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PILGRIM UTILISATION OF SACRD SERVICES PROVIDED BY TTD - A STUDY

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Abstract

Service marketing in TTD is left unobserved by the researchers, government and temple administrators and policy makers. As this field has not been given enough attention, it warrants a deeper study so as to capture its nature, size, operational and economic characteristics, product lines offered, marketing practices, prospects of future growth and customers' perceptions in Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. The term service is not limited to personal services like medical services, beauty parlours, legal services etc. According to the marketing experts and management thinkers the concept of services is a wider one. The term service is defined in a number of ways but not a single one is universally accepted. TTD – provided pilgrim services evaluated in the present study include bus services between Tirupati and Tirumala, amenities along the walk way to pedestrians, kalyana katta, free darshan, arjitha sevas and special darshan, laddu prasadam, and other miscellaneous services. Attributes of different TTD – provided services considered in the current study include waiting time and speed of delivery, employee behaviour, procedures, physical characteristics, expertise, convenience, price, and information dissemination,

Key Words: Humankind, Pilgrim, Service Producers, Customers' Perceptions

INTRODUCTION

The pattern of sectoral share of employment has changed over the last two decades with the share of agriculture falling from 64.75 percent in 1993-94 to 53.2 percent in 2009-10 and of industries (excluding construction) falling from 12.43 percent to 11.9 percent. The shares of the services and construction sectors in employment, on the other hand, increased in the same period from 19.70 percent to 25.30 percent and 3.12 percent to 9.60 percent respectively. As per the National Sample Survey Office's (NSSO) report on Employment and Unemployment situation in India 2009-10, on the basis of usually working persons in the principal and subsidiary statuses, for every 1000 people employed in rural India, 679 people are employed in the agriculture sector, 241 in the services sector (including construction), and 80 in the industrial sector. In urban India, 75 people are employed in the agriculture sector, 683 in the services sector (including construction) and 242 in the industrial sector. Construction, trade, hotels and restaurants, public administration, education and community services are the three major employment-providing service sectors. 1

The performance of the different services based on the different indicators shows that sectors like telecom, tourism and railways had done well in 2015-16. Shipping and ports show poor performance reflecting the effects of the global slowdown. The performance and outlook for the different services sectors based on limited firm-level data, based on estimates and forecasts show a mixed picture for 2015-16 year, though there are some grounds for optimism in the coming year. The important commercial services for India based on their significance in terms of GDP, employment, exports and future prospects have been dealt with in detail in this section.2

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this paper is Pilgrim Utilisation of Sacred Services Provided by TTD – A study.

METHODOLOGY

SAMPLING DESIGN AND SELECTION OF SAMPLING UNITS



In the present research study, the selection of sample pilgrims has been made by using “Simple Random Sampling without Replacement Technique”. The sample number of pilgrims has been determined by using the General Formula.

$$n = t^2 \cdot p(1-p) / m^2$$

Where n = required sample

t = Table value of t-test statistic at 1% level of significance (2.58)

p = Response from the pilgrims visited at Tirumala in the pilot survey (Assumed as 1%)

m = Margin error at 1% (0.01)

By considering $m = 0.01$, $p = 0.01$ and $t = 2.58$ the sample size is given by

$$n = (2.58)^2 (0.01) (1-0.01) / (0.01)^2 = 659$$

For the field survey, due to design effect (D) of 2%, the sample size has been multiplied by 2 which results the sample size (n) as

$$n \times D = 659 \times 2 = 1318$$

The sample size has been further increased by 5 % due to certain contingencies such as non-response and recording error.

Now, the actual size of sample has been determined as

$$\begin{aligned} n^* &= n + (5\% \text{ of } n) \\ &= 1318 + (1318 \times 0.05) \\ &= 1384 \end{aligned}$$

i.e. Actual size sample size (n)* = 1384

Therefore, the sample size for the present study is 1384 pilgrim customers in Tirumala temple. The sample distribution of TTD pilgrim customers is presented in the following table.1.

TABLE-1

SERVICE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF PILGRIM CUSTOMERS IN TIRUMALA DURING JANUARY 2018 TO DECEMBER 2018

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------|----------|-------|-----|-----|
| 1 | Transport | 2721600 | 7456 | 75 | 55 |
| 2 | Accommodation | 178200 | 488 | 5 | 4 |
| 3 | Kalyana Katta | 210200 | 576 | 6 | 4 |
| 4 | Free Darshan | 12600000 | 34520 | 345 | 253 |
| 5 | Arjita Sevas | 12600000 | 34520 | 345 | 253 |
| 6 | Free Meals | 12000000 | 32877 | 329 | 241 |



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| | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|------|------|
| 7 | Laddu Prasadam | 25920000 | 71013 | 710 | 520 |
| 8 | Complaint Handling and Information Distribution | 150000 | 411 | 4 | 3 |
| 9 | Others (Clock Rooms, Locker, Medical Facilities, etc.) | 2550000 | 6986 | 70 | 51 |
| Total | | 68930000 | 188847 | 1889 | 1384 |

Source: From the official records of TTD, Tirupati. (*Rounded off figures)

Source of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was culled out from the TTD records pertaining to pilgrim flows to Tirumala for the past ten years and pilgrims utilization of tonsure, darshan and free meals services provided by TTD. In order to supplement the secondary data, primary data has been collected through sample survey. The necessary data was collected through a scheduled Questionnaire designed for this purpose. In this study the pilgrim customers perceptions of TTD provided services like amenities of free darshan, arijith sevas, laddu prasadam, free meals of TTD services had been studied.

DARSHAN AND ARJIT SEVAS

This section analyses the pilgrim utilization of various types of darshans and Arjit Sevas, mode of booking darshan and sevas. Details of Pilgrim customers who availed darshan and sevas are presented in the table 2.

TABLE 2

PILGRIM CUSTOMERS BY DARSHAN AND ARJIT SEVAS TYPE

| S. No. | Darshan Type | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| A: Free Darshan | | | |
| 1 | Sarva darshan without sudarshan Token | 393 | 28.40 |
| 2 | Sarva darshan with sudarshan token | 101 | 7.29 |
| 3 | Sarva darshan exclusive for pedestrians | 285 | 20.60 |
| 4 | Special darshan for mothers of babies and persons with disabilities | 82 | 5.93 |
| Sub-Total | | 861 | 62.22 |
| B:Special Darshan &Arjitha Sevas | | | |
| 1 | Rs. 300 Darshan | 98 | 7.08 |
| 2 | VIP darshan | 164 | 11.85 |
| 3 | Arjitha sevas | 261 | 18.86 |
| Sub-Total | | 523 | 37.78 |
| Total(A+B) | | 1384 | 100.00 |

Source: Field Survey

Table 2 presents the distribution of pilgrim customers availing darshan and Arjit sevas. Darshans are broadly categorized into two types of free darshan and special darshans and arjitha sevas. It can be seen from the table that 62.22 per cent had free darshan followed by 37.78 per cent having special darshans and arjitha sevas. Paying more attention



to the individual darshan types under each sub category, the following observations can be made, that 28.40, 7.29 and 20.60 per cent of the pilgrim customers had free darshan by having sarvadarshan without sudarshan token, sarva darshan with sudarshan token and as pedestrians respectively. In special and arjitha seva category, 18.86 per cent of the pilgrim customers had darshan by arjitha sevas. Details of mode of booking darshan and sevas by pilgrim customers are presented in the table 3

TABLE 3
PILGRIM CUSTOMERS BY MODE OF BOOKING DARSHAN AND SEVAS

| S. No. | Mode of Booking Darshan and Sevas | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1 | On arrival | 259 | 18.71 |
| 2 | Through Internet | 844 | 60.98 |
| 3 | At TTD information centers at their places | 281 | 20.31 |
| Total | | 1384 | 100.00 |

Source: Field Survey

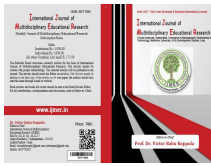
The above table 3 states the modes of booking for darshan and sevas by pilgrim customers. It can be noticed that most of the pilgrim customers, i.e., about 60.98 per cent, booked their darshan and sevas through Internet and about 20.31 per cent at TTD information centers nearby their places of living and 18.71 per cent pilgrim customers booked darshan and sevas on their arrival at Tirupati and Tirumala. Particulars of the Lead time of current visit to Tirumala by pilgrim customers are presented in the table 4

TABLE 4
LEAD TIME OF CURRENT VISIT TO TIRUMALA BY PILGRIM CUSTOMERS

| S. no | Lead time of current visit (No. of Days) | Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1 | Up to 7 | 304 | 21.97 |
| 2 | 8-30 | 242 | 17.49 |
| 3 | 31-60 | 491 | 35.48 |
| 4 | More than 60 | 347 | 25.06 |
| Total | | 1384 | 100.00 |

Source: Field Survey

The table 4 presents the distribution of pilgrim customers by the lead time of current visit to Tirumala. 35.48 per cent of the pilgrim customers had 31-60 days planning in advance of the current visit, and 25.06 per cent of the pilgrim customers had a lead time of above a month in advance planning of the current visit. Details of Lead time of the trip of pilgrim customers to Tirumala and mode of booking darshan and tickets are presented in the table 5



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TABLE 5

**LEAD TIME OF THE TRIP OF PILGRIM CUSTOMERS TO TIRUMALA AND MODE OF BOOKING
 DARSHAN AND SEVA TICKETS**

| S. No | Lead time (in days) | Mode of booking Darshan | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | On Arrival | Through Internet | At TTD information centers | Total |
| 1 | Up to 7 | 40 (13.16) | 200 (65.79) | 64 (21.05) | 304 (100.00) |
| 2 | 8 to 30 | 65 (26.86) | 121 (50.00) | 56 (23.14) | 242 (100.00) |
| 3 | 31 to 60 | 76 (15.48) | 361 (73.52) | 54 (11.00) | 491 (100.00) |
| 4 | More than 60 | 78 (22.48) | 162 (46.69) | 107 (30.83) | 347 (100.00) |
| Total | | 259 (18.71) | 844 (60.98) | 281 (20.31) | 1384 (100.00) |

Source: Field Survey

The table 5 depicts the details of the lead time of the trip of pilgrim customers to Tirumala and mode of booking darshan and seva tickets. It can be seen that as lead time of travel increases, the percentage of pilgrim customers booking darshan and seva tickets decreases. Regarding the details, 13.16, 26.86, 15.48 and 22.48 per cent of the pilgrim customers whose lead time of the trip was up to 7 days, 8-30 days, 31-60 days and more than 60 days respectively booked their darshan tickets on arrival at Tirumala and Tirupati. It can be observed that as the lead trip time of increased, the promotion of pilgrim customers booking darshan and seva tickets in advance also increased. It can be observed that 21.05, 23.14, 11.00 and 30.83 per cent of the pilgrim customers booked darshan and seva tickets with a lead time of up to 7 days, 8-30 days, 31-60 days and more than 60 days respectively at TTD information centers. Details of States of origin of pilgrim customers and modes of booking darshan and sevas tickets are presented in the table 6.



TABLE 6

STATES OF ORIGIN OF PILGRIM CUSTOMERS AND MODE OF BOOKING DARSHAN AND SEVA TICKETS

| S. No | State of origin of pilgrim customers | Mode of booking Darshan and sevas | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | On Arrival | Through Internet | At TTD information centers | Total |
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 132 (31.96) | 161 (38.98) | 120 (29.06) | 413 (100.00) |
| 2 | Other southern states | 76 (10.61) | 559 (78.07) | 81 (11.32) | 716 (100.00) |
| 3 | State other than south | 51 (20.00) | 124 (48.63) | 80 (31.37) | 255 (100.00) |
| Total | | 259 (18.71) | 844 (60.98) | 281 (20.31) | 1384 (100.00) |

Source: Field Survey

The table 6 depicts the details of States of origin of pilgrim customers and their mode of booking darshan and seva tickets.

It can be observed from the table that 31.96 per cent of pilgrim customers' origination was Andhra Pradesh and they booked darshan and seva tickets after their arrival and 29.06 per cent of pilgrim customers booked their darshan and seva tickets at TTD information centers. The percentage of pilgrim customers booking darshan, seva tickets on arrival was 10.61 per cent amongst pilgrim customers from other southern states and 20.00 per cent amongst those from state other than south. The percentages of pilgrim customers who booked darshan and seva tickets at TTD information centers were 11.32 and 31.37 per cent amongst pilgrim customers from other southern states and states other than south respectively.

Details of modes of help sought by the Pilgrim customers in booking for darshan are shown in table 7.

TABLE 7

PILGRIMS CUSTOMERS' MODE OF HELP SOUGHT IN BOOKING DARSHAN AND SEVA TICKETS

| S. No | Sought in Booking Darshan | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Self Help | 1286 | 92.91 |
| 2 | Influential local person | 98 | 7.09 |
| Total | | 1384 | 100.00 |

Source: Field Survey



The above table 7 presents the distribution of pilgrim customers as per the source of help they sought in booking darshan tickets. It can be seen that most of the pilgrim customers, i.e., 92.21 per cent, booked their darshan tickets without seeking anyone's help and only 7.09 per cent sought the help of influential local persons.

LADDU PRASADAM

This section presents the pilgrim customers utilization of Laddu prasadam service, and the number of Non availors of laddu prasadam. Details of Pilgrim customers as availors and non-availors of laddu prasadam facility are presented in the table 8

TABLE 8
AVAILORS AND NON-AVAILORS OF LADDU PRASADAM AMONG THE PILGRIM CUSTOMERS

| S. No | laddu prasadam | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Availors | 1125 | 81.28 |
| 2 | Non-Availors | 259 | 18.72 |
| Total | | 1384 | 100.00 |

Source: Field Survey

The above table 8 depicts the details of pilgrim customers as availors and non-availors of laddu prasadam. It can be noticed that about 81.28 per cent of pilgrim customers had laddu prasadam, and 18.72 per cent of them had not received laddu prasadam. Even though TTD at present makes the availability of laddu prasadam facility open to all instead of the earlier rule of laddu prasadam for only those having darshan and 18.72 per cent of pilgrim customers that is 259 pilgrim customers did not avail the laddu prasadam as may be for fear of waiting for long time in the queues for laddu prasadam.

KALYANA KATTA

This section presents the pilgrim customers utilization of kalyana katta service, and studies the relationship between availing of tonsure service and purpose of visit of pilgrim customers. Details of Pilgrim customers who availed Kalyana katta facility and the non-availors are presented in the table 9

TABLE 9
PILGRIM CUSTOMERS WHO AVAILED KALYANA KATTA FACILITY AND THE NON-AVAILORS

| S. No. | Kalyana Katta | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Availors | 1125 | 81.28 |
| 2 | Non-Availors | 259 | 18.72 |
| Total | | 1384 | 100.00 |

Source: Field Survey

The table 9 brings out the distribution of pilgrim customers who availed kalyana katta facility at Tirumala. It can be noticed that about 81.28 per cent of pilgrim customers availed kalyana katta facility at Tirumala and 18.72 per cent did not avail. Thus majority of the pilgrim customers availed kalyana katta facility in their visit to Tirumala.



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CONCLUSION

In this paper the pilgrims utilisation of sacred services provided by TTD viz., Darshan and Arjit sevas, mode of booking darshan and sevas, lead time of their visit, laddu prasadam, kalyanakatta services were presented.

Among 1384 sample pilgrim customers 62.22 percent i.e., 861 respondents availed free and 37.78 percent i.e., 523 respondents had special darshans and arjitha sevas. With regard to mode of booking darshan and seva tickets 60.98 percent booked through internet, 18.71 percent on arrival and 20.31 percent at TTD information centres at their places. With regard to lead time to current visit 35.48 percent of sample pilgrims booked before 31 to 60 days.

Among 1384 sample pilgrims 81.28 percent i.e., 1125 pilgrims were availors of laddu prasadam and 18.72 percent i.e., 259 were non-availors as may be for fear of waiting for long time in the queues and also with regard to kalyanakatta among 1384 sample pilgrims 81.28 percent i.e., 1125 were availors and 18.72 percent i.e., 259 pilgrims were non-availors of kalyanakatta services.

Reference

1. World Tourism Organisation in 2016, unwto.org