

Analyzing An Impact of Temple Economics on GDP and Creating An Employment Opportunity in Indian Economy

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ABSTRACT:

The temple economies in ancient Bharat was a complex and multifaceted system that intertwined religious, social, and economic aspects of life. This research paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the economic and employment impact of Indian temples, with a focus on the famous temples all over India. The study is based on data collected from secondary source including the number of temples, their size, the number of festivals and events organized, the number of people employed, and the revenue generated by the temples. The research found that the temples in India have a significant impact on the economy and employment of the country. They generate an essential amount of revenue through donations, offerings, and other sources, which is used to maintain and develop the temple infrastructure, contributing to the local economy. The temples also provide employment opportunities to a large number of people, including parson, temple staffs, and local people, who sell goods and services to the devotees. The study concludes that the temples in India play a crucial role in the economic and employment growth of the country, and more research is needed to further understand their impact. This research paper highlights the importance of temples as a driver of tourism and their role in India's GDP.

Keywords: Indian Temples, Economy, Employment.

INTRODUCTION

The temple economy in India is a dynamic force that promotes regional wealth and advances the country. India, a land with a rich and diverse history, was once the epitome of prosperity, both spiritually and materially. In this journey through time, we delve into the multifaceted role of temples in India, exploring their significance beyond being mere religious institutions. Temples were not only centres of worship but also crucial components that shaped the socio-economic-political landscape of the nation. Temples like Tirupati, Madurai, and Amritsar, with their complex dance between spirituality and commerce, demonstrate the possibility of a peaceful cohabitation between cultural preservation and sustainable economic growth. In ancient Bharat, mandirs were providing not only spiritual salvation but also livelihood opportunities to the local community. The temples are an integral part of Indian culture and tradition, and they hold a special place in the hearts of millions of Indians. They not only serve as places

of worship but also play a significant role in the social, cultural, and economic life of the country. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the economic and employment impact of Indian temples. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the economic and employment impact of Indian temples, with a reference to temples in India. This paper is organised under three sections.

Section 1: Economic Contribution of Indian Temples This section analyses the importance of famous temples in India, their role in shaping the country's society and culture, and their contribution to the economy. It also includes case studies of Indian temples.

Section 2: Creating an Employment opportunity of Indian Temples. This section provides an overview of the employment generation potential of Indian temples and their contribution to the Indian economy.

Section 3: Conclusion The final section presents the conclusions drawn from the analysis and discussion in the above sections.

Review of Literature:

Temple Economy in Ancient & Medieval India by Aviral Prataph Singh Chawda

Published online by Cambridge University [Year- 2004]

Temple Economy were not only places of worship but also repositories of tradition, centres of education, charitable institutions, hospitals, and centre's for the preservation of fine arts and historical records. Temples also served as governing bodies for local self-government, places of entertainment and justice, and meeting places.

Landed endowment and sacred food the economy of an Indian Temples Published online by Cambridge University Press: [Year-2009]

This paper majorly states about with the Jagannath temple of Puri which nowadays constitutes one of the biggest remaining North Indian temple and pilgrimage centers. This town of 60,000 inhabitants still draws approximately one million pilgrims annually from all over India.

Emergence of Temple Towns in India with Special Reference to Udhampur District, Jammu and Kashmir. Published online by Harsha Joshi in Indian Journal of Distance Education [Year- 2022]

Religion has been an integral part of every society. Its evolution from nature worship to a structured belief system led to the development of temples, monasteries, mathas, and other religious institutions. Built under the patronage of the rulers and merchant community, the religious spaces aided in the economic development as well and became the backbone of the society. These religious institutions were the nucleus of a society around which the town settled. Thus, leading to the emergence of temple towns all over India.

Approaches for Assessment and Analysis in the Temple Cities of India-Published Online by Ar. Arathy Gopal, Prof. Dr. Mayank Mathur, Prof. Dr. Mandeep Singh[Year- 2019]

The paper attempts to explore the methods for quantitative assessment of change in urban form, specific to the context of Temple cities of India. The various theoretical approaches to studying urban form were reviewed for suitability to quantitative assessment and cognitive- aspect analysis approach was found suitable. Critical review of empirical research papers along this perspective was done and aspects and indicators relevant to the context of Temple cities of India were identified. The measurable indicators of change in urban form have been identified from existing literature at three scales – city, area and street level. At the city/area level, indicators have been identified for six aspects of urban form - urban expansion, population density, uniformity in population density and distribution, land utilization, mixing of land uses and accessibility of transport infrastructure. At the street level, the indicators were identified for four aspects of urban form – density, function, height and perception. The aspects and indicators are listed in a

comprehensive matrix; for aid in quantitative assessment of change in urban form. The matrix proposed in the paper could help future empirical studies on change in urban form in Temple cities of India.

Temple Ecology and Cognitive Development: A Report from South India- Published by R. Murulidharan and Ashok K Srivastava [Year- 1995]

The impact of growing up in the vicinity of Hindu temples on cognitive development was studied in the southern part of India. Enrolled in Grades 1 and 4, the participating children (N-281) were drawn from three kinds of ecology, i.e., families intimately associated with temple, families that are religious but not so intimately associated with temple, and families in non-temple areas, using a cross-sectional design. NCERT School Readiness Scale and Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System were used to assess their cognitive development. Children associated with temples emerged to be more cognitively competent than other two groups of children on both points of schooling. Sex differences and their interaction with ecology were not significant for most of the measures. Results point to the role of temple institutions in shaping development of children by providing rich and variegated ecology.

Section 1: Economic Contribution of Indian Temples for a growth.

Overview of famous Indian Temples

The Hindu temple architecture as the main form of Hindu architecture has many varieties of style, though the basic nature of the Hindu temple remains the same, with the essential feature an inner sanctum, the garbha griha or womb-chamber, where the primary Murti or the image of a deity is housed in a simple bare cell. For rituals and prayers, this chamber frequently has an open space that can be moved in a clockwise direction. There are frequently additional buildings and structures in the vicinity of this chamber, with the largest ones covering several acres. Local temples were once the centers of the community where people gathered to exchange news and ideas, share their stories and difficulties, seek each other's advice, and plan their social lives. Money received from prosperous farmers was distributed through the sale of goods produced by small businessmen, potters, and craftsmen. Vaidyas, teachers, people associated with music, and astrologers were also associated with the temple, making it a hub of activity for the whole society. India has a rich cultural and religious heritage, and religion plays a vital role in the lives of its people.

India has 649000 + temples as of 2022. These are spread across rural and urban areas. There are top 12 states in India which consist of more number of temples. Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra & Karnataka these states having more temples in India. In the whole of India, there are more than 50 lakh temples in six and a half lakh villages. Even if only one family is employed in every village temple, more than 60 lakh people in the country are directly running their livelihoods from the temples. Moreover, a large number of people indirectly get employment from temples. In small towns and cities, the number of temples generally ranges from 30 to 60, and many of them have appointed priests from families or religious institutions.

On the report of the NSSO survey, the Hindu temple economy is worth Rs 3.02 lakh crore, or about \$40 billion and 2.32 percent of GDP. In actual fact, it could be much larger. Sacred things, like flowers, oil, lamps, perfumes, bangles, sindur, images, and puja dresses are all included. The NSSO figures suggest that 55 per cent of Hindus undertake religious pilgrimages patronizing mid and small-sized hotels.

The Case Studies of Prominent Indian Temples:

The Temples and pilgrimage centres in India are not just centres of faith but also important sources of economic activity. They attract millions of devotees every year, leading to the growth of many supporting industries. The Indian temples have been a significant part of the country's cultural and religious heritage

for centuries. Many temples in India have become important pilgrimage sites, attracting millions of tourists and devotees every year. In this paper, we will look at the top 10 Indian temples based on the number of tourists, offerings, donations, total staff, and their contribution to funding education and hospital institutions.

Sl. No	Temple Name	Visitors in a year	Staff	Total revenue	Offerings & Donations
1	Tirumala Venkateswara Temple, Andhra Pradesh	24 million	16,000	5,141.74 crore	39 crore
2	Vaishno Devi Temple-Jammu and Kashmir	95 lakh	3,000	\$16 million	INR 500 Crore
3	Jagannath Temple, Puri-Odisha	1.15 crore	6,000	Rs 106 crore	500 crore
4	Siddhivinayak Temple, Mumbai	22 million	2,000	125 hundred crores	INR 150 million
5	Kashi Vishwanath Temple – Uttar Pradesh	3 million	300	Rs 83.34 crore	INR 100 crore
6	Golden Temple - Punjab	20 million	2,800	INR 500 crore	INR 900 crore
7	Somnath Temple - Gujarat	1 crore	200	Rs 33 crore	INR 60 crore
8	Meenakshi Amman Temple, Madurai	2.09 crore	5,000	60 million	₹1.28 crore
9	The Ram Temple in Ayodhya-Uttar Pradesh	1.79 crore	1,600	25,000 crore	Rs. 100 crores
10	Shirdi Sai Baba Temple, Maharashtra	8 million	3,000	Rs 900 crore	INR 350 crore

Table 1: Top 10 Indian Temples Based on the Visitors, Staffs and Total revenue

1. Tirumala Venkateswara Temple, Andhra Pradesh

The Tirumala Venkateswara Temple is one of the most visited temples in India, with an average of 75,000 pilgrims visiting every day. The temple receives more than 24 million devotees every year. The annual income of the temple is estimated to be around INR ₹5,141.74 crore. The temple has a staff of around 16,000 people. The temple generates revenue of around 39 crore rupees annually through the auctioning of the curled hair of the devotees. Additionally, the temple has 52 tonnes of gold ornaments worth around Rs 8,496 crore. The temple also earns about 1.10 crore rupees annually from the sale of 1.5 lakh laddoos daily. The temple trust runs several educational and healthcare institutions, including Sri Venkateswara University and Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences.

2. Vaishno Devi Temple-Jammu and Kashmir

The Vaishno Devi Temple is another popular temple in India, located in the hills of Jammu and Kashmir. The temple receives around Between 37,000 and 44,000 devotees every day and over 95 lakh pilgrims in this year. The annual income of the temple is estimated to be around INR \$16 million. The temple trust has over 3,000 staff, including priests, caretakers, and other support staff. The temple trust also funds

educational and healthcare institutions, including the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University and the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspeciality Hospital.

3. Jagannath Temple, Puri-Odisha

The Jagannath Temple in Puri is a popular temple dedicated to Lord Jagannath. The temple receives around over 50,000 visitors every day, and around 1.15 crore visitors every year. The temple collects around INR 500 crore in offerings and donations every year. The temple trust has over 6,000 staff, including priests, caretakers, and other support staff. The temple trust also funds educational and healthcare institutions, including the Jagannath Sanskrit University and the Jagannath Cancer Hospital.

4. Siddhivinayak Temple, Mumbai

The Siddhivinayak Temple in Mumbai is a popular temple that attracts around 75,000 to 90,000 visitors every day. The temple receives offerings and donations in the form of cash, jewelry, and other valuables. The temple collects around INR 150 million in offerings and donations every year. The temple trust has over 2,000 staff, including priests, caretakers, and other support staff. The temple trust also funds educational and healthcare institutions, including the Siddhivinayak College of Engineering and the Siddhivinayak Hospital.

5. Kashi Vishwanath Temple - Uttar Pradesh

Kashi Vishwanath Temple is a popular temple located in the holy city of Varanasi. The temple receives around 3,000 visitors every day & 3 million visitors every year. Vishwa Bhushan Mishra, Chief Executive Officer of the Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple Trust said on Thursday that from January to June 2024, as many as 33,494,933 devotees visited. The temple collects around INR 100 crore in offerings and donations every year. The temple has a staff of around 300 people. As per 2023-24 financial year Rs 83.34 crore is revenue generated.

6. Golden Temple - Punjab

The Golden Temple, also known as Sri Harmandir Sahib, is a Sikh temple located in Amritsar, Punjab. The temple receives Over 150,000 people visitors every day for worship, and around 20 million visitors every year. The temple collects around INR 900 crore in offerings and donations every year. The temple trust runs several educational and healthcare institutions, including the Sri Guru Ram das Institute of Medical Sciences and Research. INR 500 Crore is per year income.

7. Somnath Temple - Gujarat

This temple in Gujarat is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva and has been looted and destroyed 17 times by the Ottoman ruler Mahmud of Ghazni. The Somnath Temple is a popular temple located in Gujarat, dedicated to Lord Shiva. The temple receives around 7.6 lacs visitors every day and 1 crore in a year. The temple collects around INR 60 crore in offerings and donations every year. The temple trust runs several educational and healthcare institutions, including the Somnath Sanskrit University.

8. Meenakshi Amman Temple, Madurai

The Tamil Nadu Located in Madurai, this temple attracts around 20 to 30 thousand devotees daily and generates around 60 crores of revenue annually. The temple has around 33,000 sculptures and 14 gopurams ranging between 45 and 50 meters in height. The temple receives offerings and donations in the form of cash, jewelry, and other valuables. The temple trust has over 5,000 staff, including priests, caretakers, and other support staff. The temple trust also funds educational and healthcare institutions.

9. The Ram Temple in Ayodhya- Uttar Pradesh

The Ram Temple in Ayodhya is one of the most significant Hindu temples in India. The Ram Temple in Ayodhya is expected to attract a large number of visitors from all over the world. It is estimated that the

temple can accommodate around 1 lakh devotees per day. It is estimated that the temple will receive around Rs. 100 crores in offerings and donations annually. The Ram Temple in Ayodhya will provide employment opportunities to a large number of people. The temple management has appointed priests, staff, and caretakers for the temple. The construction of the temple has also provided employment opportunities to the local people. The construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya has provided a significant boost to the local economy. The construction work has provided employment opportunities to the local people, and the construction material was sourced from local suppliers. The temple is expected to boost the local economy by generating business opportunities for the local people, such as selling goods and services to the devotees. The Ram Temple in Ayodhya is expected to have a significant impact on the local economy and employment. The temple is expected to attract a large number of visitors, generate substantial offerings and donations, and provide employment opportunities to the local people. The construction of the temple has also provided a significant boost to the local economy. Overall, the Ram Temple in Ayodhya is expected to play a crucial role in the economic growth and development of the region.

10. Shirdi Sai Baba Temple, Maharashtra

Shirdi Sai Baba Temple is another popular temple in Maharashtra, dedicated to the 19th century saint Sai Baba. The temple receives around 25,000 to 30,000 visitors every day, and around 8 million visitors every year. The temple collects around INR 350 crore in offerings and donations every year. The temple trust runs several educational and healthcare institutions, including the Shri Sai Baba Institute of Engineering and Technology, the Sai Institute of Higher Learning and the Sai Hospital.

In conclusion, a nation's GDP may benefit from the income that temples create. However, this effect depends on a number of variables, such as the temple's size and popularity, its location, and the state of the local economy. However, it is indisputable that temples have a good economic influence and continue to be important for the development of many nations' economies.

Section 2: Employment Generation Potential of Indian Temples

2.1 Indian temples contribution to the economy

The Temples of India play a crucial role in the economy and job creation by attracting devotees and tourists, stimulating local businesses in hospitality, transportation, and retail sectors. Temples in India are not just centres of faith and worship, but also important sources of economic activity and employment generation. They attract millions of devotees every year, leading to the growth of many supporting industries.

Here are some ways in which Indian temples contribute to the economy:

Tourism: The Temples in India are important tourist destinations, attracting millions of visitors every year. Many of these temples are architectural masterpieces and have fascinating stories attached to them, making them not just places of worship but also tourist attractions. This leads to the growth of many supporting industries such as hotels, restaurants, transportation, and souvenir shops.

Employment: The Temples provide employment opportunities for thousands of people in various fields such as hospitality, maintenance, security, and administration. The upkeep and maintenance of these temples require a significant workforce, which contributes to the local economy.

Donations: The Devotees donate significant amounts of money to temples in India. This money is used for the maintenance and development of the temple, which includes the construction of new buildings, the

purchase of equipment, and the hiring of staff. These donations also contribute to the local economy by providing a source of income for the people associated with the temple.

Agriculture: Many temples in India own large tracts of land, which are used for agricultural purposes. This land is either cultivated by the temple or leased out to farmers, providing a source of income for both the temple and the farmers. In some cases, the temple also provides training and other support to the farmers, which helps to improve their livelihoods. **Arts and Crafts:** Many temples in India have a rich tradition of arts and crafts. Local artisans create a variety of handicrafts, which are sold to devotees and tourists. These handicrafts include items such as sculptures, paintings, and textiles, which contribute to the local economy.

In conclusion, temples in India play a major role in the country's economy. They contribute to the growth of many supporting industries, provide employment opportunities, and generate income through donations, agriculture, and arts and crafts. The economic impact of Indian temples is significant, and they continue to be an important part of the country's cultural and economic landscape.

Sl.No	Sectors	% Contributed to GDP
1	Tourism	7%
2	Employment	2.32%
3	Donations	10% of their income
4	Agriculture	2.3%

Table 2: Ways in which Indian temples contribute to the economy-2024

Table 2 shows the percentage contributed to the GDP or Economic development with the reference of 2023-24 Financial year. As per the above table can be estimated that compare to the previous year the contribution towards economy is keeps on increasing. Also temple economics playing a major role for an economic growth.

2.2 Employment generation potential of Indian Temples

Indian temples have significant employment generation potential, as they are not just places of worship but also centers of culture, heritage, and economic activity.

Here are some ways in which Indian temples can generate employment:

Hospitality and Tourism: Temples in India are popular tourist locations, with millions of visitors each year. The expansion of the tourism industry has increased demand for a variety of services, including hotels, restaurants, transportation, and tour guides. Temples might hire workers for these services to meet the needs of tourists and devotees. Around 42 million people work in hospitality and tourism.

Maintenance and Upkeep: Temple care and repair require a large team. Temples require people to clean the buildings, maintain the gardens, and make routine repairs and upgrades. These operations necessitate a variety of talents, such as plumbing, electrical, carpentry, and masonry, which might lead to career prospects.

Security: Temples require 24/7 security to safeguard the safety of guests and the temple's valuables. Security staff can be hired to perform tasks such as access control, crowd management, and emergency response.

Arts and Crafts: India has a long history of artistic and crafty temples. Handicrafts made by local artists

are marketed to tourists and believers alike. These handicrafts include fabrics, paintings, and sculptures, among other things. For craftspeople of all kinds, temples can offer employment and training programs.

Agriculture: Many temples in India own big plots of land that are used for agricultural purposes. This land is either cultivated by the temple or leased to farmers, which generates revenue for both the temple and the farmers. Temples can hire labourers for a variety of agricultural tasks including as planting, harvesting, and crop care.

Educational and Cultural Investments: Educational Institutions: In India many temples established and supported educational institutions such as schools and libraries, which contributed to local knowledge and skill development. **Cultural Promotion:** Temples often sponsored festivals, performances, and cultural events, which boosted local economies through tourism and cultural activities.

In conclusion, Indian temples have a large potential for creating jobs. They can hire workers for a variety of services, including agriculture, maintenance, hospitality, and the arts and crafts. Both skilled and untrained workers can find chances from these activities, which also boost the local economy. Temples have the power to significantly improve the lives of those who are connected to them by generating jobs.

Section 3: Conclusion

Generally speaking, temples have served as centres for spiritual and commercial activity, fostering the growth of both regional and national economies in India. Their impact can be observed in several areas of the economy, ranging from jobs and agriculture to tourism and cultural heritage. Indian temples are essential to the country's employment and economy. They give millions of people job opportunities and make a major contribution to the GDP of the nation. The report emphasises how important it is to acknowledge Indian temples' economic potential and take advantage of it in order to create jobs and revenue. It also underscores the importance of investing in skill development and training to enhance the employability of temple workers.

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