencing tour environment. Also, the problem intensity differs significantly based on respondents' state such as gender, age, nationality, education, profession, income, geographical location, family size and frequency of tour made. The discussed situation with the intensity of problems requires more attention and policy efforts to develop tourism development.

There are major hindrances during tour which are to be attended step by step based on its intensity, so as to reduce the problem during their tour.

Females, elders and business people are found to be perfectionists and hence they express major problems due to corruption, pollution, heavy rush, beggars. Hence, it is suggested that they can be attracted to tourist spots mainly by focusing on pollution free, peaceful place. Accommodators adjust to various problems but this would reduce the interest on tour. This ultimately affects the growth of national touristic market. Steps are to be taken to retain such tourists by reducing the problem intensity.

Social awareness is to be created to uphold the national pride by reducing the problem intensity of foreigners.

Higher income group, urban people have expressed problems relating to all factors. There is much potential to attract this category by providing them with better service.

It is observed that major problems are deviation in the arrangements made for their stay, visit, transport and unexpected expenses. These problems could be addressed by the supportive industry. If they address them with a service mind, this could be minimized.

Reducing intensity of tour problems motivates the people to undertake frequent tours that will enable to build a better society and better national economic development than before.