



SUPPORTING SERVICES PROVIDED BY A.P. TOURISM- A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

The current study is designed to enquire into the supporting services provided by A.P. Tourism to tourists. The participants were 148 tourists selected through random sampling method in Vijayawada, Rajahmundry and Visakhapatnam. The data have been collected from both the primary and secondary sources. For the primary data researchers have used questionnaire. The study formulated one hypothesis on mode of transport vs. socio-economic variables of the respondents and used ANOVA test to find out the major findings. The study concluded that the respondents' opinion on mode of transport according to their socio-economic variables is found to be in signification as per their F-value, T-value and P-value. Hence, there is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents as per age, gender, education and occupation on the mode of transport.

Key Words: Tourism, Supporting Services, Anantagiri Hill, Borra Caves, Kolleru Lake, Pulicot Lake, Pilgrimage, Accommodation, Food, Transport.

Introduction

Tourism is as rapidly evolving industry that has become increasingly competitive in the global market place. With advancement in communication, efficient transportation linkages, en-route facilities and other basic on-site infrastructure on tourist destinations may compete directly with destinations in other including transportation, lodging and entertainment. It is very difficult to assess the types and rates of innovations in the industry.

The Andhra Pradesh Tourism department has promoted by it as a "Kohi-Noor" of India. It is a domicile for all types of tourisms i.e. Pilgrimage tourism, Heritage tourism, Adventure tourism, Cultural tourism, Educational tourism, Beach tourism, Eco-tourism, Geological tourism, Rural tourism etc., The geological tourism also well developed in Andhra Pradesh state i.e. Borra caves at Visakhapatnam district, actually it was located in Anantagiri hill of Eastern Ghats. The hill stations like Horsley hills, Thalakona waterfalls are also enchanting the tourists. The coastal beaches are well developed in Andhra Pradesh state with a very long coastal line nearly 972 kms, from Ichapuram to Thada. The famous Kolleru and pulicot lakes are located in this belt.

Objectives

1. To enquire into the supporting services provided by the A.P Tourism.
2. To suggest appropriate solutions for promoting and developing tourism in A.P Tourism.

Hypothesis

The categorical variables as age, gender, education and occupation do not affect the opinion of the respondents on the mode of transportation.

Methodology

The study initiated with literature review to conceptualize the services provided by A.P. Tourism in Visakhapatnam and its impact on tourists. On the basis of the review the research gap was identified followed by development of hypothesis which was tested later though empirical data. To conduct this study, primary data were collected through structured questionnaire for tourists. The aspects on which the data collected from the sample respondents on supporting services provided by A.P Tourism include accommodation, food and transport

The study has taken into consideration the respondents belonging to male, female and children. The researcher has selected a total sample of 148 tourist's respondents from Vijayawada, Rajahmundry and Visakhapatnam. Purposive and random sampling techniques have been used for selection of sample tourists. The primary data have been interpreted with the help of simple statistical tools such as percentage, weighted means and ANOVA test.

Review of Literature

Review of literature is divided into three parts A. Accommodation B. Food C. Transport. Review of literature includes both Indian and foreign research studies.



A. Accommodation

Jag Mohan Negi (1984)¹ analyzed the change that had taken place in the construction and management of hotels. According to him the accommodation facility as a tourism infrastructure, is one which leaves a lasting impression on both foreign tourists and domestic tourists.

The study undertaken by S.C Davar and Vlrithen Davar (1990)² highlights the working of the Haryana Tourism Corporation LTD. The study focuses its activities only on the board and lodging services of the Haryana Tourism Corporation.

E. thirumalai Kumarasami (1993)³ focused on the important role of tourism, the boarding and lodging sector in tourism development at Tirunelveli of Tamil Nadu. This study had a focus on the growth and functioning style of boarding and lodging sector with respect to promotion of tourism. It has suggested some measures for the effective functioning of the boarding and lodging sector at Tirunelveli for the development of tourism.

J.E.M. Arputha Moorthy (1994)⁴ placed accommodation as the first and the foremost infrastructure facility to improve the tourist traffic, since the demand for accommodation has become an important function of tourism at Kodaikanal. Hence without an adequate development of hotel accommodation all the places of attraction would not sustain a large number of tourists. This study threw much light on the hotel industry in Kodaikanal, to find out the conditions of the demand and supply of hotel accommodation, season wise and tourist wise and reviewed the problem encouraged by hoteliers and tourists.

Taper R, Font X (2004)⁵ in their report reviews examples of existing tourism supply chain initiatives from different parts of the world and at different points in the supply chain. These initiatives are focused around four main points in the tourism supply chain, accommodation and transport, ground handlers, excursions and activities and food and crafts.

B. Food

Hall and Mitchell, (2006)⁶ opined that in recent years food has gained recognition by governments, business, and academics as an integral part of the tourism product, and as a means of differentiation for destinations. There are many benefits to be had in linking food and tourism for all stakeholders concerned.

Haven-Tang and Jones, (2006)⁷ considered that Local food is a vital element that can help to create a sense of 'place' and heighten destination appeal.

Sims, (2000)⁸ remarked that Local produce adds authenticity to the tourist experience and provides motivation for visitors to come to a location.

Hall and Mitchell, (2006)⁹ points out that tourists may even be tempted to stay longer in one place because of the availability of food products and related activities.

Boyne, Williams, and Hall, (2002)¹⁰ Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis, and Cambourne, (2003)¹¹ Hashimoto and Telfer, (2006)¹² identified increasingly food is used in development initiatives to strengthen tourism destinations and to create linkages of benefit to both the food production industry and the tourism industry.

C. Transport

Cullinane, S. (1997)¹³, Cullinane, S. and Stokes, G. (1998)¹⁴, Steiner & Bristow, (2000)¹⁵, Viewed that transport initiatives are most commonly conceptualised in terms of incentives and disincentives or 'carrots' and 'sticks'.

In the words of Cullinane, (1997)¹⁶, Holding, & Kreutner, (1998)¹⁷, the general consensus is that successful initiatives require a combination of 'carrots' and 'sticks'.

S. Burak, E. Dog˘an, C. Gaziog˘lu, (2004)¹⁸ analyzed the tourist resorts require effective transport links. The explosion of car and coach-based tourism in the 20th Century contributed heavily to the development of extensive road networks throughout the developed world. Tourist resorts are also generally characterised by extensive car-parking facilities, taking yet more land, particularly in coastal areas.

Jameel khadaroo, Boopen Seetahah (2008)¹⁹, points out that a good and attractive transportation system rests to a large extent on quality and availability of transportation infrastructure comprising air services and air port, land transport system and routes and water transport infrastructure as well. In fact the transport system is responsible for connecting tourism origins to tourism destinations and providing transport within the tourism destination.



Primary Data Analysis

In this paper it is proposed to study the supporting services provided by A.P tourism and it is presented in three sections. A. Accommodation B. Food C. Transport.

A. Accommodation

1. Respondent's preference on lodges

Table no. 1 Respondents preference on lodges

Category of lodges preferred	Frequency	Percentage
Luxury	34	23.0
Medium	105	70.9
Economy	8	5.4
Others	1	.7
Total	148	100.0

Respondent's preference on lodges is furnished in table no.1. Vast majority of 70.9 per cent of the total sample preferred medium type of lodges. About 23 per cent of them preferred luxury lodges, 5.4 per cent preferred economy lodges and 0.7 per cent of the respondents preferred other type of lodges. The table concludes that the majority of the respondent's family income is comfortable for that reason they prefer medium type lodges.

2. Attitude towards the mode of accommodation selected

Table no.2 Respondents attitude towards different types of accommodation

Attitude towards different types of accommodation	E	VG	G	A	B
Private lodge	5.4	38.5	52.7	3.4	
Government lodge	9.5	16.2	51.4	22.3	0.7
Youth hostels	16.2	17.6	43.9	20.9	1.4
Paying guest accommodation	14.9	25	39.2	19.6	1.4
House of friends & relatives	9.5	38.5	41.9	8.8	1.4

It is evident from the table no.2 that many respondents attitude towards different types of accommodation is good. Regarding private lodge 52.7 per cent, government lodge 51.4 per cent, youth hostels 43.9 per cent, house of friends and relatives 41.9 per cent and paying guest accommodation 39.2 per cent of the respondents revealed good opinion. Considerable number of respondents also opined very good and average opinion on different accommodation.

3. Mode of booking the accommodation

Table no.3 Mode of booking the accommodation

Mode of booking of the accommodations	Frequency	Per cent
Direct spot booking	12	8.1
Direct mail	31	20.9
Travel agencies	39	26.4
E-mail	21	14.2
Tourist guide	1	.7
Friends & relatives	44	29.7
Total	148	100.0

Table no.3 explains the mode of booking of the accommodation. In the present scenario travel agencies are playing dominating role in booking the tickets and accommodation. As such 26.4 per cent of the total respondents booked their accommodation through travel agents, 29.7 per cent through friends and relatives, 20.9 per cent through direct mails and 14.2 per cent through e-mails. The table concludes that due to the busy schedule of the respondents they are depending on others for booking the accommodation.



4. Facilities expected from the lodges

Table no.4 Respondents perception on facilities expected from the lodges

Mention the facilities expected from lodges	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Weighted Rank
Cable net work	27 (189)	45 (270)	33 (165)	12 (48)	18 (54)	5 (10)	8 (8)	2 (744)
Video games	5 (35)	7 (42)	7 (35)	13 (52)	14 (42)	37 (74)	65 (65)	7 (345)
Internet facilities	72 (504)	19 (114)	23 (115)	8 (32)	14 (42)	5 (10)	7 (7)	1 (824)
Cultural programs	6 (42)	6 (36)	19 (95)	30 (120)	23 (69)	52 (104)	12 (12)	5 (478)
Swimming pool	3 (21)	7 (42)	11 (55)	21 (84)	49 (147)	34 (68)	23 (23)	6 (440)
Night club	8 (56)	19 (144)	27 (135)	52 (208)	21 (63)	14 (28)	7 (7)	4 (611)
Safety locker	26 (182)	48 (288)	27 (135)	14 (56)	8 (24)	4 (8)	21 (21)	3 (714)

The researcher asked the respondents to rank the facilities expected at lodges according to the order of preference. Respondents gave 1st rank to internet facilities, 2nd rank to cable network, 3rd rank to safety locker, 4th rank to night club, 5th rank to cultural programme, 6th rank to swimming pool and 7th rank to video game. (Table no.4)

B. Food

5. Type of food preferred

Table no.5 Type of food preferred by the respondents

Type of food preferred	1	2	3	4	5	6	Weighted Rank
Vegetarian	17 (102)	14 (70)	16 (64)	12 (36)	30 (60)	59 (59)	6 (391)
Non- vegetarian	75 (450)	31 (155)	16 (64)	15 (45)	6 (12)	5 (5)	1 (731)
South Indian	6 (36)	16 (80)	24 (96)	39 (117)	49 (98)	14 (14)	5 (441)
North Indian	10 (60)	9 (45)	30 (120)	62 (186)	22 (44)	15 (15)	3 (470)
Chinese	38 (228)	50 (250)	21 (84)	6 (18)	16 (32)	17 (17)	2 (629)
Continental	2 (12)	28 (140)	41 (164)	14 (42)	25 (50)	38 (38)	4 (446)

Type of food preferred by the respondents is illustrated in table no.5. Respondents gave First rank to non-vegetarian ,second rank to Chinese, third rank to North Indian, fourth rank to continental, fifth rank to South Indian and sixth rank to vegetarian.

6. Quality of food supplied

Table no. 6 Respondent's opinion on quality of food supplied by AP Tourism

Quality of food supplied	Frequency	Per cent
Excellent	13	8.8
Very good	104	70.3
Good	29	19.6
Average	2	1.4
Total	148	100.0

Respondent's opinion on quality of food supplied is presented in table no.6. A vast majority of 70.3 per cent of the total



Respondents revealed that food supplied by the A.P. Tourism is very good and according to their taste. About 19.6 per cent opined good, 8.8 per cent said excellence, and 1.4 per cent told average.

Over all the table concludes that majority of the tourists opined that food offered by the A.P. Tourism is very good and low per cent of them opined to the excellent grade.

7. Providing special dishes according to the place

Table no. 7 providing special dishes according to the place

Opinion	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	135	91.2
No	13	8.8
Total	148	100.0

A whopping majority of 91.2 per cent of the total sample respondents revealed that they are providing with special dishes according to the places. This is also one type of technique used by the A.P. Tourism to attract more and more tourists. (Table no.7)

8. Food provided by A.P. Tourism affected their Health

Table no.8 Respondents opinion on food provided by AP tourism affected their health

Opinion	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	100	67.6
No	48	32.4
Total	148	100.0

A considerable no of respondents 67.6 per cent are affected with the food provided by A.P. Tourism and depicted in table no.8. The remaining 32.4 per cent of them are not affected their health. Cleanliness, hygienic conditions and satisfactory catering should be provided at every place of tourist interest.

9. Causes for Ill Health

Table no.9 Respondents causes for ill health

Causes	1	2	3	4	Weighted Rank
Poor quality of food	12 (48)	35 (105)	35 (70)	18 (18)	3 (241)
In hygienic food	30 (120)	27 (81)	29 (58)	14 (14)	2 (273)
Food poison	13 (52)	13 (39)	18 (36)	56 (56)	4 (183)
Late food	45 (180)	25 (75)	18 (36)	12 (12)	1 (303)

Respondents were asked the causes for ill health and described in table no.9. Respondents gave 1st rank to late food. Late food may lead to indigestion and affect the health. 2nd rank is attributed to the hygienic food, 3rd rank to poor quality of food and 4th rank to food poison.

C. Transport

10. Mode of transport used in Andhra Pradesh

Table no.10 Mode of transport used in Andhra Pradesh

Mode of transport	Frequency	Per cent
Rail	7	4.7
Road	16	10.8
All	125	84.5
Total	148	100.0



Mode of transport used in Andhra Pradesh is shown in table no.10. A vast majority of 84.5 per cent of the total respondents tourists used both rail and road transport. Few respondents used road 10.8 per cent and rail 4.7 per cent. Improvement of the roads surrounding the tourist centers attracted more people to travel by road.

11. Mode of transport used at the tourist places

Table no.11 Mode of transport used at the tourist places

Mode of transport	Frequency	Per cent
Auto rickshaw	2	1.4
Taxi	4	2.7
Tourist Van	1	.7
Tourist Buses	23	15.5
All	118	79.7
Total	148	100.0

The researcher further asked the mode of transport used at the tourist places and furnished in table no.11. A vast majority of 79.7 per cent of the total respondents used all transports like auto rickshaw, taxi, tourist van and tourist buses. Few respondents are using tourist buses 15.5 per cent, taxi 2.7 per cent, auto rickshaw 1.4 and tourist van 0.7 per cent. It may be concluded that the respondents used different types of transport facilities according to their convenient.

12. Reasons for changing mode of transport

Table no.12 Reasons for changing mode of transport

Reasons	Frequency	Per cent
Convenience	29	19.6
Availability	90	60.8
Economy	9	6.1
Safety	20	13.5
Total	148	100.0

About 60.8 per cent of the total respondents felt for the only available transport , 19.6 per cent of them for convenience, safety 13.5 and economy 6.1 per cent.

13. Opinion on mode of transport

Table no. 13 Respondents opinion on mode of transport

Opinion on mode of transport	E	VG	G	A	B
Auto rickshaw	5.4	16.9	35.8	41.2	0.7
Taxi	4.7	18.9	68.2	8.1	
Tourist vans	4.1	23	66.9	6.1	
Tourist buses	6.1	22.3	66.9	4.1	0.7
Rail	5.4	28.4	64.2	2	
Air	16.2	35.1	45.3	2.7	0.7

Respondent's opinion on mode of transport is revealed in table no .5.13. Respondents gave good opinion for taxi 68.2 per cent, 66.9 per cent each to tourist vans and tourist buses, 64.2 per cent for rail and 45.3 per cent for air. Average opinion 41.2 per cent is given to auto rickshaw.

Table no.13 Respondent's opinion on mode of transportation Vs age

Age	n	Mean	S.D	F-Value	P-Value	Decision
Below 20	13	3.5897	.67910	1.673	.159	N.S
20-29	47	3.2021	.50949			
30-39	32	3.3333	.58506			
40-49	36	3.2315	.50753			
50 & above	20	3.1667	.47757			



The above ANOVA test value(1.673) and its P-value(0.159) explains that there is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents on the dimension “Opinion on mode of transportation” by Age. i.e., all these categories of age respondents are opined similarly. Further, the average opinion score of below 20 years of age respondents have more optimistic opinion rather than the remaining age categories.

Table no. 13 b Respondent’s opinion on mode of transportation Vs gender

Gender	n	Mean	S.D	T-Value	P-Value	Decision
Male	118	3.2472	.52648	-0.875	0.383	N.S
Female	30	3.3444	.60795			

The t-test value (-0.875) and the corresponding P-value (0.383) explains that there is no significant difference by gender on the dimension “Opinion on mode of transportation” by gender. Further, female respondents are more positive in this regard when compared with male respondents.

Table no. 13c Respondent’s opinion on mode of transportation Vs education

Educational Background	n	Mean	S.D	F-Value	P-Value	Decision
Pre metric	15	3.3889	.58644	1.831	.110	N.S
Metric	13	3.1154	.47329			
Intermediate	11	3.3939	.63802			
Technical	24	3.0556	.34636			
Degree	55	3.2455	.51406			
P.G	30	3.4333	.64713			

The above table portrays that there is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents who were from different educational backgrounds on the dimension “Opinion on mode of transportation”. Further, the average opinion score of post graduate background respondents is greater than when compared with the remaining all the categories followed by intermediate background which illustrate this category respondents opinion is more affirmative rather than others.

Table no.13d Respondent’s opinion on mode of transportation Vs occupation

Occupation	N	Mean	S.D	F-Value	P-Value	Decision
Government employee	32	3.1875	.49505	1.812	.130	N.S
Private sector employee	58	3.2874	.54683			
Own business	16	3.0208	.37945			
Retired	13	3.2821	.56267			
Studying	29	3.4425	.61766			

The above table describes the opinion of the respondents on the dimension “Opinion on mode of transportation “by occupation of the respondents. The average opinion score of students is greater than the remaining four categories followed by the Private sector employees, which gives a thought that these respondents have more sanguine opinion on this dimension. Whereas the business respondents opined less positive than others. Further, the F-value (1.812) and the corresponding P-value (0.130) illustrates that there is no significant difference in the opinion between these five categories of the respondents on the said dimension.

Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Accommodation

An attempt is made here to study about respondents’ preference on lodges. A vast majority of 70.9 per cent of the total sample respondents preferred medium type of lodges. Majority respondent’s attitude towards different types of accommodation is good.

In the present scenario travel agents are playing dominating role in booking tickets and accommodation. According to the order of preferences respondents are asked to rank the facilities expected at lodges. They gave 1st rank to internet and 2nd to cable network facilities. Now-a-days people are more acquainted with the internet and cable network. The respondent’s opinion is also coinciding with above statement. It is suggested that if adequate facilities are provided at lodges they can attract more and more tourists into its domain.



2. Food

It is quite surprising to note that a whopping majority of 70 per cent of the total sample respondents are belonging to Andhra Pradesh. But they prefer Chinese, north Indian and continental food. In the modern scenario, people are preferring the tasty food and keeping aside the traditional food and it is proved in the study. A whopping majority of 91.2 per cent of the total sample respondents revealed that they are provided with special dishes according to the places. This is one type of technique used by the A.P. Tourism to attract more and more tourists.

A considerable number of respondents 67.6 per cent are affected with the food provided by the A.P tourism. It is suggested to the A.P. Tourism authorities to use good quality of food products and cook in hygienic conditions to avoid ill health of tourists. Availability of good, familiar and qualitative food attracts more number of tourists.

3. Transport

A whopping majority of 84.5 per cent of the total sample respondents used both rail and road transport as their mode of transport in Andhra Pradesh. It may be concluded that the respondents used different types of transport facilities according to their convenience. Respondents gave very good grades to the mode of transport supplied by A.P. Tourism. On the other hand few respondents gave excellent opinion.

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