

A Study On Satisfaction Of Tourists Visiting Tourist Destinations In Trivandrum District

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ABSTRACT

Tourism appears to be an economic activity of vital importance for national development and an important medium of cultural exchange across the nations. It has come to be accepted as a 'potent' tool of social integration (Reddy, 1996). Tourism offers multiple avenues for various socio-cultural developments, environmental conservations, and maintenance. This helps to improve national integration by community living and cultural exchange. Along with many mainstream services tourism is also identified as a major source of income for the country. A developing country like India should make all efforts to boost tourism and the capital-less industry. Any tourist visiting a spot will think of the experiences he will come across during the visit. A foreign tourist makes huge commitment of funds while visiting destinations in India. Trivandrum, the capital city of Kerala receives the good number of tourist every year. However, it is important to ensure that the tourist returns to their home country satisfied. Study unfolds that beaches, pilgrim centres, art gallery, palace, and waterfalls are the attractions in Trivandrum that rise up to the expectations. With regard to beaches, art gallery and Palace, the experience of foreign tourists is significantly higher than the expectation. Study shows that the experience of foreign tourists with regard to accessibility is significantly lower than their expectation and the tourists are not satisfied. However, with regard to amenities tourists are satisfied. In order to attract tourists internationally all the three A's of tourism namely attractions, accessibility, and amenities must be able to rise up to the exactions of the tourist. With regard to Trivandrum, more focus needs to be given in the area of attractions and accessibility to tourist spots.

Keywords : (Tourism – three A's of tourism – tourist satisfaction – economic development)

INTRODUCTION

Growth and income of any nation is measured in terms of products and services. Along with many mainstream services tourism is also identified as a major source of income for the country. A developing country like India should make all efforts to boost tourism and the capital-less industry. The country needs to do maintenance; renovation and beautification work at tourist spots along with basic amenities for grabbing visitors internationally.

Regarding any product or service customer Satisfaction is ultimate. This is because only a satisfied customer tries the product or service twice and recommends it to others. So is the case of tourist satisfaction. Any tourist visiting a spot will think of the experiences he will come across during the visit. A foreign tourist makes huge commitment of funds while visiting destinations in India. Kerala, the gods on the country also receives huge number of foreign tourists every year. However, there is no official mechanism to identify how many of the tourist visiting India returns satisfied.

In order to find out satisfaction of tourist two factors are important. They are expectations and the true experience. Prior to visiting any destination a tourist will have a certain amount of expectation. It is true that the quantum and strength of such expectation is the driving force behind any visit. Hence expectation of a tourist plays a vital role in itinerary selection. Such expectation is a compound function of his social interaction, experience sharing, social media and personal beliefs.

Experience of tourists is a determining factor in selecting a tourist destination. It acts as a catalyst in choosing itinerary of any destination. A tourist gains a variety of experiences upon visiting a place. These experiences are acquired while interacting with the people and environment. At times the experiences can be mind-blowing or poor. A happy experience is conducive to growth while a sad experience is detrimental.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To identify the most visited tourist destination in Trivandrum district.
- 2) To study the expectations of foreign tourists regarding the attractions, accessibility, and amenities in Trivandrum district.
- 3) To study the experience of foreign tourists regarding the attractions, accessibility, and amenities in Trivandrum district.
- 4) To analyze the satisfaction of foreign tourists regarding the attractions, accessibility and amenities in Trivandrum district.

METHODOLOGY

The article is analytical in nature as it employs statistical methods to identify the gap existing between the expectation and experience of foreign tourists with regard to attractions accessibility and amenities. The entire study is based on primary data collected from tourists visiting Trivandrum

The foreign tourist visiting Trivandrum is the sample unit considered and the sample size is fixed 130. Samples are taken from each tourist destination by using the convenience sampling method. Nevertheless, sample selection is done purely by chance from the entire tourist available at the destination and hence not affected by personal prejudice of the researcher. On reaching the tourist spot visitor come in contact with attractions and its surroundings. However prior to visiting any destination tourists will have some sort of expectations regarding the magnitude of attractions they plan to visit. In fact such expectations are the driving force for the visitors. It is his expectation regarding the destination makes him travel. This expectation is a function of different factors like friend's influence, advertisement, knowledge level, perception, and ultimately their attitude.

After reaching a particular destination tourists go through the attractions present. This time they feel the imagined things physically. That is through experience. What tourist experience at the destination matters a lot as it ultimately influences his visiting the same location again? Moreover, he will share his experience with his friends and relatives. Many tourists are likely to be influenced by the words of a tourist who already visited a spot before.

The article attempts to identify and analyze the expectations and experience of foreign tourists visiting Trivandrum district. The three A's of tourism i.e. attractions, accessibility and amenities are the variables considered for the study to measure tourist satisfaction. Once the expectation and experience is analysed gap between these two is unearthed to find out the satisfaction of tourist. Holsat Model which is a widely accepted tool in finding tourist satisfaction is employed in the study.

Percentage analysis and t-test are the major statistical tools applied in this chapter for the purpose of analysis.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

With regard to the economy of India Foreign exchange earnings matter a lot. One of the prominent ways to improve foreign exchange is revenue from foreign tourists. Even before the visit of a foreign tourist revenue starts flowing into the country through visa fee. Once tourist reaches, India all his spending forms part of our foreign exchange. Trivandrum, the capital city of Kerala receives good number of tourists every year. However, it is important to ensure that the tourist returns to their home country satisfied. Even though many

studies are conducted in the area of tourism no study has been made to analyse the satisfaction of foreign tourists visiting Trivandrum district. Hence the present study “A study on satisfaction of tourist visiting tourist destinations in Trivandrum district” is significant.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN TRIVANDRUM

The tourist attractions considered in the case of foreign tourists are taken in the case of foreign tourists also. Table 1 shows the different tourist attractions in Trivandrum selected for the study and the number of foreign tourists visited.

TABLE NO.1
ATTRACTION WISE FOREIGN TOURIST FREQUENCY

Location	Frequency	Percentage
Beaches	112	86
Wild life sanctuary	61	46
Hill stations	52	40
Pilgrim centres	97	75
Zoo	74	56
Art gallery	69	53
Palace	86	66
Waterfalls	81	62

Source: Primary data

It is seen from the table 1 that of the total 130 foreign tourists, 86 percent visited beaches, 75 percent visited pilgrim centres and 66 percent visited palace. Hill stations were the least visited destination in Trivandrum district that marked with 40 percent of the visitors. Hence it is obvious that of the tourist attractions in Trivandrum, beaches are the most preferred and hill stations is the least preferred amongst the foreign tourists.

EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF FOREIGN TOURISTS WITH REGARD TO VARIOUS ATTRACTIONS

The expectations and experiences of the foreign tourists regarding tourist attractions in Trivandrum is collected by administering questionnaire. The questionnaire contains questions on a five-point Likert scale ranging from ‘1- highly unfavourable’ to ‘5- highly favourable’ to measure the important variables of the study. further, mean expectation and mean experience value is calculated for each attraction. Thus in the case of each tourist attraction, there is a mean expectation value and mean experience value for making the comparison. Afterwards, the mean expectation and experience of the foreign tourists regarding the tourist attractions in Trivandrum are subjected to comparison. Statistical tool t-test is used for making expectation and experience comparison

TABLE NO.2
EXPECTATION AND EXPERIENCE OF FOREIGN TOURISTS REGARDING TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Location	N	Before		After		t-value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Beaches	112	3.51	0.52	4.02	0.92	4.28*
Wildlife sanctuary	61	3.98	0.00	3.67	0.82	1.00
Hill stations	52	4.26	0.53	3.74	0.79	-4.19*
Pilgrim centres	97	3.80	0.64	4.08	1.12	1.10
Zoo	74	3.88	0.67	3.62	1.03	-1.57
Art gallery	69	3.91	0.53	4.28	0.91	2.24*

Palace	86	3.61	0.42	4.12	0.71	3.92*
Waterfalls	81	3.91	0.84	4.08	1.16	0.77

Source: Primary data

Table 2 reveals the mean experience scores of beaches (4.28), art gallery (2.24) Palace (3.92) are higher than the mean expectation value. The calculated t-values of these tourist attractions are 4.28, 2.24 and 3.92 respectively. Since the calculated t-values are greater than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 level, there exists a significant difference between the expectations and experience of foreign tourists regarding these attractions. The experience of foreign tourists with regard to beaches, art gallery and Palace is significantly higher than their expectations. The average experience value of

hill stations (3.74), is lower than their average expectation value. Since the calculated t-value (- 4.19) is greater than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 level, there exists a significant difference between the expectation and experience of foreign tourists regarding hill stations. The experience of foreign tourist with regard to hill stations is significantly lower than their expectations.

The calculated t-value in case of wildlife sanctuary (1), pilgrim centres (1.10), zoo (-1.57) and waterfalls (0.77) are less than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence there is no significant difference between the expectations and experience of foreign tourists with regard to wildlife sanctuary, pilgrim centres, zoo and waterfalls.

ACCESSIBILITY

TABLE 3

EXPECTATION AND EXPERIENCE OF FOREIGN TOURIST- ACCESSIBILITY

Facilities	N	Expectation		Experience		t- value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Road connectivity to alldestinations	130	3.24	0.51	3.60	0.62	-6.50
Availability of Publictransport services in Malabar	130	3.18	0.62	3.53	0.69	-4.32
Proximity of destinationsto railway stations	130	4.19	0.65	3.49	0.85	8.92
Proximity of Airport toMajor destinations	130	4.04	0.62	2.89	0.98	12.03

(Source: Primary data)

Table 3 discloses that with regard to the connectivity, public transport and proximity of railway stations, the proximity of Airport calculated t- t-values are -6.50, -4.32, 8.92 and 12.03 respectively. As the t-values in respect of these facilities are higher than 1.96 there is significant difference between the mean expectation and experience score of foreign tourists regarding these facilities. The mean experience score of foreign tourists with regard to Road connectivity to all destinations and availability of Public transport is significantly higher than their expectations. With regard to proximity of railway station and proximity of airport the average experience score is significantly less than their expectation score.

TABLE 4

OVERALL EXPECTATION AND EXPERIENCE OF FOREIGN TOURIST- ACCESSIBILITY

	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Expectation	130	18.13	2.02		

Experience	130	16.02	2.11	14.67	0.000
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(Source: Primary data)

It is evident from the table 4 that with regard to accessibility, the mean expectation score by the foreign tourist is 18.13 with a standard deviation of 2.02 and the average score of their experience is 16.02 with a standard deviation 2.11. Paired sample t-test shows that the calculated t-value (14.67) is greater than table value (1.96) at .05 level of significance, so there exist a significant difference between expectation and experience of foreign tourists regarding accessibility. The experience of foreign tourists with regard to accessibility is significantly lower than their expectations.

AMENITIES

TABLE 5

EXPECTATION AND EXPERIENCE OF FOREIGN TOURIST- AMENITIES

Components	N	Expectation		Experience		t-value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Various tourism activities in destinations	130	2.55	.53	3.72	.97	15.31*
Adequacy of toilets and washroom at destinations	130	3.91	.70	2.43	.94	20.22*
Convenience of shopping	130	2.72	.59	3.03	.94	4.99*

(Source: Primary data)

Table 5 shows that the mean experience score of the foreign tourists regarding amenities, viz., various tourism activities in destinations (3.72) and convenience of shopping (3.03) are higher than the mean expectation they had in mind prior to visiting the location. There exists a significant difference between the expectation and experience of the foreign tourists regarding these elements as the calculated t-values of these facilities are greater than the table value (1.96) at .05 level of significance. However, regarding the adequacy of toilets and washroom room mean experience value (2.43) is significantly lower than the mean expectation value.

TABLE 6

OVERALL EXPECTATION AND EXPERIENCE OF FOREIGN TOURIST- AMENITIES

Period	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Expectation	130	8.17	1.23	20.11*	0.000
Experience	130	10.05	1.37		

(Source: Primary data)

* Significant at 0.05 level

It is clear from table 6 that foreign tourists' mean expectation score with regard to amenities is 8.17 with a standard deviation of 1.23 and of the experience score is 10.05 with standard deviation 1.37. Paired sample t-test shows that the calculated t-value (20.11) is greater than the table value (1.96) at .05 level of significance. There exist a significant difference between expectations and experience of foreign tourists in respect of amenities. The experience of foreign tourist with regard to amenities is significantly higher than their expectation.

FINDINGS

1. Survey makes it clear that 86 % of foreign tourists makes the beaches as the most favourite destination in Trivandrum district. Least percent (40%) of foreign tourist visits hill stations.
2. The experience of foreign tourists with regard to beaches, art gallery and Palace is significantly higher than their expectation.
3. With regard to Beaches, Pilgrim centres, Art gallery, Palace and Waterfalls in Trivandrum district foreign tourists are satisfied.
4. The experience of foreign tourists with regard to accessibility is significantly lower than their expectation. With regard to accessibility foreign tourist are not satisfied
5. The experience of foreign tourist with regard to amenities is significantly higher than their expectation. Hence in respect of amenities foreign tourists are satisfied.

CONCLUSION

Identifying and analysing the expectations and experience of foreign tourists helps to figure out the tourist attraction and facilities in Trivandrum which are capable to meet the expectations set in their mind. Study unfolds that beaches, pilgrim centres , art gallery, palace and waterfalls are the attractions in Trivandrum that rise up to the expectations. With regard to beaches, art gallery and Palace, the experience of the foreign tourists is significantly higher than the expectation. Study shows that the experience of foreign tourists with regard to accessibility is significantly lower than their expectation and the tourist are not satisfied. However with regard to amenities tourists are satisfied. In order to attract tourist internationally all the three A's , namely attractions, accessibility and amenities must be able to rise up to the exactions of the tourist. With regard to Trivandrum more focus needs to be given in the area of attractions and accessibility to tourists spots.

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