Preface

Tirumala the abode of Lord Venkateswara is reputed to be the most ancient temple in India. It is perhaps the richest temple in the East.

On an average everyday 60,000 pilgrims from different parts of the country visit Tirumala for the holy darshan of Sri Venkateswara. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams is dedicated itself in serving these pilgrims by providing facilities for darshan, accommodation, provision of hygienic Laddu prasadam, free food, Sudarshan / biometric token system through Queue Complex, free transportation at Tirumala, water facilities, Kalyanakatta, free medical aid, health and sanitation, vigilance and security to pilgrims, and sevas and utsavarns. The pilgrims require information on the above facilities for decision making and planning their journey to have comfortable pilgrimage. To provide exact information to them, it is necessary to know their information needs and information seeking patterns and information channels used by them. A study of information needs of pilgrims of Tirumala Tirupati is useful to design a better information system for them.

Most of the studies were conducted on students, research scholars, faculty members, lawyers, engineers, doctors, agricultural officers, scientists, farmers, households, psychologists, sociologists, journalists, industrialist etc., in relation to their information needs. No study has been so far undertaken on the information needs of pilgrims.

Hence, the present investigation is an attempt to study in detail the information needs of pilgrims visiting Tirumala Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter is an introduction wherein the importance of information, role of information in social, cultural and educational development and spread of pilgrimage, types of pilgrims visiting Tirumala Tirupati and statement of the problem are discussed.

A brief profile of TTD's growth and development is presented in the second chapter along with an account of its facilities and services, organization and infrastructure.
The third chapter deals with objectives, hypotheses, methodology and the review of literature.

The analysis and interpretation of data collected form pilgrims, TTD administrative officers and managers of TTD information centres are presented in the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters respectively.

The last chapter gives a brief summary of the study, findings, recommendations and suggestions for further research. This chapter is followed by selected bibliography, appendices and glossary.