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## Exploring the impact of accommodation attributes on destination satisfaction among domestic tourists in Tamil Nadu

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### Abstract

Tourism is a vital global industry that plays a crucial role in the economic, social, and cultural development of regions and nations. This study investigates the impact of accommodation attributes on destination satisfaction among domestic tourists visiting selected heritage and hill destinations in Tamil Nadu. The structured questionnaire was used and data was collected from 150 domestic tourists across five key destinations attributes using stratified random sampling. Accommodation attributes includes Price & Facilities, Location, Service, Reviews, and Safety. The data was analyzed and interpreted using simple percentages, mean values, standard deviations, variance, and regression analysis. It was found that all the five factors had a considerable impact on destination satisfaction of the tourist. Among these, Price & Facilities was the most influential factor. Regression model showed a strong relationship, explaining 98.4% of the variance in satisfaction. Accommodation providers should focus on affordability, cleanliness, safety, and service excellence. Enhancing these attributes will improve the tourist experiences and promote sustainable tourism growth.

**Keywords:** Destination, attributes, satisfaction, tourist

### Introduction

Tourism contributes significantly to the state's economy, accounting for approximately 8-10% of Tamil Nadu's GDP. (Jha 2022) <sup>[8]</sup>. This industry provides both direct and indirect employment possibilities for a diverse variety of people, from trained professionals to unskilled workers, hence promoting inclusive economic growth and poverty eradication. (Dhanasekaran, 2021) <sup>[2]</sup>. Tamil Nadu is known for its extensive variety of heritage sites and attractive hill stations, making it a popular destination for both local and international visitors. The state is home to UNESCO World Heritage sites such as the Brihadeeswarar Temple and Mahabalipuram, as well as popular hill resorts such as Ooty, Kodaikanal, and Yercaud, all of which provide unique experiences based in natural beauty and cultural heritage. As tourism in these places grows, the quality and diversity of lodging options, which range from heritage hotels and eco-resorts to cheap accommodations, become increasingly important in molding tourist satisfaction and influencing destination selection.

### Review of Literature

Gunasekaran and Anandkumar (2012) <sup>[4]</sup> investigates the factors influencing tourists' choices when selecting alternative accommodations like guest houses or bed and breakfasts, rather than conventional hotels. The study specifically focuses on Pondicherry, a coastal heritage town in India, which has seen a rise in such lodging options. Through primary data collection from guests, the authors utilize factor analysis to pinpoint the motivations behind these decisions. Understanding these influencing factors is crucial for alternative accommodation providers to distinguish their offerings effectively and appeal to their target client. According to Vidhya and Selvam (2019) <sup>[12]</sup>, an empirical study was conducted in Vellore City, Tamil Nadu, focused on pilgrim tourists visiting the Golden Temple. They aimed to explore their perceptions of accommodation and transport facilities. The data was analyzed using statistical tools such as percentages, Chi-square, and ANOVA using SPSS. Findings revealed that family income had no significant relationship with accommodation preferences, while age significantly influenced perceptions of transport facilities.

Kanagarani (2020) <sup>[9]</sup> examines the impact of hotel marketing strategies on tourism development and customer satisfaction. Using data from 150 hoteliers and tools like regression analysis and ANOVA, the study identifies key factors such as quality consciousness, employee morale, communication, and customer satisfaction as significantly influencing market orientation. The variables like technology absorption and sales promotion were found less impactful. The research concludes that a strong service orientation, proper performance monitoring, and trained personnel are essential for enhancing both hotel performance and tourist satisfaction, urging governmental support through infrastructure and training initiatives. Sulistyawati & Suarka, (2020) <sup>[11]</sup> conducted a study to explore the preferences and characteristics of Chinese tourists in selecting accommodations in Badung district, Bali, based on responses from 50 tourists using incidental sampling and conjoint analysis. Most tourists were women aged 15-24 from Liaoning Province, visiting for the first time, staying 4-6 days with friends for leisure, and mainly choosing star-rated hotels in Nusa Dua. Key factors influencing their accommodation choices, ranked in importance, were: facilities, promotion, comfort, location, service, price, and cleanliness.

### Importance of the Study

Accommodation is consistently identified as one of the most influential destination attributes affecting tourist satisfaction. Among the numerous destination features, accommodation has the largest impact on overall satisfaction among domestic travellers (Hasan *et al*, 2020) <sup>[5]</sup>. In addition, Several essential elements contribute to tourist satisfaction in Tamil Nadu's cultural and hill attractions. At hill stations like Udhagamandalam in the Nilgiris, tourists are generally satisfied with accommodation and amenities, though senior citizens express dissatisfaction with banking and healthcare facilities (Jayaram & Bai, 2011) <sup>[7]</sup>. In Chennai's hotel industry, tourists express satisfaction with staff attributes but only average satisfaction with service quality, indicating a need for improvement in amenities and food services (Baby, 2021) <sup>[1]</sup>. These findings highlight the importance of understanding accommodation attributes to enhance destination satisfaction across Tamil Nadu's heritage and hill destinations.

### Statement of the Problem

As tourism continues to grow in Tamil Nadu's heritage and hill destinations, domestic tourists have a wide range of accommodation preferences and expectations. Despite the availability of various lodging options, many accommodations fail to meet tourists' evolving demands in

terms of affordability, safety, service, and location. This mismatch can directly affect overall destination satisfaction, influencing tourists' likelihood to revisit or recommend a place. Hence, it becomes essential to understand which specific accommodation attributes significantly contribute to tourist satisfaction. This study addresses the gap by examining the impact of key accommodation factors on destination satisfaction, aiming to provide insights for enhancing the quality of tourist experiences and informing future tourism development strategies.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the factors that influence domestic tourists' choices of accommodation at selected heritage and hill destinations in Tamil Nadu.
2. To assess the level of destination satisfaction among domestic tourists and also to understand how accommodation experience contributes to this satisfaction.
3. To analyze the relationship between accommodation attributes and overall destination satisfaction.

### Research Design

**Population:** Domestic tourists visiting various destinations in Tamil Nadu.

**Sample Selection:** The Stratified Random Sampling method is used to select the sample from the total population. The total population is divided into 6 strata (sub-groups) based on location. From each stratum, 25 samples are selected randomly, ensuring equal representation from all locations.

**Table 1:** Sample Selection

| Tourist Spots                     | Sample selected |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Thanjavur (Brihadeeswarar Temple) | 25              |
| Chidambaram (Nataraja Temple)     | 25              |
| Trichy (Rock Fort Temple)         | 25              |
| Ooty (Botanical Gardens)          | 25              |
| Kodaikanal (Kodai Lake)           | 25              |
| Kanyakumari                       | 25              |
| Total                             | 150             |

**Tools Used:** The primary data from respondents were collected through a structured questionnaire designed using 5-point Likert scale. Simple Percentages, Mean, Standard deviation, Variance and Regression analysis using SPSS have been computed to test the hypothesis under study.

### Simple Percentage

**Table 2:** Demographic Profile

| Variable        | Category                   | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Gender          | Male                       | 83            | 55.3%          |
|                 | Female                     | 67            | 44.7%          |
| Age Group       | Below 25 years             | 30            | 20.0%          |
|                 | 26-35 years                | 53            | 35.3%          |
|                 | 36-45 years                | 38            | 25.3%          |
|                 | Above 45 years             | 29            | 19.3%          |
| Education Level | High School                | 22            | 14.7%          |
|                 | Undergraduate (Bachelor's) | 75            | 50.0%          |
|                 | Postgraduate & above       | 53            | 35.3%          |
| Occupation      | Student                    | 30            | 20.0%          |

|                |                      |     |       |
|----------------|----------------------|-----|-------|
|                | Working Professional | 75  | 50.0% |
|                | Business Owner       | 23  | 15.3% |
|                | Retired/Homemaker    | 22  | 14.7% |
| Monthly Income | Less than ₹20,000    | 30  | 20.0% |
|                | ₹20,001 - ₹40,000    | 53  | 35.3% |
|                | ₹40,001 - ₹60,000    | 38  | 25.3% |
|                | Above ₹60,000        | 29  | 19.3% |
| Type of Travel | Individual           | 23  | 15.3% |
|                | With Family          | 68  | 45.3% |
|                | With Friends         | 45  | 30.0% |
|                | Business/Official    | 14  | 9.3%  |
| Total          |                      | 150 | 100%  |

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 indicates that among the 150 respondents, the majority are male (55.3%) and females represent (44.7%). Most respondents fall within the 26-35 years age group (35.3%), followed by those aged 36-45 years (25.3%), indicating that the primary traveling population is young to middle-aged adults. In terms of education, a significant portion holds an undergraduate degree (50.0%), with another 35.3% having postgraduate qualifications or higher, suggesting a well-educated sample. The highest portion is working professionals (50.0%), while students (20.0%), business owners (15.3%), and retired/homemakers (14.7%)

form notable segments. Regarding income, the majority fall into the middle-income range, particularly ₹20,001-₹40,000 (35.3%), with a balanced spread across lower and higher income groups as well. Travel preferences reveal that most respondents prefer traveling with family (45.3%), friends (30.0%), while individual (15.3%) and business/official travel (9.3%) are less common.

It is found that travel is more popular among educated, working, and middle-income individuals who favour group leisure travel.

**Table 3:** Descriptive Statistics on Accommodation Attributes

| Accommodation Attributes |                                      | Mean | S.D  | Variance |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|------|------|----------|
| Price & facilities       | Affordable room rates                | 4.39 | 0.74 | 0.549    |
|                          | In-house restaurant                  | 4.53 | 0.58 | 0.345    |
|                          | Value for money                      | 4.32 | 0.63 | 0.407    |
|                          | Clean and hygienic rooms             | 4.41 | 0.67 | 0.459    |
|                          | Space for Parking                    | 4.36 | 0.68 | 0.475    |
| Location                 | Close to tourist attractions         | 4.25 | 0.71 | 0.513    |
|                          | Peaceful and Quiet                   | 4.34 | 0.70 | 0.490    |
|                          | Scenic Surrounding                   | 4.31 | 0.66 | 0.445    |
|                          | Near shopping areas                  | 4.16 | 0.69 | 0.489    |
|                          | Easy access to transportation        | 4.42 | 0.64 | 0.420    |
| Service                  | Courteous and helpful staff          | 4.18 | 0.67 | 0.457    |
|                          | Prompt and Efficient service         | 4.28 | 0.68 | 0.471    |
|                          | 24/7 service                         | 4.15 | 0.77 | 0.600    |
|                          | Efficient check-in/check-out process | 4.12 | 0.75 | 0.576    |
|                          | Personalized customer service        | 4.07 | 0.75 | 0.565    |
| Reviews                  | High ratings on Online reviews       | 4.01 | 0.85 | 0.738    |
|                          | Consider Comments in reviews         | 4.14 | 0.71 | 0.510    |
|                          | Hotel responds to online feedback    | 4.13 | 0.72 | 0.519    |
|                          | Recommendations from other travelers | 4.26 | 0.67 | 0.452    |
|                          | Social media presence and reputation | 4.21 | 0.70 | 0.491    |
| Safety                   | Availability of CCTV surveillance    | 4.12 | 0.74 | 0.554    |
|                          | Secure room locks                    | 4.13 | 0.72 | 0.532    |
|                          | Presence of fire safety measures     | 4.11 | 0.76 | 0.584    |
|                          | Emergency support and contact        | 4.25 | 0.70 | 0.499    |

Source: Primary data (Computed)

Table 3 indicates that Price & Facilities is the most influential factor in accommodation attributes, with high mean scores for in-house restaurant (4.53), Clean and hygienic rooms (4.41), and affordable room rates (4.39). Location is also a key factor, especially easy access to transportation (4.42) and peaceful and quiet surroundings (4.34). Service-related aspects like prompt service (4.28) and courteous staff (4.18) are important but show more variability in responses. In the Reviews category, recommendations from travelers scored high (4.26), while high online ratings had the lowest mean (4.01) and highest variation (S.D. = 0.85), indicating differing opinions. Safety

features such as emergency support (4.25) and secure locks (4.13) were consistently rated high.

### Regression Analysis

The regression analysis was conducted to test the following hypotheses

- **Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between accommodation attributes and destination satisfaction among the tourists.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>a</sub>):** There is a significant relationship between accommodation attributes and destination satisfaction among the tourists.

| Model Summary   |                   |          |                   |                            |               |
|---|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Model   | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
| 1   | .992 <sup>a</sup> | .984     | .983              | .05164                     | 2.094         |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Safety, Service, Price & Facilities, Location, Reviews |                   |          |                   |                            |               |
| b. Dependent Variable: Destination satisfaction                                   |                   |          |                   |                            |               |

| ANOVA <sup>b</sup>  |                |     |             |         |                   |
|---|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| Model   | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F       | Sig.              |
| 1 Regression  | 23.579         | 5   | 4.716       | 1.768E3 | .000 <sup>a</sup> |
| Residual  | .384           | 144 | .003        |         |                   |
| Total   | 23.963         | 149 |             |         |                   |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Safety, Service, Price & Facilities, Location, Reviews |                |     |             |         |                   |
| b. Dependent Variable: Destination satisfaction                                   |                |     |             |         |                   |

| Coefficients <sup>a</sup>                       |                             |            |                           |        |      |                         |       |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|-------------------------|-------|
| Model   | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. | Collinearity Statistics |       |
|   | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      | Tolerance               | VIF   |
| 1 (Constant)                                    | .119                        | .045       |                           | 2.624  | .010 |                         |       |
| Price & Facilities                              | .277                        | .012       | .325                      | 23.741 | .000 | .595                    | 1.682 |
| Location  | .168                        | .013       | .199                      | 12.904 | .000 | .467                    | 2.141 |
| Service   | .192                        | .011       | .255                      | 17.114 | .000 | .502                    | 1.991 |
| Reviews   | .148                        | .013       | .195                      | 11.655 | .000 | .398                    | 2.512 |
| Safety  | .190                        | .010       | .264                      | 18.267 | .000 | .534                    | 1.872 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Destination satisfaction |                             |            |                           |        |      |                         |       |

Source: Computed data

### Regression Equation

**Destination Satisfaction = 0.119 + 0.277(Price & Facilities) + 0.168(Location) + 0.192 (Service) + 0.148 (reviews) + 0.190 (Safety) + e**

The Model summary shows that all the independent variables significantly contribute to predicting tourist destination satisfaction, as indicated by the p-values (.000), i.e., highly significant. Tolerance values range from 0.398 to 0.595, and VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values are all below 5, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern.

- Price & Facilities has the highest standardized beta ( $\beta = .325$ ) and a t-value of 23.741, making it the strongest predictor. A 1-point increase in satisfaction of accommodation attribute i.e price and facilities leads to a 0.33 unit increase in Destination satisfaction of tourists. This suggests that better pricing and facility offerings significantly increase satisfaction of tourist.
- Safety follows closely with  $\beta = .264$  and  $t = 18.267$ , indicating a strong positive influence. A 1-point increase in the perception of safety leads to a 0.26 unit increase in satisfaction, showing that secure environments are highly valued. Travelers place great importance on safety when choosing accommodations.
- Service also shows a strong effect ( $\beta = .255$ ,  $t = 17.114$ ), highlighting the role of staff behavior and service efficiency. A 1-point rise in satisfaction with staff behaviour and service quality increases satisfaction by 0.25 units. This indicates that personalized service and hospitality play more important role to tourists.
- Location ( $\beta = .199$ ,  $t = 12.904$ ) and Reviews ( $\beta = .195$ ,  $t = 11.655$ ) have slightly lower but still significant impacts, showing that convenience and online reputation also affect preferences. For every 1-point increase in tourists' rating of location and accessibility, their satisfaction score increases by 0.199 units. Likewise, for every point increase in reviews resulting in a 0.195 unit increase in satisfaction.

### Findings

- The majority of respondents were male (55.3%).
- Most respondents belonged to the 26-35 years age group (35.3%).
- Undergraduate degree holders made up the largest group at 50%.
- Working professionals formed the majority at 50%.
- The highest proportion earned ₹20,001-₹40,000 per month (35.3%).
- Most respondents travelled with their family (45.3%), followed by with friends (30%).
- Price & Facilities had the strongest influence on destination satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.325$ ), particularly elements like in-house restaurants, affordability, and clean rooms.
- Safety ( $\beta = 0.264$ ) was the second most significant factor, highlighting the importance of emergency support, CCTV, and secure locks helps in building trust and comfort among tourists.
- Service Quality ( $\beta = 0.255$ ), as well as prompt responses and courteous staff, plays a major role in improving the tourist experience.
- Location ( $\beta = 0.199$ ), especially easy access to transportation and proximity to attractions, was another important factor affecting satisfaction.
- Online Reviews ( $\beta = 0.195$ ) also contributed positively, showing that recommendations and social media presence influence tourists' perceptions and choices.
- The model explained 98.4% of the variance in destination satisfaction ( $R^2 = 0.984$ ), indicating a very strong fit.

### Suggestions

- Accommodation providers should prioritize affordability, cleanliness, and essential facilities to enhance tourist satisfaction.
- It is essential to prioritize enhancing safety measures, such as surveillance, secure access, and emergency



preparedness.

- Continuous training and performance reviews for service staff are vital to maintain high-quality and responsive guest service.
- Leverage positive online reviews and proactive customer feedback engagement to build reputation and trust.
- Strategic location planning near key tourist attractions and transport hubs can improve accessibility and convenience for travellers.
- Development of family- and group-friendly packages is recommended, reflecting the dominant domestic travel preferences.
- Policymakers should support tourism infrastructure upgrades and promote eco-friendly lodging to sustain long-term destination appeal.

### Conclusion

The Study concludes that accommodation attributes significantly impact destination satisfaction among domestic tourists in Tamil Nadu. Price & Facilities emerged as the most influential factor, followed by Safety and Service Quality. Location and Online Reviews also positively contributed to tourist satisfaction. The regression model showed a strong relationship, explaining 98.4% of the variance in satisfaction. Most tourists were young, educated, and preferred to travel with their family. Accommodation Providers should focus on improving affordability, hygiene, safety measures, and personalized service to enhance the overall tourist experience. This helps the stakeholders to develop more tourist-friendly infrastructure and sustainable tourism strategies.

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