

AN EMPRICAL STUDY ON PILGRIMAGE TOURISM IN SRIRANGAM OF TAMILNADU

Saranya Vijay*, S. Ramalingam** and K. Ramakrishnan***

Abstract: "Pilgrimage tourism; to a certain extent it is a form of tourism motivated, somewhat or completely by religious motives closely or loosely related with holiday making or with journey undertaken for social, cultural or political reasons over short or long distances". The study would contribute to identify the need for pilgrimage tourism development in Tamilnadu with special reference to Srirangam. Tamilnadu has different tourism destination which convince the needs and demands of almost every class of visitors. This study aims to study pilgrimage tourist quality of services, quality of basic facilities opportunities with respect of accommodation, accessibility, attractions, amenities, transport network and facilities inside the temple premises in srirangam. This study aims to suggest measures to make pilgrimage tourism efficiently feasible and suggest appropriate and effective promotional strategy for promoting pilgrimage tourism in srirangam. The objective of this research article is to study the satisfaction level of tourist and determinants of pilgrimage tourism and problems faced by tourist in Tiruchirapalli district. The number of samples collected for this study is 50 tourists and the collected data will be analysed with SPSS 16.0 version. The data descriptive statistics frequency analysis, percentage analysis for categorical variables and the mean and S.D for continuous variables will applied. The reliability of the questionnaire will be verified with Cranbach Alpha. To find the significance difference between the bivariate samples in Independent groups Mann-Whitney U test and for the multivariate analysis the one way ANOVA (Kruskal Walli's test) will be applied .To assess the relationship between the variables Spearman's rank Correlation going to be implemented. To find the significance in categorical data Chi-Square test will be conducted. In all the above statistical tools the probability value .05 is considered as significant level. The present study has focused upon famous pilgrimage sites in South India, i.e. Srirangam.

Keywords: Srirangam, pilgrimage, tourism, tamiladu, services

INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry occupies an important place in the world's economy. It is the fastest growing sectors of the economy now-a-days and is expected to generate

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more income and employment as well as foreign exchange. Tourism can be broadly categorized into international tourism and inter-regional tourism. Both the types hold better prospects and contribute towards the economic development of a particular national region. Tourism is of major economic and social significance in both developed and developing countries. It provides direct and indirect employment opportunities and raises the standard of living and quality of the resident population. It also supports and helps to find arts, folk traditions, festivals and events and provides a market for local crafts and manufacturing. The tourism industry in India is substantial and vibrant and the country is fast becoming a major global destination. India's travel and tourism industry is one of most profitable industries in the country, and also created with contributing a substantial amount of foreign exchange. India's tourism sector is projected to grow at 8.8 per cent ahead of China's over the next 10 years. According to WTTC, capital investment in the India tourism sector is expected to touch the \$21.4 billion mark in 2014. This will be about 7.8 per cent of the total investment received by the country in that year.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pilgrimage Tourism is a long journey for search of knowledge and enlightenment (Gill,1999). Pilgrimage Tourism in India is almost as old as Indian civilization (Singh, 1997), is motivated by faith or religious reasons for centuries (Priya, 2001); and becomes the functional and symbolic of traditional religious practices. Pilgrims are the special tourists whose purpose is to visit the place and get involved in the religious activities (Sanjay, 2003). Differences in behavioral attributes like perception, attitudes and motives vary according to the cultural background and personality.

Majority of domestic tourists are pilgrimage tourists, whose behaviors depend on the experience about the pilgrimage sites (Pauline, 1966). There is a close relationship of between religious needs and facilities at the pilgrimage tourism centers (Rathod, 1999). Local hospitality is one of the most important components of pilgrimage tourism and the hospitality industry thrives on service quality and facilities to ensure customer's satisfaction. (Tomasi, 2002).

Pilgrimage tourism is a leisure-oriented travel and recreation and religious needs are the elements of pilgrimage tourism (Bajpai, 1954). Pilgrim sites tend to deviate from their original purposes (Tyrakowski, 1994). Pilgrimage tourism as a form of travel provides opportunities for people to visit sacred places and is a feature common to almost all societies (Kiran,1991).

The facilities such as accommodation, transportation, darshan, food and drinking water, shopping are essential at the pilgrimage sites center and the behaviour of the local people with the pilgrims is also important (Rathod,1999).

Pilgrims do travel to pilgrimage site by taking various modes of transportation and the selection of transportation depends on the cost, speed and safety (Pauline, 1966).

Hospitality is one of the most important components of pilgrimage tourism industry to satisfy the tourist expectations (Sharma, 1988). In many regions, pilgrimage tourism thrives only due to the presence of the hospitality industry (Aziz, 1985) Pilgrimage to Mecca is increasing due to the travel itinerary, communication network, infrastructure and public transport (Rana, 2003). Pilgrimage sites are like any other tourism destinations and they meet the needs of both religious believers and more general holidaymakers (SHUO, 2009). Adequate facilities and amenities would lead to the rise of pilgrimage tourism in Islamic countries (Shakiry, 2001). Religious tourism faces serious hurdles like poor tourism infrastructure (Nevatia, 2001).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The process of research design includes the exploratory study consisting of literature survey and in-depth interview. The sampling method selected for the study is "convenience sample" in the non-probability category. As many as 50 tourists were interviewed at the sites. The questionnaire has two parts highlighting on the demographic profiles of the respondents and various dimensions of pilgrimage tourism with regard to srirangam. These statements were measured through the five point Likert scales. The sources of data collection consist of both primary and secondary sources. Data analysis was done by with SPSS 16.0 version. The data descriptive statistics frequency analysis, percentage analysis for categorical variables and the mean and S.D for continuous variables will applied. The reliability of the questionnaire will be verified with Cranbach Alpha. To find the significance difference between the bivariate samples in Independent groups Mann-Whitney U test and for the multivariate analysis the one way ANOVA (Kruskal Walli's test) will be applied .To assess the relationship between the variables Spearman's rank Correlation going to be implemented. To find the significance in categorical data Chi-Square test will be conducted. In all the above statistical tools the probability value .05 is considered as significant level.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Quality of Services

In this QS1, 50% of the people has strongly disagree and 30% of the people disagree by selecting accommodation, transport and restaurant on the basis of the standard of the service. QS2 68% of the people said that they are uncomfortable of reception upon arrival in the hotel. In this QS3 nearly 60% of the participant has disagree by reservation procedure in the hotel. In this QS4, 66% of the people were

not satisfied in Staffs in the front office. In this QS5, 74% of the people said that Staffs are not well-groomed, well-behaved and unhelpful. In this QS6, 62% of the participant said they are undecided of room and food services as shown in figure 1 and table 1.

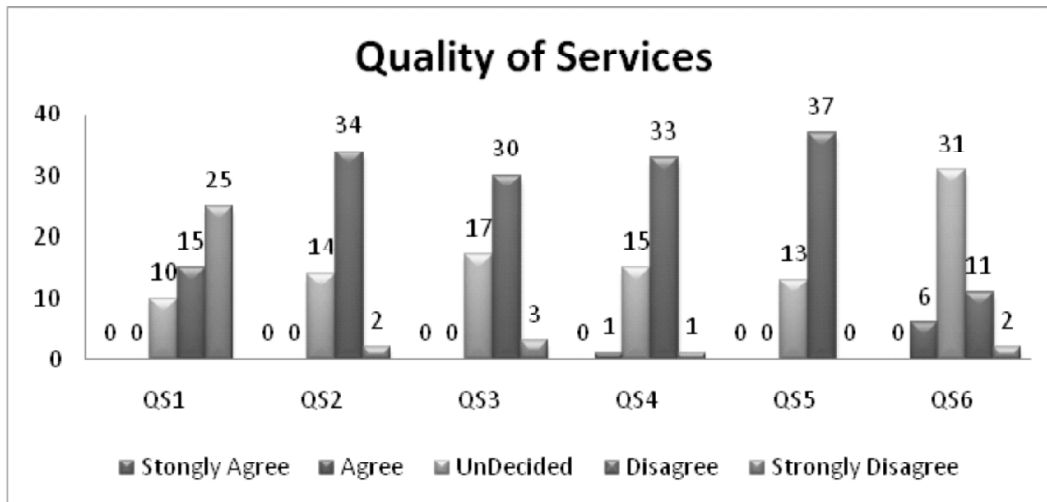


Figure 1: Comparison of Quality of services

Table 1
Intra Class Correlation Coefficient for Quality of services

Name of the Domain	Intraclass Correlation Coefficient				Significant Value
	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items	95% Confidence Interval		
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Quality of Services	0.818	6	0.727	0.886	0.0001 **

** denotes Highly Significant at P ≤ .01 level

The reliability of the quality of services questionnaire was verified with Cronbach's Alpha is shown that $\alpha = 0.818$ with the number of items is 6. The 95% confidence interval for the lower bound is 0.727 and upper bound is 0.886. The significant level is $\rho = 0.0001$ level, which is highly significant.

Quality of Basic Facilities

In this QBF1, 52% of the people has said that the road condition is not well maintained they are uncomfortable by travelling. In QBF2, 72% of the people has said they are disagree by the road maintenance needs to be undertaken. In QBF3, 82% of participant has said the Banks and ATM counters are not located at the

convenient places. In QBF4, 84% of the people has said that approach roads are not laid to facilitate easy movement around the pilgrimage sites. In QBF5, 74% of people said parking space is unadequate. In QBF6, 64% of the people disagree of the Health Services.

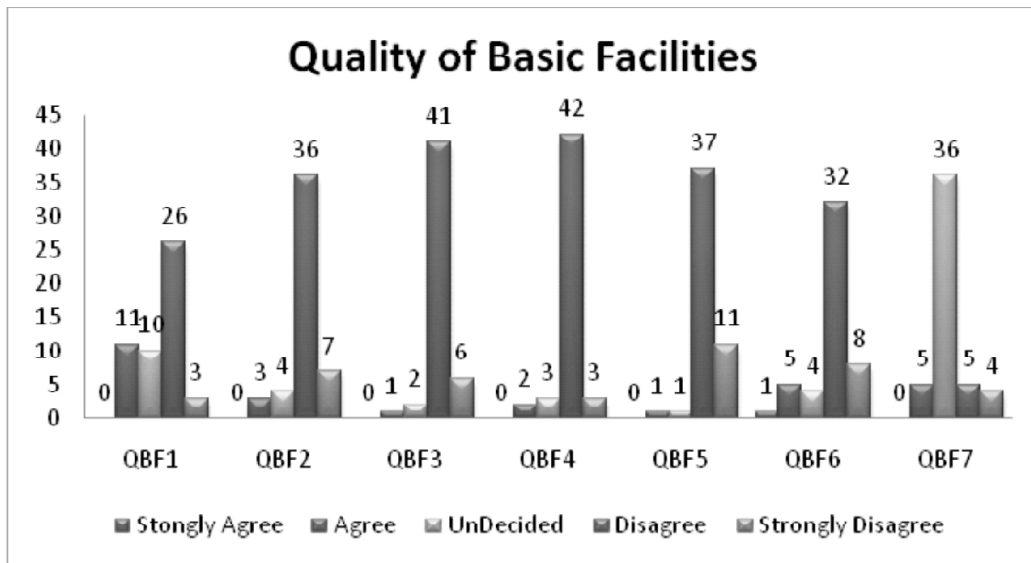


Figure 2: Comparison of Quality of Basic Facilities

Table 2
Intra Class Correlation Coefficient for Quality of Basic Facilities

Name of the Domain	Intraclass Correlation Coefficient				Significant Value
	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items	95% Confidence Interval		
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Basic Facilities	0.568	7	0.357	0.729	0.0001 **

** denotes Highly Significant at $P \leq .01$ level

The reliability of the basic facilities questionnaire was verified with Cronbach's Alpha is shown that $\alpha = 0.568$ with the number of items is 7. The 95% confidence interval for the lower bound is 0.357 and upper bound is 0.729. The significant level is $\rho = 0.0001$ level, which is highly significant.

Quality of Amenities

In QA1, 56% of the participant has said that Purified drinkingwater facilities are not provided at the pilgrimage center. In QA2, 50% of the people has disagree that Rest shed is built for the pilgrims to comfort them. In QA3, 78% of the people

has disagree for Toilet and washrooms are built for the pilgrims. In the QA4, 84% of the participant are disagree Cloak rooms are provided for the pilgrims to keep their personal belongings safely. QA5, 82% of the people has said that Shopping centres are located and not to purchase the souvenirs. In QA6, 56% of people stated that in and around the temple premises, it is hygienic and clean.

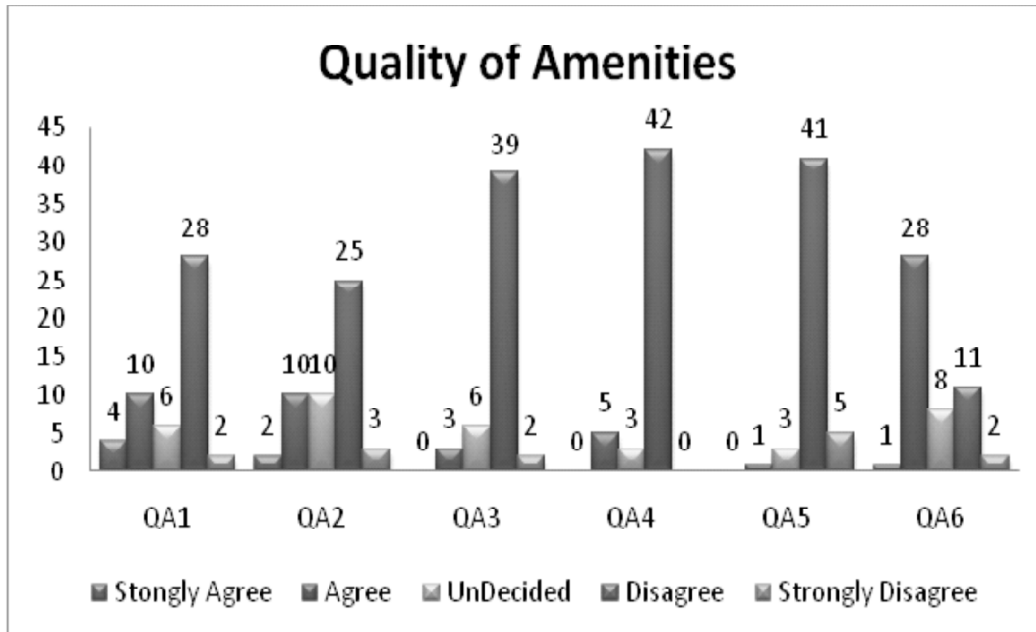


Figure 3: Comparison of Quality of Amenities

Table 3
Intra class Correlation Coefficient for Quality of Amenities

Name of the Domain	Intraclass Correlation Coefficient				Significant Value
	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items	95% Confidence Interval		
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Amenities	0.738	6	0.606	0.836	0.0001 **

** denotes Highly Significant at $P \leq .01$ level

The reliability of the amenities questionnaire was verified with Cronbach's Alpha is shown that $\alpha = 0.738$ with the number of items is 6. The 95% confidence interval for the lower bound is 0.606 and upper bound is 0.836. The significant level is $\rho = 0.0001$ level, which is highly significant.

Transport Network

In TN1, most of the participant aroud 82% has said that the placefor site is not well connected by roads. In TN2, 78% of the people has stated that the government or the private bus service is not being operated regularly and safely. In TN3, most of the participant has said bus fare is too high and not resaonable. In TN4, 82% of the people has disagree and stated that rail connection is unhelpful. In TN5, 70% of the people has said regular buses from major towns and cities of Tamilnadu are not available in time. In TN6, 70% of people has strongly disagree on congestion of buses are noticed at the pilgrimage destination.

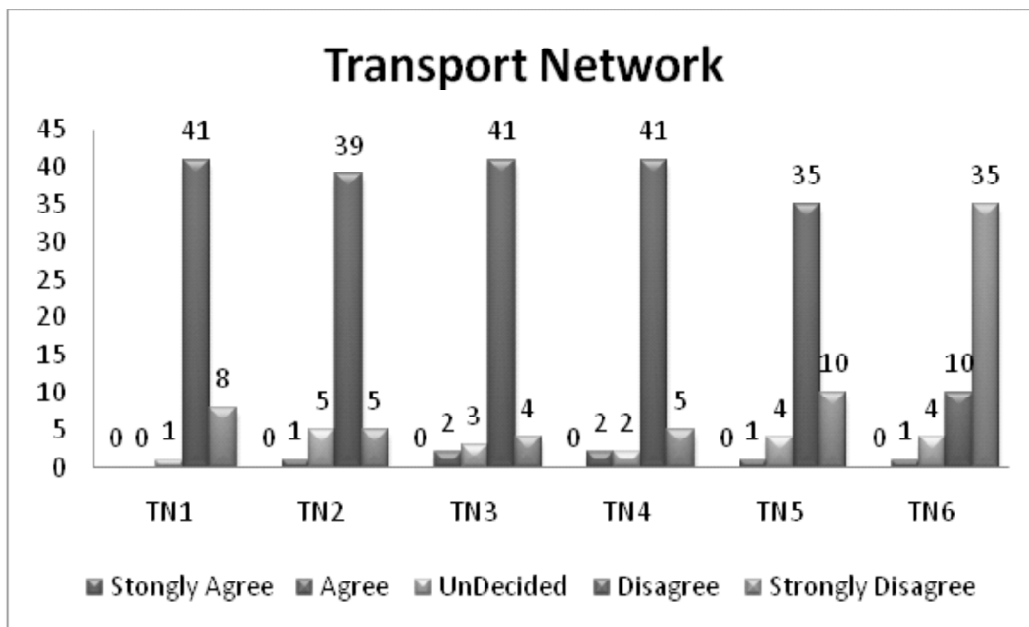


Figure 4: Comparison of Transport Network

Table 4
Intra Class Correlation Coefficient for Transport Network

Name of the Domain	Intraclass Correlation Coefficient				Significant Value
	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items	95% Confidence Interval		
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Transport Network	0.661	6	0.492	0.788	0.0001 **

** denotes Highly Significant at $P \leq .01$ level

The reliability of the transport network questionnaire was verified with Cronbach's Alpha is shown that $\alpha = 0.661$ with the number of items is 6. The 95%

confidence interval for the lower bound is 0.492 and upper bound is 0.778. The significant level is $\rho = 0.0001$ level, which is highly significant.

Facilities Inside the Temple Premises

In FITP1, 62% of people has said that undecided on the first aid medical facility is available at free of cost in the pilgrimage sites. In FITP2, 62% of the people has undecided of free choultry is available at reasonable price. In FITP3, 48% of the people has strongly disagree that free wheel-chair for differently abled and aged are available. In FITP4, 66% of people has said money is collected other than pooja tickets and entrance ticket. In FITP5, some of the guides are trained is available for explaining the pilgrims.

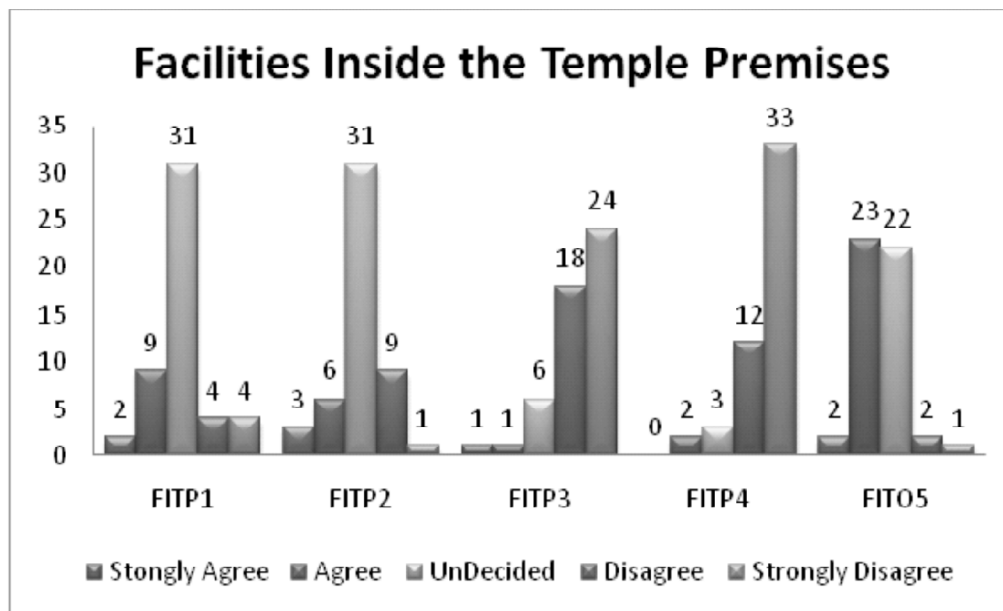


Figure 5: Comparison of Facilities Inside the Temple of Premises

Table 5
Intra Class Correlation Coefficient for Facilities Inside the Temple

<i>Intraclass Correlation Coefficient</i>					
<i>Name of the Domain</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>No. of items</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval</i>		<i>Significant Value</i>
			<i>Lower Bound</i>	<i>Upper Bound</i>	
Facilities Inside the Temple	0.600	5	0.393	0.751	0.0001 **

** denotes Highly Significant at $P \leq .01$ level

The reliability of the facilities inside the temple questionnaire was verified with Cronbach's Alpha is shown that $\alpha = 0.600$ with the number of items is 5. The 95% confidence interval for the lower bound is 0.393 and upper bound is 0.751. The significant level is $p = 0.0001$ level, which is highly significant.

Table 6
Intra Class Correlation Coefficient for Overall Satisfaction

Name of the Domain	Intraclass Correlation Coefficient				Significant Value
	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items	95% Confidence Interval		
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Overall Satisfaction	0.794	30	0.702	0.868	0.0001 **

** denotes Highly Significant at $P \leq .01$ level

The reliability of the overall satisfaction questionnaire was verified with Cronbach's Alpha is shown that $\alpha = 0.794$ with the number of items is 30. The 95% confidence interval for the lower bound is 0.702 and upper bound is 0.868. The significant level is $p = 0.0001$ level, which is highly significant.

SUGGESTION & RECOMMENDATION

- Select accommodation, transport and restaurant on the basis of the standard of the service.
- Reception upon arrival was very smooth and comfortable in the hotel.
- Reservation procedure in the hotel does not take much time.
- Staffs in the front office were very quick in settling the bills
- Staffs are well-groomed, well-behaved and helpful.
- The room and food services seem to be very expensive.
- Road condition is well maintained.
- Road maintenance needs to be undertaken.
- Banks and ATM counters are located at the convenient places.
- Approach roads are laid to facilitate easy movement around the pilgrimage sites.
- Parking space is adequate but needs to be expanded.
- Health Services
- Purified drinkingwater facilities are provided at the pilgrimage center.
- Rest shed is built for the pilgrims to comfort them.
- Toilet and washrooms are built for the pilgrims.

- Cloak rooms are provided for the pilgrims to keep their personal belongings safely.
- Shopping centres are located to purchase the souvenirs.
- In and around the temple premises, it is hygienic and clean.
- The place is well connected by roads.
- The government or the private bus service is being operated regularly and safely.
- The bus fare is reasonable and flexible.
- The rail connection is better and helpful.
- There are regular buses from major towns and cities of Tamilnadu.
- Over congestion of buses are noticed at the pilgrimage destination.
- First aid medical facility is available at free of cost.
- Free choultry is available at reasonable price.
- Free wheel-chair for differently abled and aged are available.
- Money is collected other than pooja tickets and entrance ticket.
- Trained guide is available for explaining the pilgrims.

CONCLUSION

The data presented in this chapter indicate the potential for pilgrimage tourism development in srirangam. Although development to date has been limited to few major sites, the analysis shows that it should be possible to spread the development of pilgrimage tourism to more parts of the region. Particularly taking into account the potential for pilgrimage tourism with cultural and the potential for developing new age or pilgrimage tourism it should be possible to use the major anchor sites identified to stimulated regional development.

Realizing this potential will clearly require a high level of inter municipal co-operation given the extent of the pilgrimage tourism religions identified. In addition the importance of pilgrimage tourism supply factors identified in the research shows the need for extensive collaboration between the public sector, which is responsible for policy and promotion which manages most of the sites, and the tourism sector which provides the supporting facilities this underlines the importance of net working in the future development of pilgrimage tourism in srirangam. At present however there is a clear distinction between a more local pilgrimage tourism currently stimulated by pilgrimage motives and more globalized pilgrimage tourism. These have very different motivations and different needs as well as different patterns of activity in the destination. In many respects the local pilgrimage tourism offers relatively little scope for further pilgrimage tourism development, particularly as the current generation of pilgrim's ages and

the enthusiasm for traditional religion wanes among young people. In developing new products and new markets therefore the pilgrimage tourism attractions of the region should think more seriously about the pilgrimage tourism elements of current demand and in particular the development of new products of emerging niches such as pilgrimage tourism.

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