



ISSN: 2249-894X
 IMPACT FACTOR : 5.7631 (UIF)
 UGC APPROVED JOURNAL NO. 48514
 VOLUME - 8 | ISSUE - 8 | MAY - 2019



TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT:

Transport contributes significantly to our socio-economic needs. Transport industry has acquired a fundamental place in the global network system by facilitating mobility of persons and goods from one place to another through various modes of transportation. The development of

tourism depends on the transport industry. A tourist always thinks of safe, comfortable and convenient mode of transport. And of course, costs and time are also important considerations while deciding on the mode of travel. Here lies the challenge before the transport industry to attract the tourist by offering suitable means of travel as per their requirements.

KEYWORDS: Travel, Transport, Tourist, Developments .

INTRODUCTION

Transport plays an important role in accelerating the socio economic development of a country. It is of growing significance not only in India, but all over the world. The term transport has been derived from the Latin word "Transportare" - Trans means across and port are means to carry to the other side or from one place to another. Transport, therefore, is a service which helps to carry goods and persons from one place to another. The various kinds of modern transport facilities generally available are railways, roadways, inland water

transport, coastal shipping and air transport. These transport systems have their own hierarchies in terms of investments, operational costs, use values to specific groups of people and significance in the context of national, regional and area development. Of these varieties, railways and roadways cater to the bulk of demand for transport. Thus transport is making this very important contribution to the society. It can be stated that the social, political and economic advancement of a country entirely depends upon transport.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present research will intend to study the implications of the

impact of transport infrastructure on Indian tourism industry, particularly in Tamil Nadu and especially in Kanyakumari District. Even though the Indian tourism sector is vast, the researcher tries to find out the impact of transport infrastructure in this sector.

ROAD AND TRANSPORTATION

Roads play a vital role in economic development, opening up remote areas, stimulating the growth of agriculture as well as industry, besides facilitating communication. As an essential element of the transport infrastructure, they contribute, along with the railways, the nation's lifeline. All the villages of Kanyakumari District are connected by road and transport

system. The network of roadways of a country is as essential as the arterial system to the human body. The Chennai-Kanyakumari Highway joins the Kanyakumari - Thiruvananthapuram road near Aralvoimozhi which passes through Nagercoil touching other important places and terminates at Trivandrum in Kerala State covering a distance of 62.4 km. The road network in Kanyakumari District consists of National highways, there are two major National Highways (NH) roads emanating from Kanyakumari town. One is the NH 7 that starts from the town and runs through Madurai and the other is the NH 47 that runs to Salem through Kerala, touching some important cities like Trivandrum, Kochi and Coimbatore. There are also State highways, District roads and rural roads. Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation is the major operator of bus services in the district. Today, there are 3495.80 km of surface roads in the district. Indian Railway operates train from Kanyakumari District to many important places of India. There is a proposal to build an airport in Nagercoil by Airports Authority of India. It is clear that Kanyakumari District is equipped with rich infrastructure like Educational Institutions, roads and power.

TOURISM IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

Kanyakumari District attracts tourists from other States of India and even from foreign countries. The following areas are the main tourist attractions. Gandhi Mandapam, Vivekananda Memorial Mandapam, Thiruvalluvar Statue of 133 feet height in the sea. Kamarajar Manimandapam, Bhagavathi Amman Temple, Mandaikadu Bhagavathi Amman Temple. Suchindram, Sthanumalayan Temple, Padmanabhapuram Palace with an Archaeological Museum, Udayagiri Fort, Vattakottai Fort located six kilometres from Kanyakumari, St. Xavier's Church Kottar, Home Church Nagercoil, Mosque at Thuckalai, Bawa Kassim Valiyullah Masjid, Elankadai, the Rocky Muttom, Swamithope Pathi one of the Panchappathies of the Ayyavazhiseet, The Marthanda Varma Mathur hanging trough, Chitharal Jain Monuments, Olakaruvi waterfalls, Pechiparai reservoir, Perunchani and Chittar Dams. Thiruparrapu falls, Sanguthurai beach, Sothavilai beach, Mukkudal reservoir, Kalikesam are the important tourist places in the district, and the congenial climate attracts both the Indian and foreign tourists. Marunthuvalmalai attracts spiritualists seeking solace in solitude. Kodayar Hydro Project a power-generating scheme also attracts domestic tourists.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hussain, Asif; Fisher, David; Espiner, Stephen (2017) have made a study titled, "Transport Infrastructure and Social Inclusion: A Case Study of Tourism in the Region of Gilgit-Baltistan", Until the building of the Karakorum Highway (1958-78), the region of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan, was extremely isolated, thus preserving distinct cultural traits. The few tourists accessing the area were primarily experienced mountaineers. The highway was established to provide a land link with China, principally as a result of turbulent geo-political rivalry. Once built, however, the road created a connexion to the outside world and allowed for many more visitors to the region. Whilst the road was not built with tourism in mind, it allowed easier access for tourists and necessitated the development of a service sector to provide for those using the road. As a consequence, a once subsistence and self-reliant economy became monetised, and modern consumer goods were introduced to the region. Increased access and mobility has facilitated change in the Gilgit-Baltistan, contributing to a degree of social inclusion not previously possible. Whilst there are multiple drivers of change observed here, tourism has provided an important means by which some of the more profound changes have occurred. Local people have adapted their livelihoods to the new, monetary economy resulting in a decline in traditional agricultural practices. More importantly, however, tourism has enabled the outside world to enter into the consciousness of local people. Visitors have become conduits of change and the world is now viewed via technologies made possible by the spoils of tourism. The road has also allowed for much easier movement of local people out of and back to Gilgit-Baltistan, thereby facilitating increased social inclusion with the wider world.

Stanley Joseph Michal Raj (2016) in their study entitled, "Impact of Tourism in India", The Tourism ministry has also played an important role in the development of the industry, initiating advertising campaigns such as the 'Incredible India' campaign, which promoted India's culture and tourist attractions in a fresh and memorable way. Traveling and Tourism has been an integral part of Indian Culture & Tradition. Tourism Industry is the most vibrant tertiary activity and a multibillion industry in India. The potential and performance of India's tourism industry needs to gauge in terms of its socio-economic magnitudes. It also examines the impact of India's economic growth on tourism, Contributors to economic growth, Role of Tourism industry in India's GDP, Foreign versus Domestic Tourists. Tourism is one of the fastest growing service industries in the country with great potentials for its further expansion and diversification. Tourism industry plays a major role in any country's economic development. It helps significantly to the country for creating the employment opportunities to the large number of people. Moreover, it is also one of the important engines to attract more foreign exchanges with its potential. We need to concentrate to have liberal policies, relaxation in taxes, comprehensive package and so on to influence tourist and foreign investment. There is also a need to increase the government's role to make India flourishing in tourism and established in the global market. India has rich source in tourism for the establishment of the brand. Of course India has been launched the Incredible India to make tourism better.

Lingappan A. and Abdul Haneef. N (2011) in their article, "Marketing Strategy of Tourism Industry" are of the opinion that tourism industry is the largest employment generator of the world. This is the only industry which requires less or no investment yet it generates billions of foreign exchange to the country. Tourism is one of the major earners of foreign exchange for the country perhaps there is hardly any other field of activity where so many people are involved directly or indirectly. India is one of the best countries of the world for most productive creative, enlightening and exclusive tourism. The need of the hour is for the public and private sectors to work earnestly with a commitment to develop India as the most attractive tourism destination in the world.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the impact of transport infrastructure in tourism in Kanyakumari District.
2. To analyse the opinion of tourists, regarding tourist transportation services in Kanyakumari District.

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of assessment the role and growth of transport facilities in Kanyakumari District, both secondary and primary data were collected. Secondary data were collected from the Tourism Development Corporation, Books, Journals and Newspaper etc. The primary data were collected by a well structured questionnaire. Direct interview was also conducted by the researcher.

Impact of Transport Infrastructure in Tourism Development Tourism in Kanyakumari

Kanyakumari is located in the southernmost land area of mainland of India and it is the smallest district out of 32 districts of Tamil Nadu. The district has derived its name from the tourist town of "Kanyakumari" which is located at the southernmost tip of Indian peninsula which faces the Indian Ocean. The district is well known as "The District of ponds" or "The Lands End". The district has the destination to have the best life in the state and best educated district in the Indian state Tamil Nadu. It is estimated that around 10,000 tourists visit Kanyakumari almost every day and approximately 5,000 during the offseason. The most important places to visit in Kanyakumari are mainly Thiruvalluvar statue, Vivekananda Rock Memorial, Kamarajar Mandapam, Mahatma Gandhi Memorial and Bay watch (Water theme Amusement park). The other important religious tourist interest centres are Suncidrum, Kanyakumari Bagavathiamman Temple, St. Xavier Church, Peer Mohammed Durha, Maruthuvamalai including some other tourist attractions spots around Kanyakumari namely Udayagiri fort, Mathur Hanging Bridge, Padmanabhapuram Palace, Pechiparai Dam, Thirparappu Waterfalls and Vattakottai (Circular Fort).

Transportation

Transport is yet another vital component of tourism is a necessary condition of tourism. The growth of tourism is generally affected by the development of the means of transport. Tourism as explained earlier is a some of relationships resulting from travel and stay of non-residents. Thus a tourist to see some of the places of interest quite apart from the places, needs transport facilities. It is estimated that travel costs are typically about 40 Percentage of the total holiday expenditure. Thus in tourism travel contributes a major share. The various forms of transport may be divided into three categories.

- A). Air Transport
- B). Land
 - a) Road Transport
 - b) Rail Transport
- C). Water Transport

Road transport constitutes one of the most important activities of man in every stage advanced civilization. It is an important constituent of the infrastructure for economic growth. India has the largest network of roads with a total length of 27 lakh km. The national highways which are the arterial routes have a network of 58,112 km only. The Indian roads sector, especially the national highways has witnessed a sea change in the recent past. Majority of the roads are highly congested have poor quality and are poorly maintained.

Tourists Opinion regarding Travel Convenience and Transport Facilities in Kanyakumari

Table I shows the details regarding the convenience of transport chosen by the tourists in Kanyakumari District.

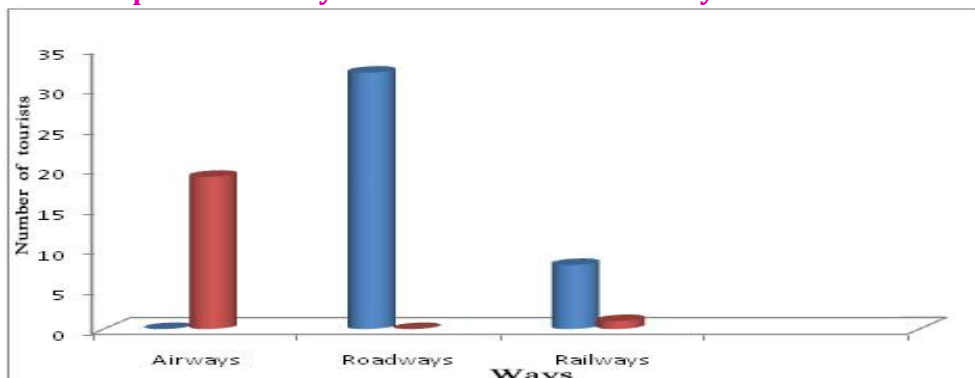
Table - I
Transport Chosen by the Tourist to Reach in Kanyakumari District

Sources	No of Domestic Tourist		No of Foreign Tourist		Total
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	
Airways	-	-	19	95	19
Roadways	32	80	-	-	32
Railways	8	20	1	5	9
Total	40	100	20	100	60

Sources: Primary Data

The table clearly indicates that 95 Percentage of the foreign tourists prefer airways to reach Kanyakumari. In case of domestic tourists 80 Percentage of them prefer Roadways to reach Kanyakumari.

Chart-I
Transport Chosen by the Tourist to reach in Kanyakumari District



Mode of Transport Considered Traveling within the District

Table II shows the details about the mode of transport chosen to travel within the district.

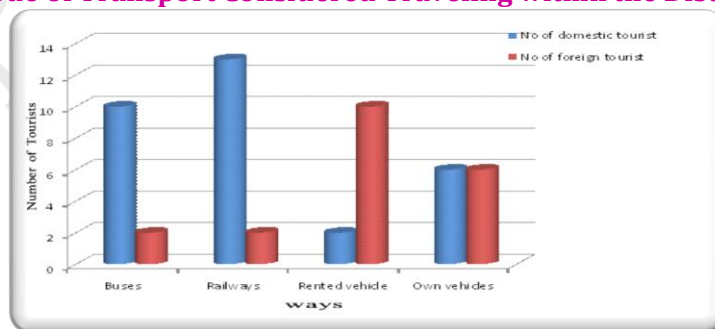
Table-II
Mode of Transport Considered Traveling within the District

Sources	No of Domestic Tourist		No of Foreign Tourist		Total
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	
Buses	19	48	2	10	21
Railways	13	32	2	10	15
Rented Vehicles	2	5	10	50	12
Own Vehicles	6	15	6	30	12
Total	40	100	20	100	60

Sources: Primary Data

It is clear from the Table II that 48 Percentage of domestic tourists, would prefer to travel in Kanyakumari District with Buses. Then 32 Percentage of the tourists prefer railway to visit the tourist centres in Kanyakumari District. Out of the rest 20 Percentage (domestic tourist), 5 Percentage of the tourist use to travel in rented vehicles and 15 Percentage of the tourists prefer their own vehicles.

Chart-II
Mode of Transport Considered Traveling within the District



FINDINGS

1. Transport system from local and distance travel is well organised and functioning effectively.
2. Bus stand and Railway station through dispersed are neatly maintained and are having all facilities.
3. Vehicles for local transport are scarce. Auto rickshaws have no meter and hence they are collecting higher rates.
4. The popular form of transport available in Kanyakumari are Road and Rail transport, In case of Rail transport, It helps to increase the tourist arrivals in Kanyakumari especially North Indians. Some of the special train like Bombay-Kanyakumari Express and Kanyakumari-Jammu Tawi Express which arrives and departs once in a week brings a tourist of North Indians.
5. The major drawback is the transport service does not cover all the tourist places. This problem was highly affected by the tourist. Kerala Government implemented one scheme that of one bus compulsorily connecting all the tourist places in Kanyakumari District in Weekend days. Such scheme is not available in Kanyakumari District.
6. Being an important tourist destination in India Kanyakumari should be connected by air. If connected through airways the arrival of foreign tourists will be increased.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the present study, it can be concluded that Kanyakumari is a tourist spot with all potentials to attract foreign and domestic tourists but it is not fully explored. Steps to be taken to develop transport facilities and other facilities. Transportation is not maintained properly and periodically. All facilities are available to a large extent but the maintenance and functioning are very poor. Thus Kanyakumari with the unique tourist spot and transportation will become a tourist paradise attracting tourists foreign and domestic. If it is provided with a hygienic environment, quiet atmosphere, the expected facilities and proper service the District will come out as one of the famous and attractive tourist centres in the country.

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