

## WORKING OF RESORTS – A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO STERLING SWAMIMALAI RESORTS

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### **Abstract**

*Tourism has emerged as an instrument for employment generation, poverty alleviation and sustainable human development. Tourism today is one of the world's fastest growing industries. It earns money and attracts international travellers. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism gradually increased. It has become the second largest earner after gem and jewellery and readymade garments. The resort industry is witnessing a boom all over the world mainly due to improvement in transport sector and also due to rise in the business field. A lot of international and national chain resorts come up, such as hill resorts, beach resorts, sterling resorts etc. They have established their chain resorts all over the world. In this paper an attempt is made to analyse tourist arrival and utilising the services offered by the Sterling Swamimalai resort in Thanjavur district of Tamilnadu.*

**Keywords:** Foreign exchange, Resources, Resorts, Tourism

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## Introduction

Tourism is a basic and most desirable human activity deserving the praise and encouragement of all people and government. Tourism denotes the temporary short-term movements of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work. At present, people are travelling from place to place and country to country. But the purpose of visit differs from person to person. Somebody travel seeking pleasure, some on business and some for academic purpose. Tourism has emerged as an instrument for employment generation, poverty alleviation and sustainable human development. Tourism today is one of the world's fastest growing industries. It earns money and attracts international travellers. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism gradually increased. It has become the second largest earner after gem and jewellery and readymade garments.

By attracting the attention of the foreign tourist towards the tourist resource of own country, we could earn more foreign exchange. Like any other economy activity tourism also depends on the available resources, for its development. The resources include both physical as well as cultural resources. The physical resources include natural resources such Beaches, Hill resorts, Springs etc. The cultural resources include places of religious arts and importance, war memories, places noted for architectural places, park etc. Tourism denotes the temporary short term movement of people to destination outside the places where they normally live and work. Tourism makes use of resources which may not be used otherwise. To avail these good given resources, it becomes necessary to use marketing strategies and publicity.

## Statement of the Problem

Travel for pleasure and enjoyment is the most common form of travel in modern world. Getting away from all that routine of every day life is perhaps the most important motive of all in recent times. The individual's desire and need for pure pleasure is very strong indeed. An individual like to have fun excitement and good time wherever possible. People wanted to get away from the stress and strain of modern city life and to relax in an atmosphere which is more peaceful and entertaining. But unfortunately some of the tourist spots provides bitter experiences and affect us worries and sufferings. The major problems in the development of tourism in India are

1. Lack of proper infrastructure
2. Lack of information on tourist spots

3. Lack of proper accommodation facilities
4. Non-availability of hygienic food stuff
5. Scarcity of safe drinking water
6. Lack of environment protection knowledge
7. Lack of entertainment facilities

Basic amenities and infrastructure are necessary for development of tourism in a particular destination. If a tourism programme is to be successful, it is necessary to provide life support through a number of infrastructure elements comprising of the system of services and utilities which are necessary for the operation of a tourism spot. Tourism being a mode of movement, the transport element of the infrastructure is assigned the prime importance. Without the basic transport facilities, no one can visit any particular tourism spot. But many tourist spot do not have proper transport facilities. Accommodation by itself may be an attraction. Some time people visit a particular spot to enjoy the service of a particular hotel which provides excellent services and facilities. But many tourist centres have not such facilities.

The resort industry is perhaps one of the latest commercial institutions existing in the world. A resort is defined as a place where a bonafide traveller can receive shelter and other allied services provided. It is in a position to pay for it. The resort industry is very important in developing the countries national economy. The resort industry also helps in securing employment for the people. Today the life styles of the people have changed a lot. The women do not anymore sit at their houses. They have also started working along with men. Moreover these days the middle class people have also started spending their money at expensive resorts etc. These all reflects upon the resort industry. Today the resort industries are becoming an inevitable factor not only of the major metros but also of the growing cities and towns.

The resort industry is witnessing a boom all over the world mainly due to improvement in transport sector and also due to rise in the business field. A lot of international and national chain resorts come up, such as hill resorts, beach resorts, sterling resorts etc. They have established their chain resorts all over the world. In this paper an attempt is made to analyse tourist arrival and utilising the services offered by the Sterling Swamimalai resort in Thanjavur district of Tamilnadu.

## Methodology

The study is based on secondary data. The required data were gathered from the office records of the Swamimalai resort. However personal discussions with manager and other staff members of resort have been made whenever necessary.

## Profile of Sterling Swamimalai Resort

Sterling Swamimalai resort is a beautiful home built around late 1800's. The house radiates harmony and south Indian lifestyle accurately. The house has the magical property to rejuvenate by its sheer simplicity and tranquillity. One gets automatically transported to 'The period 1896'. It is a confluence of leisure, Heritage, Health, Nature, Aesthetics and Spirituality that creates harmony for the mind and the soul, offering the guest the Authentic Indian Experience through a life style, art and culture and making the stay a memorance one. The resort situated in a 6 acre land amidst coconut grooves at the village Baburajapuram at Kumbakonam taluk of Thanjavur district.

## Purpose of Arrival

Tourism has become one of the most important industries of the world. It stands next only to the oil industry. Tourism is distinguished in particular from the related concepts of leisure and recreation. Purpose of journey is the important elements of tourism. On the basis of purpose, tourism can be classified into recreation, cultural, spiritual & religious and health. The arrival of foreign tourist to Sterling Swamimalai Resorts during the period of 2009-10 to 2011-12 is given in Table 1.

**TABLE 1**  
**FOREIGN TOURIST ARRIVAL PURPOSE**

S. No.	Purpose	2009-10	%	2010-11	%	2011-12	%
1	Culture	972	41	1105	43	1386	47
2	Aesthetics	521	22	540	21	648	22
3	Peacefulness	498	21	411	16	294	10
4	Others	381	16	516	20	621	21
	Total	2372		2572		2949	

Source: Primary Data

The table 1 shows the foreign tourist arrival purpose in the resort. The cultural purpose takes 41 percent in 2009-10, 43 percent in 2010-11 and 47 percent in 2011-12. In case of Aesthetics purpose, it stood 22 percent in 2009-10, 21 percent in 2010-11 and 22 percent in 2011-12. In respect of peaceful life purpose, it stood 21 per cent in 2009-10, 16 per cent in 2010-11 and 10 per cent in 2011-12. Finally other purpose got 16 percent in 2009-10, 20 percent in 2010-11 and 21 percent in 2011-12. In short, the tourist for cultural purpose has been increased gradually during the study. In respect of aesthetic purpose, this stood almost standard position. The peaceful life purpose shows a decline from 2009-10 to 2011-12. The arrival of North Indians to Sterling Swamimalai Resorts during the period of 2009-10 to 2011-12 is given in Table 2.

**TABLE 2**  
**NORTH INDIANS' TOURIST ARRIVAL PURPOSE**

S. No.	Purpose	2009-10	%	2010-11	%	2011-12	%
1	Pilgrimage	388	42	588	48	963	57
2	Rests & Relaxation	268	29	269	22	287	17
3	Business	194	21	245	20	253	15
4	Others	78	8	123	10	187	11
	Total	926	100	1225	100	1690	100

Source: Primary Data

The Table 2 revealed the North Indians' tourist arrival purpose to the resort. It consists of pilgrimage purpose, rest and relaxation purpose, business purpose and other purpose. The pilgrimage purpose got higher position which stood 75 percent in 2009-10, 79 percent 2010-11 and 80 percent 2011-12. The purpose of rest and relaxation took 17 percent in 2009-10, 15 percent in 2010-11 and 16 per cent in 2011-12. The business purpose got only 5 percent in 2009-10, 4 percent in 2010-11 and 2 per cent in 2011-12. Lastly the other purpose stood 3 percent in 2009-10, 2 percent in 2010-11 and 2 per cent in 2011-12. It has been ascertained from the above analysis that pilgrimage purpose occupied the highest position among other purpose. Relaxation purpose took second position and the business purpose assumed the legal position. The arrival of South Indians to Sterling Swamimalai Resorts during the period of 2009-10 to 2011-12 is given in Table 3.

**TABLE 3**  
**SOUTH INDIANS' TOURIST ARRIVAL PURPOSE**

S. No.	Purpose	2009-10	%	2010-11	%	2011-12	%
1	Pilgrimage	80	75	134	79	204	80
2	Rests & Relaxation	18	17	25	15	39	16
3	Business	5	5	4	4	6	2
4	Others	4	3	7	2	6	2
	Total	107	100	170	100	255	100

Source: Primary Data

The table 3 showing the South Indian arrivals purpose in the resort. It is divided into pilgrimage purpose, rest and relaxation purpose, business purpose and other. The percentage was higher in percent of pilgrimage purpose which stood at 42 per cent in 2009-10, 48 percent in 2010-11 and 57 per cent in 2011-12. The rest & relaxation purpose took 29 percent in 2009-10, 22 percent in 2010-11 and 17 percent in 2011-12. Business purpose got 21 percent in 2009-10, 20 percent in 2010-11 and 15 percent in 2011-12. Other purpose stood only 8 percent in 2009-10, 10 percent in 2010-11 and 11 percent in 2011-12. In short, the pilgrimage purpose has been increased gradually from 2009-10 to 2011-12. The rests relaxation purpose and business purpose shows a decline from 2009-10 to 2011-12. The other purpose gradually increase from 2009-10 to 2010-11.

### Findings of the Study

When comparing the tourism business in Tamil Nadu level, the tourist arrivals to resorts is relatively low. The domestic tourist is not sound. Restaurant facilities providing by the resort is excellent and it maintains standard like five star deluxe hotel. In addition they are providing South Indian styled homely atmosphere. But the amount of charges from visitors is very high. This resort is providing all sorts of entertainment for relieving from routine life pain and stress by attractive, beneficial and charming recreational facilities. However it is only suitable for those who are able to offer more money. It protects the Indian culture and exposes its unique features among domestic and foreign tourist. It provides ayurvedic medical care and practising Yoga facilities to the visitors. It leads to attract foreign tourist. But it fails to attract the domestic tourist. The total arrival of tourist is increased by 16.5 per cent in 2009-10 and 23.4 percent in

2010-12 and 23.4 percent in 2011-12. The foreign tourist occupied higher position compare to the domestic tourists. Though the foreign tourist arrival increased year after year, it was at decreasing rate. Domestic tourist arrival is evident that the pilgrimage purpose took first position. Foreign tourist arrival is seen that the cultural purpose took first position. This resort is generating foreign exchange and employment besides assisting regional development.

### **Suggestions**

The resort should take adequate steps to improve its tourism business by properly segmenting the customers. The resort should divert from cultural oriented tourism to holiday and leisure tourism. The resort should take step to arrange normal cost restaurant facilities for poor and middle class people which leads to increase domestic tourist arrivals. The resort should take step to attract children through children oriented tourism which paves the way for improving tourism business. The resort may adopt the marketing strategy of emphasising the safety aspect of the foreign travellers. It will increase the confidence among the foreigners. Offering best customer services will in turn increase the turnover rate. It may conduct programme targeting the pilgrimage since this resort is situated near by a famous temple. Presently this resort is providing service with limited staff strength. It can increase the present staff to provide better service. The resort should improve its library which leads to increase in awareness of natural resources of our country and de culture of our country. It can expose our National Symbol which are National flag, National emblem, National Bird, National Animal and National Flower in its premises in the form of handicrafts.

### **Conclusion**

The marketing strategy of the sterling holiday resort has been emerging effective targeting at the foreign clientele. On the whole the resort offers a suitable accommodation with package of services at a reasonable rate. With the growing magnitude of tourism of our country, the role of resorts is growing fast.

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