



“REVENUE STRUCTURE OF PILGRIM CENTERS IN KERALA: AN ANALYSIS”

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Abstract

Pilgrim centers occupy the centre stage in the non-business tourism sector in Kerala. Various pilgrim centers of different religion are there in the state of Kerala which directly or indirectly contribute to the tourism revenue of the state. Unlike other Non-Business tourism entities, Pilgrim centers generate revenue in large scale and thus have become centers of economic importance for the exchequer of various governments all over the world. This paper attempts to have an analysis of the revenue structure of pilgrim centers in the state of Kerala.

Key Words: Pilgrim Centers, Non-Business Tourism Entities.

Introduction

Pilgrim tourism is one of the different dimensions of tourism. It is spread across all over the world irrespective of caste; creed or religion. Having a history as old as the human civilization, pilgrim centers occupy an important place the social life of the people across the world. Though it has attained significance in social life, it has other dimensions too. In view of its large revenue generation capacity, it possesses economic significance also.

Kerala being the center of famous temples, churches, mosques etc attracts large number of devotees throughout the year. The inflow of visitors in large scale leads to the generation of revenue also in large scale for the state government. In this context, this paper attempts to review the revenue structure of pilgrim centers in the state of Kerala.

has become a model for planned tourism development to other Indian states. With the booming tourist arrivals (both domestic and foreign), Kerala Tourism today accounts for a considerable share in the total tourism revenue of the country.

This paper attempts to carry out an extensive review of literature existing in the field of tourism financing with an emphasis on tourism financing in India, especially in the state of Kerala. Since not much literature.

Famous Pilgrim centers in Kerala

Some of the important pilgrim centers in Kerala are :

1. **Sabarimala Sree Dharma Sastha Temple** : Sabarimala Ayyappa Temple is a very famous pilgrim center in the state. It is located in the Pathanamthitta district in Kerala.
2. **Erumeli Sastha Temple**: It is one of the important links in the chain of Sabarimala Pilgrimage. It consists of the Sastha (Lord Ayyappa) temple and the Vavar Mosque. The devotees of Lord Ayyappa during their journey to Sabarimala worship at these two places and continue their journey after this. Thus it symbolically portrays the Hindu-Muslim unity in the Kerala society.
3. **Cheraman Juma Mosque** : Built by Malik Deenar, an Arab propagator of Islam, this mosque is situated at Kodungallur in Kerala. It is a famous muslim pilgrim centers in Kerala
4. **Pandalam Valiyakoyickal Temple**: According to the legend, Ayyappa as a baby was found lying on the banks of the river Pampa, by the Raja of Pandalam. The Raja had no children and the child was considered as a God-given gift. Sree Dharma Sastha of Pandalam Valiyakoyickal Temple is the Dharma Deva to the King of Pandalam.
5. **Guruvayur Temple**: The famous Guruvayur temple in the Thrissur district in Kerala is the abode of Lord Vishnu. Thousands of devotees are visiting this temple daily.
6. **Kulathupuzha Sasta Temple**: It is very ancient temple. It is believed that the temple was constructed by the Raja (King) of Pandalam. Feeding of the fishes in the nearby river is an important custom in the temple.
7. **Achankoil Sastha Temple**: Achankoil Sastha (Arachan) Temple is a sacred place of worship where pilgrims from Kerala and Tamil Nadu come in group by group throughout the year.
8. **Malayattoor Church**: It is one of the most renowned Christian pilgrim centers at Malayattoor in the Ernakulam district of Kerala. This church attracts a large number of devotees from all over the country.
9. **Aryankavu Sasta Temple**: The legend is that the Ayyappa of Aryankavu is similar to that of Sabarimala Sree Dharma Sastha. The only differences between the two are that Sastha was brought up by the Pandi Raja of Madura and not the Raja of Pandalam. There is a beautiful waterfall known as Palaruvi in the dense forest area about two kilometres away from the temple premises.



10. **Attukal Devi Temple:** it is the abode of goddess Durga. The custom of preparing pongala in the temple is a very ancient and famous custom. Lakhs of people across the state visit this temple

Objectives of the study

The study inquires into the different sources of revenue of pilgrim centers in Kerala. It aims to:

1. Identify the various constituents of revenue for the pilgrim centers in the state.
2. Identify the share of various constituents in the revenue of pilgrim centers in the state.

Hypotheses

1. There exists difference in the share of various sources to the total revenue of pilgrim centers in Kerala.
2. Voluntary contributions constitute the major source of revenue for pilgrim centers in the state.

Methodology

The data for this study were collected from various pilgrim center managements. This study is mainly based on secondary data like annual budgets report of various pilgrim centers in Kerala

Literature Review

There is not much literature related to the pilgrim centers available. However, an attempt has been made to review all existing literature covering the pilgrim center in the state of Kerala. This included scholarly research studies, published books, journals, reports of the seminars and workshops, magazines, study reports of various working groups, reports of various agencies involved in the promotion of tourism industry and the official publications of various Governments. These are described below:

1. Bindu K (2015) analyses the various aspects of pilgrim centers with special emphasis on its element as a part of tourism.
2. Dr. Baby M.D (2003) examines the economics of the famous Sabarimala Pilgrimage in Kerala at micro and macro perspectives. He investigates and analyses the effects of pilgrimage on the socio-economic conditions of the households in Erumely Grama Panchayath where the famous Sabarimala Sree Ayyappa Temple is situated. In this connection, he evaluates the attitudes of the local people regarding the various aspects of the pilgrimage.
3. Libison KB & Muraleedharan KP examines the impact of Sabarimala Pilgrimage on the standard of living of people in the Panthalam Locality in Kerala. They identify the micro-economic benefit obtained from Sabarimala Pilgrimage
4. Tourism policy of Kerala (1995) says that "for an appropriate development of tourism, there has to be large scale investment. Investment by the government as well as by the private sector will have to be stepped up. It has a hassle-free and friendly atmosphere that facilitates investment"
5. Vijayanand S (2012) identifies the economic impacts of the pilgrimage tourism. Further, he tries to identify the socio-cultural, economic impacts of the pilgrimage tourism and the Positive impacts, Multiplier effect, Negative impacts etc in pilgrimage tourism. Besides the Economic dimensions of pilgrimage tourism is also analysed by him

Sources of Revenue of Pilgrim Centers

The study identified the different sources of revenue for pilgrim center in the state. They are:

1. Government annual contribution.
2. Money realized from properties.
3. Voluntary contribution/offering/donations.
4. Profit & interest from investment.
5. Other receipts.

Share of Various Sources to the Total Revenue of Pilgrim Centers

The study enquired into the share contributed by various sources as explained above to the total revenue of pilgrim center in Kerala. The collected data are tabulated and presented below in Table-1.



Table-1: Revenue Structure of Pilgrim Centres

Financial year	Govt annual contribution in percentage	Money realised from properties in percentage	Voluntary contribution (Donations/ Offerings) in percentage	Profit and Interest from investment in percentage	Other Receipts in percentage
2003-2004	0.47	1.39	62.87	4.35	30.92
2004-2005	0.52	2.28	58.72	3.06	35.42
2005-2006	1.04	1.64	63.99	1.91	31.42
2006-2007	0.01	1.54	70.82	0	27.63
2007-2008	0.45	1.79	70.83	1.76	25.17
2008-2009	0.03	1.6	65.3	1.7	31.37
2009-2010	0.29	1.81	69.74	3.1	25.06
2010-2011	0.25	1.79	67.99	1.28	28.69
2011-2012	0.21	1.94	74.51	1.06	22.28
2012-2013	0.22	1.86	66.79	2.45	28.68
2013-2014	0.17	1.86	65.75	1.78	30.44
2014-2015	0.19	1.92	66.89	1.24	29.76
2015-2016	0.23	1.84	67.82	1.56	28.55
2016-2017	0.29	1.92	66.54	1.43	29.82
Average Total	0.32	1.81	67.04	1.91	28.94

Source: Budget reports of various pilgrim centers (various years)

From Table-1 it is clear that there is a difference in the share of various sources to the total revenue of pilgrim centers in the state. Thus the hypothesis “There exists difference in the share of various sources to the total revenue of pilgrim centers in Kerala” is accepted.

Further the descriptive statistics in the above table itself reveals that Voluntary contributions provide approximately 67 percent of the total revenue to the pilgrim centers in the state. Thus the Hypothesis “Voluntary contributions constitute the major source of revenue for pilgrim centers in the state ” is accepted.

Conclusion

An analysis of the above reveals the various sources of revenue for the pilgrim centers in the state of Kerala. Further it reveals the share of various sources to the total revenue of pilgrim centers in the state. Considering the importance of tourism in the state, this analysis would help to analyse the reasons for low revenue in terms of various sources where the revenue has been found to comparatively less.

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