An Economic Study on Factors Influencing the Tourists in Courtallam

V.Sumathi[1*] and A.Seetharaman[2]

[1]*Research Scholar, PG and Research Department of Economics, The M.D.T. Hindu College, (Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University) Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu.*

[2]*Associate Professor and Head, PG and Research Department of Economics, The M.D.T. Hindu College, (Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University) Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu.*

Corresponding Author Email: sumathi86v@gmail.com

Abstract

Tourism is important for regional economic development, especially in locations with natural beauty, cultural history, and religious significance. Courtallam, a major tourist site in Tamil Nadu, India, is known for its therapeutic waterfalls, picturesque scenery, and spiritual atmosphere. Despite its promise, Courtallam's tourism business has obstacles such as seasonal dependency, limited infrastructure, and increased competition from other destinations. The purpose of this study is to identify and assess the economic elements that influence tourists' decisions to visit Courtallam, their spending habits, and their overall happiness with the location. The data show that natural attractiveness, affordability, and religious importance are the key motivators for tourism in Courtallam. However, concerns such as inadequate infrastructure, overcrowding, and expensive expenditures have a detrimental impact on visitor happiness. The findings of this study can help politicians, local companies, and tourism operators build targeted plans for increasing the destination's appeal, upgrading infrastructure, and ensuring long-term economic growth. By addressing the identified difficulties and exploiting Courtallam's strengths, stakeholders may make the destination more appealing and competitive, benefiting both the local economy and the broader tourism industry.

Keywords: Tourism, Courtallam, Economy

Introduction

Tourism is an important economic factor in many parts of the world, contributing significantly to local economies by creating jobs, developing infrastructure, and generating money. Courtallam, sometimes known as the "Spa of South India," is a popular tourist resort in the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, India. Courtallam, known for its stunning

waterfalls, lush foliage, and therapeutic natural springs, attracts a wide range of visitors, including leisure travelers, pilgrims, and wellness enthusiasts. The town's unique combination of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and religious significance makes it a popular tourist destination, especially during the summer and monsoon seasons. However, the tourism business in Courtallam confronts a number of obstacles, including seasonal changes, insufficient infrastructure, and increased competition from other destinations. Understanding the elements that impact tourists' decisions to visit Courtallam, their spending habits, and overall their general satisfaction is critical for establishing measures to increase the destination's appeal and assure long-term economic success.This study will look into the economic aspects that influence tourists in Courtallam, including their tastes, behaviours, and spending habits. By evaluating demographic data, travel reasons, and economic drivers, the study hopes to identify critical areas for improvement and provide actionable insights for stakeholders such as governments, local businesses, and tourism operators. The outcomes of this study will help to shape focused programs aimed at increasing tourism, improving tourist experiences, and generating long-term economic advantages for the region.

Objectives of the Study

➢ To estimatetourists spending towards recreational activities.
➢ To find out the factors that influence tourists' decisions to visit Courtallam.

Methodology

The study focuses on Courtallam, a major tourist attraction in Tamil Nadu's Tenkasi district that is famous for its waterfalls, natural beauty, and religious significance. A standardized questionnaire is used to collect information from tourists visiting Courtallam. The current study draws on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered from a survey of 120 sample respondents in Courtallam. Secondary data were gathered from books, journals, newspapers, magazines, Government documents. This paper used an interpretative, qualitative methodology to investigate the variables that led their travel to Courtallam for tourism.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Describes the Demographic Profile of the Respondents.

S.NO	VARIABLES	CATEGORY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Gender	Male	53	44
		Female	67	56
2	Age of the Respondents	below 18	14	12
		18-25	19	16
		25-40	32	27
		40-60	44	36
		above 60	11	9
3	Occupation	Student	16	13
		Government Employee	22	18
		Private Employee	41	34
		Business	29	25
		Self Employed	12	10
4	Monthly Income	Below 20,000	64	53
		20,000–40,000	27	23
		40,000–60,000	29	24
		60,000–80,000	0	0
		Above 80,000	0	0
5	Place of Residence	Urban	46	38
		Rural	74	62

Source: Primary Data (n=120)

Findings from Table: 1

Table 1 shows that, of the 120 respondents who participated in the study, the majority (44% of them) are male, 36% are between the ages of 40 to 60, the majority (34% of them) are private employees, the maximum number (53% of them) earn less than $20,000 per month, and 62% live in rural areas.

Table 2: Economic Factors of the Respondents

S.No	VARIABLES	CATEGORY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Average Expenditure	Below 1,000	64	53
		1,000–2,000	30	25
		2,000–5,000	13	11
		Above 5,000	13	11
			120	**100**
2	Major Expenditure Categories	Accommodation	12	10
		Food and Beverages	34	28
		Shopping	40	33
		Transportation	25	21
		Entertainment/Activities	9	8
			120	**100**
3	Willingness to Pay for Premium Services (e.g., luxury stays, guided tours)	Yes	65	54
		No	44	36
		Maybe	11	10
			120	**100**
4	Satisfaction with Value for Money	Very Satisfied	86	71
		Satisfied	14	12
		Neutral	12	11
		Dissatisfied	8	6
		Very Dissatisfied	0	0
			120	100

Source: Primary Data (n=120)

Findings from Table: 2

According to table 2, 53% of respondents have an average expenditure of less than 1000, 33% spend their money on shopping, 54% are willing to pay for premium services, and 71% are very satisfied with the value for money in Courtallam. This study uses Garret and Woodworth's (1969) approach to convert the anticipated percent position into scores. The individual scores are then totalled for each element and the sums and mean scores are calculated. The most significant element is assumed to have the highest mean value. The factors influencing tourists to visit Courtallam are listed in the table below.

Table 3: Factors Influencing the Tourists in Courtallam

Factors Influencing that the tourists	Rank Given by Respondents									
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Natural Beauty and Waterfalls	15	14	13	14	11	10	12	8	13	10
Health Benefits	14	12	10	15	15	11	8	2	25	8
Climate	10	15	14	11	12	17	16	10	0	15
Cultural and Religious Significance	5	12	10	10	15	12	6	5	20	25
Spiritual Trip	10	12	14	11	10	12	9	8	10	24
Local Cuisine	25	20	12	11	10	5	3	7	21	6
Peace and Calmness	14	10	10	8	10	18	18	17	10	5
Seasonal Events and Festivals	8	9	10	15	13	14	22	15	4	10
Eco Park	5	8	10	15	12	5	15	27	7	16
Near by	14	8	17	10	12	16	11	21	10	1

Source: Computed from primary data

The Percent Positions and Garret Values

The Garret ranks were calculated by using appropriate Garret Ranking formula. The based on the Garret ranks, the garret value was calculated. The Garret tables and scores of eachproblems in the above table, and multiplied to records scores in next table, finally by adding each row, the total Garret score were obtained.

$$\text{Percent position} = \frac{100(Rij - 0.5)}{Nj}$$

The result is provided in the **Table: 4**

Table 4:

S.NO	100 (Rij - 0.5) / Nj	Calculated value	Garret Value
1	100 (1 - 0.5) / 10	5	82
2	100 (2 - 0.5) / 10	15	70
3	100 (3 - 0.5) / 10	25	63
4	100 (4 - 0.5) / 10	35	57
5	100 (5 - 0.5) / 10	45	52
6	100 (6 - 0.5) / 10	55	48
7	100 (7 - 0.5) / 10	65	43
8	100 (8 - 0.5) / 10	75	37
9	100 (9 - 0.5) / 10	85	30
10	100 (10 - 0.5) / 10	95	18

Source: Computed value by using formula

Calculation of Garret Value and Ranking

The calculation of Garret value and Ranking of factors influencing the tourists in Courtallam are shown in Table: 5 **Table 5: The Calculation**

Factors Influencing that the tourists	Ranks given by the Respondents										Total	Average	Rank
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th			
Natural Beauty and Waterfalls	1230	980	819	798	572	480	516	296	130	180	6001	50	IV
Health Benefits	1148	840	630	855	780	528	344	74	250	144	5593	47	VII
Climate	850	1050	882	627	624	816	688	370	0	270	6147	51.22	II
Cultural and Religious Significance	410	840	630	570	780	576	258	185	200	450	4899	40.82	X
Spiritual Trip	820	840	882	627	520	576	387	296	100	432	5480	46	VIII
Local Cuisine	2050	1400	756	627	520	240	129	259	210	108	6299	52.49	I
Peace and Calmness	1148	700	630	456	520	864	774	629	100	90	5911	49.25	V
Seasonal Events and Festivals	656	630	630	855	676	672	946	555	40	180	5840	48.66	VI
Eco Park	410	560	630	855	624	240	645	999	70	288	5321	44.34	IX
Near by	1148	560	1071	570	624	768	473	777	100	18	6109	50.9	III

Source: Computed from Primary data

Result

Based on the Garret's Ranking Technique it was revealed that,

➢ **Local Cuisine** is the major factor with **highest garret score** of 6299 and an average score of 5249.

➢ Climate with scores of 6149 and an average score of 51.22 is represented second rank.

➢ Near bywith scores of 6109 and an average score of 50.9 is represented third rank.

➢ Natural Beauty and Waterfalls with scores of 6001 and an average score of 50 is represented fourth rank.

➢ Peace and Calmness with scores of 5911 and an average score of 49.25 is represented fifth rank.

➢ Seasonal Events and Festivals with score of 5840 and an average score of 49.66 is represented sixth rank.

➢ Health Benefits with score of 5593 and an average score of 47 is represented seventh rank.

➢ Spiritual Trip with scores of 5480 and an average score of 46 is represented eighth rank.

➢ Eco park with scores of 5321 and an average scores of 44.34 is represented Ninth rank.

➢ Cultural and Religious Significance with scores of 4899 and an average scores of 40.82 is represented tenth rank.

Suggestions

➢ Improve roads, public transportation, and sanitation facilities.

➢ Encourage eco-friendly activities to protect natural resources.

➢ Use social media and digital platforms to attract youthful tourists.

➢ Offer new activities such as trekking, yoga retreats, and cultural festivals.

➢ Collaborate with commercial entities to improve tourism infrastructure.

➢ Train locals in hospitality and customer service for better tourist experiences.

➢ Encourage private investment in tourism infrastructure.

➢ Regulations for environmental sustainability.

➢ To boost off-season travel with natural activities.

Conclusion

The economic research of factors influencing tourists in Courtallam identifies a complex interplay of demographic, economic, and other factors. Several key observations arose from the analysis. Tourists' demographics—age, income, and motivations for travel—have a considerable impact on their buying patterns. Families, adventure seekers, and wellness visitors have diverse preferences that businesses can effectively cater to. Tourist spending significantly contributes to the viability of local businesses, such as hotels, food

services, and recreational activities, confirming tourism's role as an economic growth catalyst. The natural beauty of Courtallam is a major attraction for visitors. However, increased footfall can impact ecological sustainability. Balancing tourist growth with environmental conservation is critical for conserving the attractions those attraction tourists. Engaging local communities in tourism development promotes cultural interchange and goodwill. Community-led efforts not only enhance the tourist experience, but also ensure that economic advantages are spread fairly.

References

1. *Dhanavandan S (2016) Application of Garret Ranking Technique: Practical Approach. International Journal of Library and Information Studies, Vol. 6, Iss. 3, Page :135-140.*

2. *Kamaruddin, GovindPathak (2018) Socio- Mathematical Analysis Using Garret's Ranking for Identifying facilities in Higher Education of Uttarkhand, International Journal of Research in Social Sciences, Vol. 8, Iss. 7, Page. 966 - 973.*

3. *Kumaran, Manjeet Singh (2019), A Study on Tourism Facilities at Courtallam, The Spa of count India, Management Practices – Opporunities and Challenges, ISBN: 978-93-88805-57-5.*

4. *SukantaSarkarThijienTharjiath Keat Belete Debasu Gebrie (2024), Growth, Prospects And Challenges Of Sustainable Tourism In Tamil Nadu: Socio- Economic Perspectives, Towards Excellence: An Indexed, Refereed & Peer Reviewed Journal of Higher Education/ Dr.SukantaSarkar, ThijienTharjiath Keat & Belete Debasu Gebrie/ Page 150-163, Vol.16. Issue No.1, ISSN: 0974 – 035X. Department of Economics and Statistics, Statistical handbook, 2023-2024.*

5. *Wani, Gowhar Ahmad, KhaliqRubeena, DawoodAyoub Khan, and ParrayAamirMajeed (2024) "A Study of Factors Influencing Tourism Service Quality: A Comprehensive Review and Analysis," Journal of Tourism Insights: Vol. 14: Iss. 1, Article 16.*