

Preference for the ‘Heritage city–Kancheepuram’ as a choice-tourist-destination lies in its strong, multi-dimensional & extended destination profile.

Mrs. P. Tapasiya¹, Dr. S. Kasthuri, Dean ²

¹ Research Scholar, Faculty of Management Studies, Dr. MGR Educational & Research Institute (Deemed to be University) tapasiya999@gmail.com

² Online Programs, Dr. MGR Educational & Research Institute (Deemed to be University) deanodl@drmgrdu.ac.in

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ABSTRACT

The paper has in it the hidden and unhidden facts of the richness of the brand ‘Kancheepuram’, carefully culled out, which is by no means a tourist destination of ordinary nature. One would be more than convinced as to why ‘Kancheepuram’ is considered ‘Visit-at-least-once-in-a-life-time’ tourist destination. Preference for the choice of a destination by the tourists is normally exercised based on its multi-dimensional profile and the features. It is not only the number of features, but if they are exceptionally different & distinct, they become much more attractive. So a ‘choice-tourist-location’ is identified more based on the ‘value and the features’ that attract the tourists and as to how much they attract them. The fact about how-much attraction that the tourist location is able to draw is dependent on the importance of location - ancient nature, historical & traditional aspects, Religious & cultural connotations, exceptional features, exclusivity, etc. If more features of value are a part of the core product, the tangible product of any nature will excel in its performance in attracting the prospective buyers. The principle naturally applies even to a ‘tourist destination’. Strong features of high value, which the Core product is made of, would enrich the profile value and make it a larger and unified one in stature - strong & multidimensional with Extended-Core-Destination, as a product. Kancheepuram, the heritage city, is one which is an embodiment of high-end Locational features, which are incomparably embedded to form a tourist destination (product) - location. Kancheepuram is, therefore, one of the choicest tourist destinations, occupying the list in the top, as one of those most preferred destinations. The paper takes the reader through umpteen number of core-destination features, which make Kancheepuram, the one that it actually is. The paper unfolds the concept of the ‘extended-core-destination-profile’ which responds to the subtle needs of the soul – beyond the body and mind of people. Kancheepuram thus sets the tone as a highly soul-satisfying tourist destination, and is not just another pilgrimage destination. Adequate marketing references that go to consolidate & strengthen the values of the product (destination) features and their values are brought into the paper for substantiating and to hail the glory of multi-dimensional core-products which become the reasons for strong preferences by the tourists. Preference of choice destinations by tourists is thus substantiated as a decision based on the core-destination features and the perceived values of them, more than other destination profile features.

KEY WORDS:

Kancheepuram – the heritage city – Preference for Tourist destination – Tourist destination profile – Multi-dimensional Core Product – Extended-Core-destination

METHODOLOGY

The Methodology adopted for study, observations and recording has been from the secondary sources from open domain – dedicated sites; articles & other information pages. The information relevant for the study has been thus

used for supporting the objective of the paper, the cumulative points of which are together used for making the conclusive statement on the role and reasons for Preference for choice destination for travel/visit.

INTRODUCTION:

Kancheepuram (also called Kanjeevaram) is an ancient town of Tamil Nadu, a district headquarters, around 50 Kms. from the city of Chennai. It is located on the banks of river Palar. Kancheepuram was ruled by Pallavas, Pandyas, Cholas, Vijayanagara empire and then, of course, the Britishers in the pre-independence era. The city (acclaimed as Nagareshu Kanchi) was known for education and it has been a Hindu religious centre for several centuries. Sage Patanjali – who gave the Yoga Sutras to the world is said to have lived here. Maha kavi Kalidasa is said to have spoken about Kancheepuram in his popular works. The town, which is a Shakti Peetham, has been one of the seats of Shaivism and Vaishnavism. The town also was a place which had roots for Jainism and Buddhism.

This ancient city is known for great culture having spiritual and religious background. The city is also known for its coined name ‘the city of thousand temples’. Kanchi Sankaracharya matam was established here by the Adi Shankaracharyar – and is popularly called as Kamakoti Peetam. The city is popular worldwide for its Silk Sarees, which are produced here with the best of weaving skills of artisans. The city has various other attractions of high interest value, which pull the tourists to this extraordinarily popular heritage city.

Kancheepuram is listed as one of the most popular heritage cities, which falls under the scheme of Government of India – HRIDAY - Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana scheme.

(Ref.No.01)

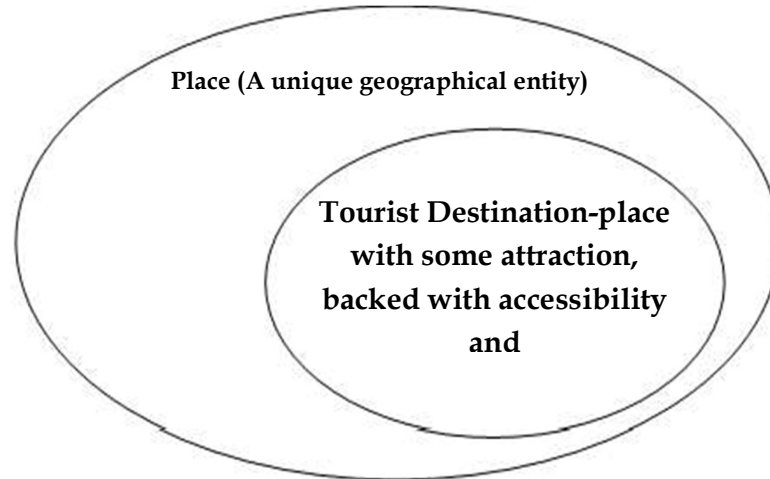
Destination-profile of Kanchipuram

The destination-profile of Kanchipuram as a heritage tourist location has to be closely studied to understand better, which, like any other product (destination) profile of an outstanding intangible brand, has an enriched Core-product and Actual product features. The paper unfolds the depths of destination features which made Kancheepuram the valued brand that tourists consider it. The brand profile is actually larger than the life size of the destination brand to strongly influence the tourists of all backgrounds, since it offers solace to everyone’s needs relevant to body, mind and soul. All of us in marketing know that the ‘Needs of the customers are essentially to be met’. Some would like them to be fulfilled by opting them through the ‘wants and desires’ creating the ‘demand’ possibilities. The clearly portrayed destination-profile structure with well-defined strong features of the Core and the associated levels make the Actual product. The Augmented product features add further to make the total product (destination) profile of Kancheepuram, perceived as of very high value. The heritage city is preferred more by tourists of all backgrounds, with the expectations and beliefs that they are sure to fulfil. Destination-Kancheepuram gets its superior-most value through its largely extended-core-destination of its profile

DISCUSSION

Before getting into understanding the destination profile features of Kancheepuram, it would be better to review certain basic concepts about the tourist destinations. The excerpts from the study brought into the paper further throw light on how the heritage city of Kancheepuram makes itself as a destination-product of high difference and great value.

Tourist Destination – Concept and Evolution - A tourist destination could actually be a place / places in any geographic location – either with **naturally** existing **OR** **man-made** features, having access and place of stay, infrastructure and local population, who are supportive of tourists.



(Ref. No.02)

The **destination – Kancheepuram** may not be totally natural, but the ancient nature of the city with great many features and the values, which are inexplicable, touch all the faculties of humans – the body, mind and the soul, thus making the experience of visiting and being in Kancheepuram spiritually significant. Since the dating of the city, as to when it was established and all the rationale surrounding the city's existence are all so very ancient, it makes us think and equate the same as natural. Four kingdoms of Indian origin and later the British ruled the place. The city thus bore the brunt of the rise & fall, still making it today as one standing tall to prove its supremacy as a great Spiritual, religious and Cultural centre of high reckoning.

Preference is based on the triggering interest: Going by the objective of the paper, the essential pre-requisite for a tourist-destination to become popular is that it should have the features which trigger the interests of the tourists to visit the destination. Following are the primarily interest generating elements / factors for a tourist destination:

Elements of Tourist destination - Deeper study of a tourist destination makes us understand that any destination, for that matter, is never a single product / feature identity, and it normally is a complex combination of elements similar or varied, which together form a frame-work for it. (Sometimes great story/stories have a link to the destination / place) They could be broadly classified as below:

1. **Attractions at the destination (Primary and Secondary)**
2. **Accessibility of destination**
3. **Amenities/Ancillary Services**
4. **Activities**
5. **Authenticity**
6. **Ambience / Atmosphere**
7. **Availability of Package**

Core Product in Tourism is the 'Tourist Destination'

The triggering interest for one to exercise a choice / preference in the case of a tourist destination may be dependent on all the factors above, but primarily the interest to visit a location / tourist destination depends on the **Importance** attached to the destination OR the **Attractive features of the destination**, which actually is the **CORE PRODUCT** in the marketing parlance. Here, in Tourism, it is the **destination / the place** that is the most important one and the decisive factor for one to embark on the journey to visit the place as a tourist.

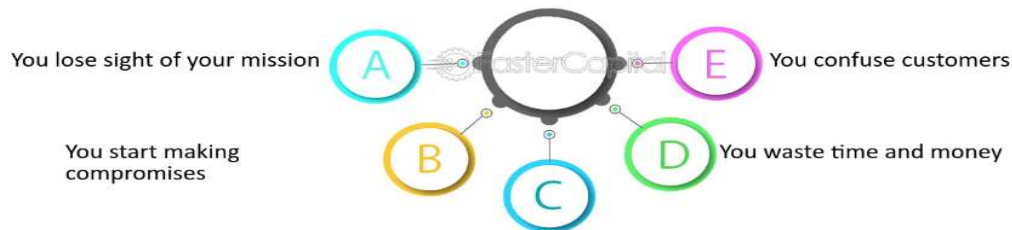
Importance of focus on the Core Product (Tourist destination)

It is very important to have unflinching focus on the core product in marketing, since core product is the very basis for any business – be it a business of tangible products or tourist destinations. Lack of focus will affect the results very much. Further, inattention on the core-product could reduce the face value of the product ending up to be treated as a sub-par product. Focus will provide opportunities for working on even the minor features of the product, which could have significant value for some or many customers.

Passionate yet logical approach needed

One needs to have clear vision of the product with no neglected view of any feature what-so-ever. It is better to have a team working continuously on the product, which many companies are now doing. Lack of team working for this important marketing task will lead to a missing focus of the product, which is the very foundation for the business. Being passionate and more than that a logical and all inclusive approach is essential for product development.

LACK OF FOCUS LEADS TO SERIOUS MISSES



(Ref. No.03)

Kancheepuram – a Multi-layered / Extended-Core-product (Destination)

The Core product in the case of Kancheepuram – as a heritage tourist destination got its due importance only through the destination features. In fact, Kancheepuram is multi-layered and extended-core-product, as the places of visit / destination are not only **high-in-number**, but also **very-high-in-value**. Hence the Core product, i.e. destination and its features are not a single layered but multi-layered, each of it having many sub-destinations, which are sub-destinations for proper understanding here, but they are all – individually – a destination of high-importance, each by itself.

The below given illustration of the **multi-layered Core product** (destination) profile of Kancheepuram throws light on it. The multi-layered Core-product (destination) profile, as illustrated, gives us the understanding that the Tourist-destination of any nature becomes important sometimes, not by just ONE single vibrant feature of importance, like Taj Mahal or Qutub Minar, but it could be a cluster of (multiple) great features. Each of the features, the interested tourist in the destination, considers it equivalent to any other great single featured tourist destination of high popularity. Not contained in the statement said, Kancheepuram, as a tourist destination, is a multi-layered core-product (destination) with several places as features, and each of them has a great story to tell about itself – which is called a Sthala purana, which involves a great happening when great people got involved in a situation – in the long and ancient past.

Enrichment of destination profile - The important aspect to be considered here is that the attractions at the destination (Primary and Secondary) are many and if each of the features of attractions is closely studied that most of them fall under the Primary level leaving not many under the secondary level. One very distinct observation here is that beyond the Core product / destination, the features that add to make the actual product are pushed to the peripheries since the Core Product is much extended occupying 3-4 layers.

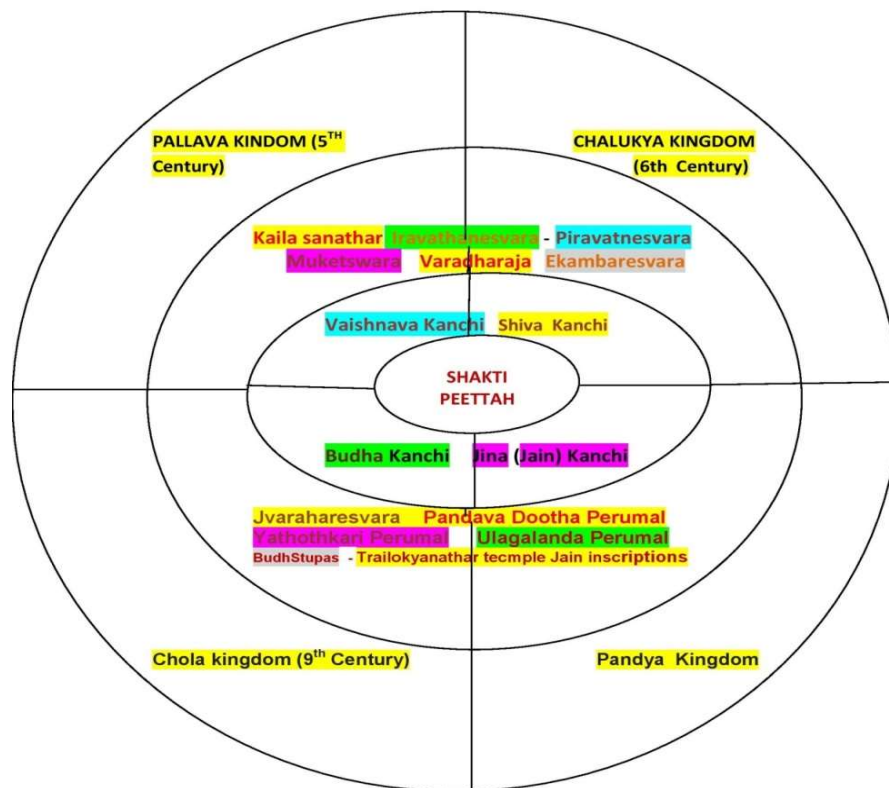
Each of the features in the illustration in the destination profile is a place of attraction. A brief narration on each of the features, as shown below, will more than convince, how these attractive-features individually enrich the destination profile.

RESULTS

In the case of Kancheeppuram, the destination profile and the Core product area is already rich in features, and it becomes the marketing agencies' – either Government or Private, initiative to properly highlight and show case the rich features and attributes to the tourists, so that they come to know about the so far un-reckoned / poorly reckoned factors that make the tourist destination highly rich and worthy of the position, it deserves in the heritage class.

KANCHIPURAM – THE HERITAGE CITY DESTINATION PROFILE

Extended Core Destination (product)



Shakti Peetah (Destination Attraction - Feature - 01)

“The place where Sri Kamakshi resides is known as “Nabisthana Ottiyana Peetam.” Kamakshi refers to Goddess that lives in Kanchi and Goddess Saraswati, and Lakshmi are her both eyes”

As per Puranas, Rishi Durvasa could get absolved from the curse, after worshipping and offering his prayers to Goddess Kamakshi. He is said to have installed the ‘Sri Chakra’ at Kancheeppuram’ and it was he who wrote the Saubhagya Chindamani Kalpa (also called Durvasa Samhita). It is quoted that he only wrote the Vidhi (method) in

the said treatise, as to how Kamakshi Devi should be worshipped.

Originally the sanctum of the Goddess is said to have been very hot signifying the 'Rudra Rupa' of the Goddess. And it was Adi Shankara who later pacified the Rudra Rupa of the Goddess and made her peaceful. Adi Shankara also wrote "Soundarya Lahiri"

Goddess Kamakshi's main sanctum is called the Gayatri Mandapam. And at this place, she sat in Padmasana – a posture in the Yoga which is found to resemble the flower Lotus. In the four arms of the Goddess she is found to hold Sugarcane bow and Lotus, Paasa and Ankusa

Architecture -The temple of Sri Kamakshi Amman is contained in a square feet area of 5 acres. Mandapams and the tank of the temple could be seen in the outer most prakaram. The hall with 100 pillars, Dwaja Arohana mandapam are those which are special

(Ref. No.04)

Shiva Kanchi (Destination Attraction - Feature - 02)

The Ekambareswarar Temple – The temple has a rich history. It is one of the temples among the Panch Bhoota Sthalas – the five elements of nature – Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space.

Worshipped as Shiva lingam, the temple is one among the large temples and considered among the seven most important pilgrimage destinations. The temple is spread over 40 acres of land. The temple has been in existence at the least from 600 AD. Many times the temple was subject to attacks, but was rebuilt by many kings, who ruled Kancheepuram. Pallavas built the temple. Cholas rebuilt it. King Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagar made several structural contributions of the temple in the later years – around 15th century.

(Ref. No.05)

Vishnu Kanchi (Destination Attraction - Feature - 03)

Vishnu Kanchi gets its name from the Lord Vishnu's temples located in the town. Sri Varadaraja Perumal Temple is one of the primarily important ones for the tourists who visit with specific purpose to have darshan of the Lord. The kshetram (holy place) is one of the most celebrated '108 Divya Desams (divine places) spread over the country. Pallava king – Nandivarman, as history reveals, built the temple. It is also believed to have been built by the Cholas in 1053 AD and further expanded during the regimes of the later Chola Kings.

Significantly the temple features are found with well carved and gold gilded lizards. The Puranas reveal that Indra, the celestial king after he got absolved from the curse of the Goddess Saraswati, was the inspiration for the installation of silver and golden lizards' carvings. The lizards were, it is believed, the witness to the ordeal that the Celestial King Indra went through. Sri Varadarajaswamy was installed early as a wooden image and was preserved in a box made of silver in the temple tank. The Vighraha is fetched out once in every forty years. And special homas and pujas are performed for a period of time and the Vighraha in the box is kept back in the tank. Lakhs of devotees visit the temple to have darshan of the Lord Varadaraja during this period of time and consider having darshan of Aththivaradhar (the wooden vighraha), as a boon in the life-time.

(Ref. No.06)

Buddha Kanchi (Destination Attraction – Feature - 04)

The city of Kancheepuram is a very ancient one. The city was a well known Buddhist religious centre. Popularly known Buddhist monks lived that time. It was in the 5th Century proponents of Buddhaghosha – "Sumati, Jotipala, Aniruddha, Acharya Dharmapala, Deepankara Tero, Ananda Tero, Saddhamma Jotipala" lived here. The most popularly acclaimed Buddhists were - Nun Manimegalai and Bodhidharma. Buddhism was an accepted and celebrated religion by the kings of the time period.

Kancheepuram is thus considered a very ancient Buddhist place of importance and considered a sacred location.
(Ref. No.07)

Jina (Jain) Kanchi (Destination Attraction 05)

Jain traditions have special place in Kancheepuram. It is of the period 550 BCE, when the Pallava King Simhavarma, is said to have ruled the kingdom. History also says that in the 4th Century BCE that the Magadha King Chandragupta Maurya embraced Jain faith. He went to the extent of renouncing his own kingdom and became an ascetic, following the steps of Jain Acharya Bhadrabahu. The king ascetic travelled with his guru to Shravanabelegola, which is currently in Karnataka. Jainism and its prevalence in Kancheepuram could be seen today as two temples in Jina Kanchi, which are of the 6th Century.

(Ref. No.08)

The Primary features of the Core-destination

The five destination attractions dealt above together and individually form a strong basis to emerge as the Primary Core product (destination). The other destination attractions, which are exterior to them but yet connect with each of the five inside ones, give the final single look for the destination profile making it of the heritage value that the very name of the tourist destination 'KANCHEEPURAM' refers to every tourist.

The exterior / the Secondary layers and the contribution of the value of the features of the destination/s could express themselves, referring to the augmented value to the destination profile:

Kailasanathar temple



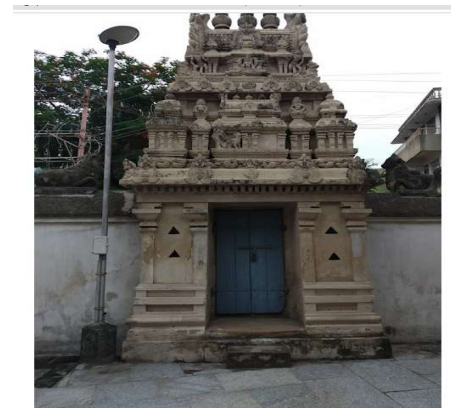
The temple belonging to the Pallava-era, historically important temple of Shiva, it is one of those ancient monuments. The Dravidian architecture is witnessable, built sometime in 700 CE by the king Narasimhavarman II, who ruled the kingdom. The temple is said to have been further built by the kings later. A square-plan for the temple and conceptual thinking that went into the plan is lauded as exceptionally great. The themes such as 'Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Shakthism and the Vedic deities' are relatable to the divine exhibits.

(Ref. No.09)

Iravaattheswarar Temple

Iravaattheswarar Temple, the abode of Lord Shiva is in the Kancheerum City. The Deity here is Mrithyunjeswarar, Irava Sthanathu Iraivan or Iravaattheswarar. It is one of the 108 Shiva kshetras, as per Puranas. This temple is built by the then Pallava Emperor Rajasimha Pallava (700 – 729 CE) following the popular architectural style of that period. As per Puraanaas the sages did penance here of severe nature for immortality and the Lord Shiva appearing before them asked them to visit Kanchi. The Sages thus visited Kancheepuram to install the Shiva Lingam. Markandeya is said to have installed Shiva Linga here

(Ref. No.10)



Piravatheeswarar Remple



Piravatheeswarar Temple in Kancheepuram is the abode of Lord Shiva. The presiding deity is Piravatheeswarar. The temple is one of the 108 Shiva temples in Kancheepuram. Lord Shiva here is called Piravatheeswarar. Pirava means no rebirth in Tamil language. Raja Simha Pallava (700 – 729 CE) built the temple.

(Ref. No.11)

Mukteswara Temple

Mukteswara Temple is said to have been built by the King **Nandivarma Pallava II** in the **8th century CE**. This temple now remains as it was first built with no attempts of change. People believe that the temple is the replica of the temple Matangeswar (Kanchi), but it is not so, as some say. There are differences though some resemblances, no doubt, exist. There are, it is said, differences in the way the sculptures are made out and the location of that of Dwarapalakas and certain other features in the architecture. Nevertheless, both the temples are admirable in their respective architectures.

This west-facing temple has a mukha mandapam with three tiered Vimana. The temple is built on a platform which is raised. The sanctum here is the abode for Shiva Linga known as Mukteswara. There is no Flag-staff and no entrance Gopura in this temple.

(Ref. No.12)



Jvarahareswara temple

The Jvarahareswara temple) is constructed by Pallava King Narasimhavarman II (Rajasimhan) (Yr. 690–725 CE) - 8th century CE, with the later temple works by the Cholas. It is also opined that the temple was built during the reign of Chola Kind - Kulottunga III (1178–1218 CE).



Shiva seemed to have appeared as Jurahareswarar at this very place owing to the prayers of the Devas. They prayed and worshipped Shiva and are said to have been purified by the waters of Jurahara Theertham. With the grace of Lord Shiva, the devas won over the demon king

(Ref. No.13)

Pandava Thootha Perumal

Pandavatutar Perumal Temple also called Thirupadagam is dedicated to the Lord Krishna, the Poorna Avatar God incarnation of the Lord Vishnu. The temple is praised and sung in the Nalayira Divya Prabandham, by the Alvar saints 6th–9th centuries CE. It is one among the 108 Divya Desams. The Pandava dhootar Perumal (Krishna) and his consort Sri Maha Lakshmi (Rukmini devi.)

The temple is an age old one in Kancheepuram; The other old temple is Ulagalantha Perumal Temple. Built in the 8th Century; the temple is said to have been constructed by the Pallavas in the 8th century CE. The four-tiered Rajagopuram and the temple's gateway tower are the grand structures.

(Ref. No.14)



Yathothkari Perumal Temple

Yathothkari Temple is also called Thiruvekka temple or Sri Sonna vannam seitha perumal. According to the story behind the temple Goddess Saraswati and Goddess Lakshmi got into a row over who holds the greatest merit.

To settle the issue between them, they approached Lord Indra., who decided go to in favour of Goddess Laskhmi; not satisfied with the decision Goddess Saraswathi met her Lord Brahma and asked for the decision. Lord Brahma also opined in favour of Goddess Lakshmi for her greater merit. Goddess Saraswathi was angry over the decision. In the meanwhile Lord Brahma got into doing Aswamedhayaga for the favour of a meeting with Lord Vishnu. Since Goddess Saraswathi was angry and did not join the yaga, Lord Brahma started performing the Aswamedhayaga without the presence of Goddess Saraswathi. Angered further the Goddess, it is said, tried to disrupt the Yaga by drowning the whole Yaga taking the form of river Vegavathi. Averting the disaster, Lord Vishnu, with Ashta Bhuja took the form of Sri Yatotkari and gave darshan reposing on the serpent couch (Bhujanga Sayana) stopping the Vegavathi river. At the end Goddess Sarasvathi joins back Lord Brahma.

(Ref. No.15)



Ulagalandha Perumal Temple

Ulagalandha Perumal Temple is the abode of Lord Vishnu. The Lord receives immense glorifications and stotras in the Naalayira Divya Prabandham. A Divya desam (one in 108 temples) where Lord Vishnu is worshipped as the Avatara -Ulagalantha Perumal, and His consort Goddess Lakshmi is named as Amuthavalli. The temple was built by the Pallavas, with the later additions and contributions done by the Cholas, Vijayanagara kings, and the Madurai Nayaks. The temple is located at Big Kanchipuram and is considered a very important Kshetra.

(Ref. No.16)



Sites of Lord Buddha & the carvings

Sites of Lord Buddha & the carvings are there to witness here. The images of Buddha, Bodhisattvas and Buddhist Yogis are carved and chiseled on the pillars of Kachapeshwarar Temple in Kancheepuram. These sites are the glorious evidences of Buddhist religion and the places of importance connected to Buddhism.

(Ref. No.17)



Jain cosmology

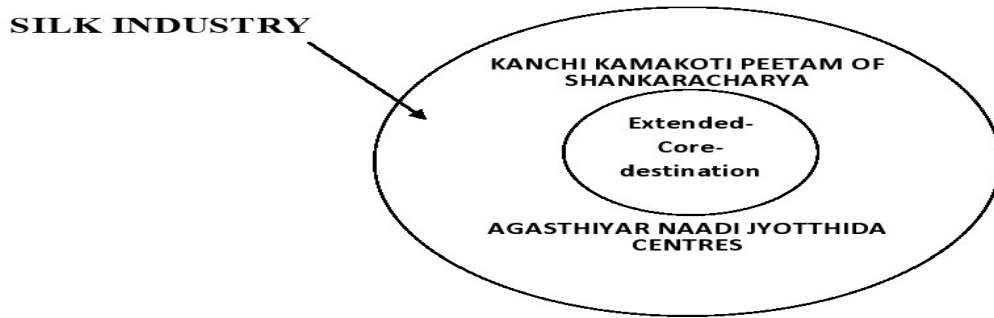
Panel depicting the unique iconic symbol which represents the core philosophy connected to the three lokas in the Jain religious cosmology. The base triangle represents the lower most world and is often said to be the seven layers of hell. The middle band area at the centre is supposed to be the middle world, which is meant to be the earth where humanity lives. The top areas are those of Devas and the other deities. The most significant in the cosmology is the exalted state of the liberated souls. The Siddhas and the other deities are those freed from the endless cycle of births.

(Ref. No.18)

Core-destination & beyond in the destination Profile of Kancheepuram

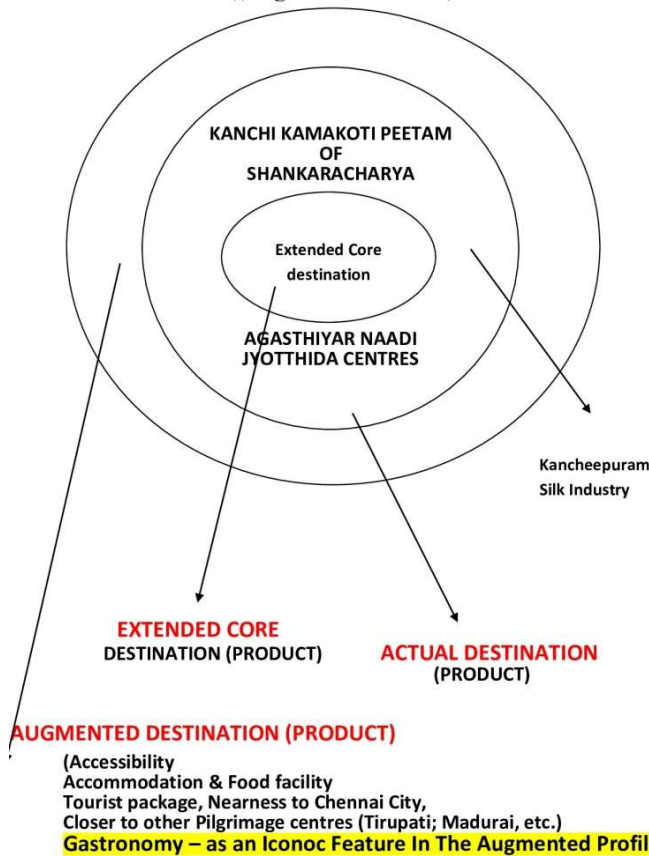
Beyond the Core-destination profile, as shown in detail above, the below given illustration to highlight the Actual product features add to the features, much more, making the destination Kancheepuram much greater. The Actual (product) destination, over all, makes Kancheepuram a highly featured destination

ACTUAL DESTINATION PROFILE (Actual Product)



As is known the Actual destination (Product) is a combination of Core destination (product) + the other added features which enhance the destination (product) - directly being a part of the destination.

AUGMENTED DESTINATION PROFILE ((Augmented Product)



The augmented destination features makes in the case of Kancheepuram, the final destination profile, which has all that a popular destination should have. Kancheepuram with its heritage status is a close satellite town of the metropolitan city CHENNAI. Chennai city therefore serves as a chosen place of stay for the Tourists from other states, though a few (mostly within the state of Tamil Nadu) decide to stay at Kancheepuram too. Further since

Chennai is also a connecting place for Tirupathi, as a popular pilgrimage city, the infra-structure for stay did not arise much in Kancheepuram. But considering the huge number of places of visit and to serve the staying needs of tourists, Kancheepuram has its accommodation facility meeting the needs of the tourists.

Gastronomy & Kancheepuram cuisine facts -

Kancheepuram has its specialities in the area of foods - prepared and consumed. Popular pilgrimage centres add to the varied preparations of the foods in general, like Palani Panchamrutham; Tirupathi Laddu; Sarkarai Pongal of Parthasarathy temple, Chennai; etc., and that way Kancheepuram has its own foods and recipes

Kanchipuram Idli- spiced with ginger in fresh and dried forms, pepper, cumin, kariveppelai (curry leaves), cashew nuts, and tempered in gingelly oil (nallennai/sesame oil). The preparation and taste is totally different from a regular idli. These Idlis are traditionally made in Mandharai leaves, which act as an encasing and the bamboo act as mould to it. These Idlis are made in huge size (1.5 foot tall) traditionally in temples.



Ref. No.19

Lentil stuffed snake gourds –is originated from Kanchiupram during Pallava period. It is snake gourd which is stuffed with specially prepared mixture made out of lentils, coconut chutney and the vegetables available in the particular season. Potatoes were chosen to be a part of the mixture which became later addition. Hence, the stuffed snake gourd or the so called podalangai adachudu has been one of the most authentic foods of Kancheepuram not much known outside. The snake gourd is known for the medicinal properties it has.



Thuni Thenkuzhal – Thuni Thenkol is a known vaishnava / iyengar sweet. It is a highly flavorful and also crispy as a snack. This got originated from kanchipuram which is mainly made out of raw rice and urad dhal. Using a square cloth to house the dough, it is deep fried in oil. This delicacy is mainly made on special occasions, in madapalli in the temples as a Prasadam to be presented to the temple gods which later are distributed to the visitors.

(Ref. No.20)



Augmented destination profile

The Augmented destination as illustrated above is well covered with the needed features suitable to Tourism products in general - such as Accessibility, Accommodation & Food facility, Tourist package, Nearness to Chennai City, Closer to other Pilgrimage centres (Tirupati, Madurai, etc). Gastronomical special feature and the Kancheepuram cuisine varieties add to the features of augmented nature to enhance the pleasant experience of the tourists

Total Destination (Product) Profile

Thus a closer observation of the whole destination (product) profile of Kancheepuram reveals that the Core-destination features load heavily not only in number but also by quality with places which are significant historically, culturally,

spiritually with architecture and religious connotations.

The preference for Kancheepuram as a tourist destination therefore will be spontaneous for the tourists, when a decision for touring South India is planned with the objective to visit a popular destinations significant historically, culturally, spiritually with architecture and religious connotations. The destination which has many features of high magnitude in quality becomes often the choice inclusion. The richness in the destination is the primary reason for it to assume the level that the Kancheepuram enjoys.

**KANCHEEPURAM – THE HERITAGE DESTINATION
EXTENDED CORE-DSTINATION & RICH IN FEATURES & VALUES**

Destination Profile segment	Features & attractions
EXTENDED CORE DESTINATION OF KANCHEEPURAM	Primary Level Shakti Peetam (Sri Kamakshi Amman temple) Shiva Kanchi (Ekambareswarar temple) Vishnu Kanchi (Varadaraja Perumal) Buddha Kanchi Vishnu Kanchi Second Level Kaila sanathar ; Iravathanesvara ; Piravatnesvara; Muketswara; Jvaraharesvara; Pandava Dootha Perumal; Yathothkari Perumal; Ulagalanda Perumal; BudhStupas - Trailokyanathar tecmple; Jain inscriptions
ACTUAL PRODUCT	KANCHI KAMAKOTI SHANKARACHARYA PEETAM RENOWNED AGASTHIAR NAADI JYOTHIDAM WORLD FAMOUS SILK INDUSTRY
AUGMENTED PRODUCT	Accessibility, Accommodation & Food Facility, Tourist Package, Nearness To Chennai City, Closer To Other Pilgrimage Centres (Tirupati, Madurai, Etc).

CONCLUSION

The paper deals in detail about all aspects of the Toruist destination profile of Kancheepuram – the highly popular heritage location for tourists. The objective of the paper is to highlight on the aspects of core-destination features of Kancheepuram, which is multi-layered and highly extended having a number of places of high importance and value, which together make the Core-destination profile features of Kancheepuram rich & valuable. It is this fact of richness of Core-destination profile of Kancheepuram, which creates greater preference for the tourists to keep Kancheepuram in the list of important places of visit among others in the state. Going by the micro details about the Core-destination features of Kancheepuram, one could get a grasp of tourists’ decision process in general, in finalizing the list of locations to be visited. Though the preference list for places of visit is finalized based on the total destination profile, the Core-destination-profile and its richness in terms of importance and value determines the choice of the tourists to include in the list of places of visit. Core-destination thus plays a major role and reason for the place of visit (tourist destination) to get the preference that it deserves. And it can be observed clearly that greater the value of Core-destination features, greater and better will be the Tourists preference for a destination.

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