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IDENTIFYING FACTORS DETERMINING PILGRIMS DELIGHT AND INVESTIGATING THEIR ABILITY TO PREDICT IN VRINDAVAN CITY OF NORTH INDIA

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Abstract

The study in hand applied exploratory factor analysis on the survey data to determine major factors that contributed in the pilgrim delight in Vrindavan city of North India. Total 568 pilgrims were interviewed in face to face personal interview on the most sacred places of Vrindavan city such as Banke Bihari temple, ISSKCON temple, etc. The study extracted the data using principle component analysis and varimax rotation method. Total five factors which determined pilgrims' delights were identified and named as basic facilities, conveniences, public, meal, and protection. Further, application of linear regression analysis found a significant influence of all identified factors in the pilgrims delight and, found that identified factors were able to predict pilgrim delights in Vrindavan city of North India.

Introduction

Pilgrims is also known as religious tourism. Pilgrims is the oldest and one of the most important categories of tourism product. Globally, holy places attract huge number of tourists (Jansen and Kuhl, 2008). India is recognized worldwide for its wealthy culture and heritage. Vrindavan city of Uttar Pradesh (North India) has of distinct importance for the devotees of Vaishnav Hindus. Vrindavan is the heartland of Braj Bhoomi, where Lord Krishna (human avatar of lord Vishnu) took birth and had spend his childhood. Epical Bal Leela and Raas Leela of Krishna was performed in and nearby areas of Vrindavan city. Due to high religious and spiritual importance of Vrindavan city, every year millions of pilgrims come to visit sacred places and participate in festivals such as Holi, Janamastami, Goverdhan Pooja, etc. Vrindavan city is situated in heartland of Braj circle where, many other sacred places are scattered in closely knitted towns namely Mathura, Gokul, Barsana, Nand Gaon, and Baldev.

Travel and tourism is a fast growing industry. Religious tourism or pilgrims is a major source of foreign exchange and one of the sectors employing largest number of unskilled people in India. Pilgrims has huge socio-cultural, psychological, environmental, and economic influences. Tourist delight or satisfaction varies from one destination to other. It is an important factor affecting branding of the destination as well as country and attracting more tourists in future. A delighted tourist spreads favorable words of mouth, visit the destination again, and also recommend the destination to their known people. This finally result an increased tourist traffic, higher earning for local people as well as government, and increased employment in the region. Increased tourism activities in the region prompt other economic activities and development of infrastructure in the region. This finally, affect not only local people but also state and central government.

Problem Statement: "Undertaking a research study to investigate the determinants of pilgrim delight and to identify their relative importance"

Literature Review

Tourist satisfaction at sacred places is not a new area of research. Globally, Research scholars have already investigated every known aspect of tourism, including tourist satisfaction (Coban 2012, Bazazo et al. 2017) destination image (Khan et al.2017), overall attitude (Prayag et al. 2018), destination quality (Cong 2016); quality of the trip (Chang et al 2017); etc. Tourist delight along with other aspect of pilgrims at holy places is still a popular research topic among tourism scholars.

The satisfaction is often termed as consumers delight. Satisfaction or delight is one of the most studied and discussed topic the field of tourism marketing and administration. Their mare several models of consumer satisfaction and delight. Few among them are Oliver's (1980) expectation-disconfirmation model, Cronin and Taylor's (1992) performance-based model, etc. Oliver's expectation-disconfirmation model (1980) being most fundamental model of consumer delight, served theoretical basis for the many future models on consumer satisfaction and delight. Delight or satisfaction is defined as a positive reaction of consumer towards purchases (Oliver 1980). It may also be referred as the emotional response to consumption experience. Customer's satisfaction is the resultant of fulfillment of their needs. Satisfaction can be achieved by delivering on customers' expectation. Further, customer delight delight is a state of satisfaction that may achieved by exceeding their thresholds of a "zone of tolerance". A delighted customer will generate positive word of mouth and will reuse the product (Paul, 2000).

There are plenty of previous studies on various aspect of tourist delight (Papadimitriou, 2015). It is influenced by numerous influencing factors such as destination attributes (Bazazo et al. 2017); quality of destination (Ababneh, 2013), motivation (Wong et al. 2013), tourist personality (Lin and Worthley, 2012), image of destination (Yap, 2018). Tourists delight

towards destination attributes can be determined by assessing the quality of destination elements or attributes such as stay, food and meal, accessibility, entertainment services, locals, etc (Çoban, 2012). Çoban (2012) applied exploratory factor analysis to identify factor determining pilgrim satisfaction. Further, a linear regression analysis was applied to investigate tourist's attitude at Hindu pilgrimage Thirumala Thirupathi Devasthanam (Andhra Pradesh). The study concluded that pilgrim delight was influenced by the web site and the television channel of communication.

Pilgrim delight is very important for the branding and differentiation of the destination. Scholars (Naghizadeh 2019, Hui et al. 2007) identified travelers satisfaction as the most important factor that positively influenced their loyalty, intention to revisit, and intentions to recommend the destination. Hui et al. (2007) in their study on destination delight found that satisfaction with the destination is positively influenced by tourist's motivation specifically cultural and relaxation. However, delight was negatively affected by pleasure seeking motivation. Their study further found that overall satisfaction was positively influenced by tourist's perception of destination quality. Most of the studies in travel and tourism considered the examination of a holistic tourist satisfaction against several destination attributes (Çoban 2012, Bazazo 2017, Chiu et al. 2017). On the other hand, there are still few studies where tourist satisfaction was examined from the specific destination attribute perspective, such as infrastructure; price-value, public transportation, safety perception (Vajčnerová et al. 2013), street and locations signs (Della 2015), entertainment (Wang et al. 2009), information (Vinh, 2013), etc.

Ramkissoon et al (2011) described loyalty of tourist as a result of their satisfaction with the destination. Several Scholars (Ramkissoon et al 2011, Prayag and C. Ryan 2012) found a significant positive relationship between tourist loyalty and satisfaction with the destination. Satisfaction of the tourist is an important factor affecting destination branding and varies from one destination to other. Chiu, Zeng and Cheng (2016) studied tourists' satisfaction and loyalty in China. They concluded that Chinese tourist satisfaction is positively affected by cognitive and affective component of destination images. Further, they held that destination loyalty was determined by satisfaction level of the tourist. A destination delight study found that tourists satisfaction with the destination is positively influenced by their cultural and relaxation motivation. However, it is negatively influenced by pleasure seeking motivation. Further, the study found that overall tourist satisfaction is positively influenced by perception of destination quality.

The image of destination also affects tourist delight which further influences their behavioral intentions (Chen and Phou, 2013). Martin-Santana et al (2017) held that satisfaction is positively influenced by destination image and result in tourists revisit intention. Destination marketers can gain competitive advantage, by developing a positive destination image in the tourists mind. Assaker and Hallak (2013) described destination image as a set of ideas, beliefs and impressions that a visitor

carry toward destination. There may be two components of destination image viz., functional component and psychological component (Pike, 2009). The functional component of destination image consists of price, climate, and special event. Whereas, psychological component of destination image consist of friendliness of the locals, beauty of the landscapes, feelings associated with religious places/ historical events.

Attribute of the tourist destination is the most important factor determining their delight. It include tourist sites, places, monuments, and landmarks; tourism facility viz. stay facility, transport and road facility, medicine and health care facility; meal and food; several support services as information centers, tour guides, translators; etc. Heitmann (2011) in his study mentioned that attributes of the destination were the pull factors which attract tourists to the place with its holistic characteristics viz. basic facilities and infrastructure, natural beauties and landscaping, several supporting services, etc. His study mentioned that tourists experience several components of destination during their visit such as organisations, shopkeepers, local people, other tourists, etc. Tourist's interaction qualities with the destination components determine tourist's experience. The perception of destination quality is also influenced by the accommodation facilities, eatables, shopping attractions, transportation facilities, experience at places at sites, interaction with people, etc. Several scholars (Buhalis 2000, López-Toro 2010, Della et al. 2015) investigated destination attributes and identified major influencers to various tourism aspect at destination. Buhalis (2000) identified six categories of destinations attributes viz., attractions, activities, available packages, amenities, ancillary services, and accessibility. Afterward, López-Toro et al. (2010) identified total 11 dimensions and Della Corte et al. (2015) identified total 14 dimensions of destination attributes.

This is clear from the literature survey that delight is one of the most researched topic in the tourism studies. The dynamic nature of tourism industry; changing tourist profile, values, and motivation; huge number of destination with unique features; made tourist delight one of the most studied topic. Every year scholastic authors take up the tourist delight projects on a changed location, changed socio economic environment, and changed sample profile.

Research Questions: The study in hand investigated factors affecting the pilgrims delight in Vrindavan (India). Literature review in the previous section identified gaps in existing pool of literature, which was instrumental in formulating research questions for the study. The study was done to answer following research questions-

Research Question 1: What are the major factors determining pilgrim delight in Vrindavan city of North India?

Research Question 2: Can pilgrim delight be successfully predicted by identified factors? If yes, determining the strongest predictor of tourism delight?

Research Methodology

The main purpose of the study was to identify major factors determining pilgrims delight in Vrindavan city of North India. The study further examined, whether pilgrim delight be successfully predicted by identified factors at the destination. The study used single cross sectional descriptive research design to achieve its objectives.

Sample design

A non probability judgement sampling technique was applied to choose sample from the population. Only Indian people who visited Vrindavan and stayed minimum 24 hours in the city were considered for sample. Before interviewing the respondent, researcher has ensured that respondent had enough experience and maturity to provide dependable data. Total 568 tourists visiting to the Vrindavan city of North India were interviewed between January and March 2020.

Among 568 pilgrim respondents total 394 were male and 174 were female. Majority of the respondents were young (344 respondents belonged to 21-40 years age group), having income between 1-3 lacs (266 pilgrims), and post graduate (280 pilgrims). Detailed sample profile is given in the table below:

Table 1. Sample Profile (N=568)

Age	Sex		Total	Annual income	Sex		Total
	Male	Female			Male	Female	
< 20 Yrs	64	32	96	< 1 lacs	82	60	142
21-40 Yrs	240	104	344	1-3 lacs	198	68	266
41-60 Yrs	68	38	106	3-5lacs	84	28	112
>60 Years	22	0	22	> 5 lacs	30	18	48
Total	394	174	568	Total	394	174	568
Qualification	Sex		Total	Occupation	Sex		Total
	Male	Female			Male	Female	
School	42	14	56	Service	182	74	256
Graduation	136	46	182	Entrepreneur	74	26	100
Post graduation	186	94	280	Scholar	112	42	154
Other	20	30	50	Other	26	32	58
Total	394	174	568	Total	394	174	568
Marital status	Sex		Total				
	Male	Female					
Married	222	62	284				
Unmarried	172	112	284				
Total	394	174	568				

Data collection design

The study utilised secondary and primary data both. Secondary data were obtained from various published sources. The secondary data obtained through published sources was essential in defining and identifying several variables of the study. Many online databases were explored for literature review and total 16 destination attributes that determine tourists delight were identified.

The primary data were collected from the pilgrims using a structured and non disguised questionnaire. The questionnaire had two parts. The first part contained questions based on nominal and ordinal scales and intended to find out the demographic profile (e.g. Gender, age, income, occupation, qualification, etc.) of pilgrims to Vrindavan city. The second part of the questionnaire contained 16 statements designed on likert scale. Each statement was aimed to gauge tourists delight from a particular destination attribute. Before executing the questionnaire on target sample, a pilot study was done on a small group of pilgrims.

Data analysis design

The study used exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to identify major factors determining pilgrims delight in Vrindavan city of North India. Factors may be described as underlying construct that describe set of variables and identify small number of factors representing relationship among them. The questionnaire data were entered in SPSS 20.0 for further analysis. The factors were identified by using principle component analysis with Varimax rotation for factor analysis. Before applying factor analysis suitability of the obtained data must be ensured. The study used KMO and Bartlett's Test of sphericity to check the suitability of data for factor analysis. KMO test is test for ensuring sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of sphericity is the test for ensuring multivariate normality. Eigen value approach was applied to identify number of factors contributing in pilgrim delight in Vrindavan city of North India. Further, Cronbach's Alpha test for internal consistency was applied to ensure data reliability for all factors determining pilgrims delight in Vrindavan city of North India. Finally, linear regression analysis was applied to investigate, whether the extracted factors significantly affected pilgrim delight in Vrindavan city of North India.

Result and Discussion

The study mainly investigated variables related to tourism delight to identify major determining factors in Vrindavan City of North India. To identify major determinants of tourism delight study used exploratory factor analysis. Suitability of data and multivariate normality being necessary condition for applying factor analysis was ascertained using the Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Table 2). The KMO value 0.729 was much higher than acceptable limit of 0.5 and hence ensured sample adequacy for factor analysis. Further, Bartlett's test of Sphericity value was found significant (less than .05). It ensured the multivariate normal and rejected the possibility of identity matrix from the available data.

Table 2. KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Test		Test Statistic
Kaiser Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.729
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi – Square	2311.58
	d.f.	111

	Significance	0.00
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Using the criteria of eigen value greater than one, SPSS extracted total five factors or principal components contributing to maximum of total variance. Each factor was given a name suitable to the group of variables it represented. In other words, the study indicated total five factors playing a crucial role in determining tourist delight in Vrindavan city of North India.

Table 3 showcase the rotated component matrix with factor loading for total 16 attributes using Varimax method. Factor loading indicate the strength of relationship between specific variable and corresponding factor. Numbers in given component matrix indicated the partial correlation between the destination attribute and rotated factor (Table 3).

Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix

S.N	Destination Attribute	Components				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Sense of Safety	0.247	-0.229	0.686	0.171	0.213
2	Prices of items	-0.127	-0.123	0.042	0.603	0.161
3	management of crowd	0.268	0.211	0.612	0.359	-0.123
4	quality of meal	0.211	0.161	0.063	0.802	0.361
5	Experience on roads	0.789	0.252	0.151	0.209	0.443
6	Experience with shopping	0.209	0.763	-0.253	0.271	-0.241
7	Experience with residents hospitality	0.161	0.191	0.614	0.182	0.279
8	Experience with transportation facility	0.857	0.171	0.361	0.262	-0.229
9	Experience with supporting services such as banking, telecommunication, medicine, etc.	0.772	0.163	0.423	0.369	0.189
10	Experience with tourist attractions such as monuments, temples, etc.	0.169	0.679	-0.159	0.439	0.202
11	Beggars' nuisance	-0.329	-0.159	-0.211	-0.243	0.703
12	Experience with basic tourist amenities such as drinking water, toilets, vehicle parking, etc.	0.198	0.722	0.251	-0.211	-0.123
13	Experience with accommodation facility	0.885	0.158	0.359	0.261	0.361
14	Experience with	0.121	0.341	0.273	0.372	0.783

	cleanliness and sanitation					
15	Stray animals, mosquitoes, flies, etc.	0.259	0.199	0.159	0.279	0.781
16	Experience with availability of information and guidance	-0.181	0.439	0.689	0.67	0.121

Exploratory factor analysis extracted total five factors determining the tourist delight in Vrindavan city of North India. All the factors determining tourist delight and their corresponding destination attributes are presented in table 4. All efforts were made to give a suitable factor name to that might represent their all constituting attributes of destination. The first factor determining tourist delight was identified and named as 'basic facility'. It was highly loaded on total four attributes of tourist destination namely experience on road condition; experience with transportation facility; Experience with supporting services such as banking, telecommunication, medicine, etc.; and Experience with hotels and staying facility. The second factor determining tourist delight was identified and named as 'conveniences'. Conveniences was highly loaded on three destination attributes namely experience with basic tourist amenities such as drinking water, toilets, vehicle parking, etc.; experience with shopping; experience with tourist attractions such as monuments, temples, etc.

Table 4: Factors contributing in Tourists Delight

S.N	Factor No. & Name	Destination Attributes	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Factor I Basic facilities	Experience on roads	0.789	.799
2		Experience with transportation facility	0.857	
3		Experience with supporting services such as banking, telecommunication, medicine, etc.	0.772	
4		Experience with hotels and staying facility	0.884	
5	Factor II Conveniences	Experience with basic tourist amenities such as drinking water, toilets, vehicle parking, etc.	0.722	.897
6		Experience with shopping	0.763	
7		Experience with tourist attractions such as monuments, temples, etc.	0.679	
8	Factor III Public	Management of crowd	0.612	.888
9		Sense of Safety	0.686	
10		Experience with residents hospitality	0.614	

11		Experience with availability of information and guidance	0.67	
12	Factor IV Meal	Quality of meal	0.802	.798
13		Prices of items	0.603	
14	Factor V Protection	Beggars' nuisance	0.703	.843
15		Stray animals, mosquitoes, flies, etc.	0.781	
16		Experience with cleanliness and sanitation	0.783	

Third factor determining tourist delight was identified and named as 'Public'. It was highly loaded on four destination attributes namely management of crowd; sense of safety; experience with residents hospitality; experience with availability of information and guidance. The fourth factor was identified and named as 'meal'. It was highly loaded on quality of meal; prices of items. Finally, the fifth factor determining the tourists delight was identified as 'protection'. It was highly loaded on three destination attributes namely beggars' nuisance; stray animals, mosquitoes, flies, etc.; and experience with cleanliness and sanitation.

Table 4 also showcased values of Cronbach's Alpha for all factors determining pilgrims delight in Vrindavan city of North India. The Cronbach's alpha value for factors basic facilities, conveniences, public, meal, and protection were 0.799, 0.897, 0.888, 0.798, and 0.843 respectively. All five factors determining pilgrims delight shown high internal consistency as the Cronbach's alpha value for each factor was above the acceptable level (0.7).

Table 5 presented results of linear regression analysis. Linear regression analysis was applied to investigate, whether the extracted factors significantly affected pilgrim delight in Vrindavan city of North India.

Table 5: Regression of Pilgrims Delight on Identified Factors (N = 568)

S.N	Factors	R square	Unstandardised Coefficient		t value	Sig
			B	SE		
1	Conveniences	0.399	0.56	0.10	4.56	.01
2	Basic facilities	0.361	0.48	0.09	4.61	.00
3	Public	0.299	0.37	0.18	3.89	.00
4	Protection	0.191	0.28	0.16	2.98	.02
5	Meal	0.093	0.18	0.13	2.79	.00

Dependent variable: pilgrim delight

The t-test and its corresponding p-value indicated that all five factors contributing in tourist delight had a significant influence ($p < 0.05$) on pilgrim delight and thus can be used for the prediction of the same. The statistic R^2 further showed the extent of influence of identified determining factors (independent variables) on pilgrim delight (dependent variable). It is found that the 'convenience' ($R^2 = 0.399$) had the maximum influence and was the strongest predictor of tourism delight. It was followed by 'basic facilities' ($R^2 = 0.361$), public ($R^2 = 0.299$), 'protection' ($R^2 = 0.191$), and 'meal' ($R^2 = 0.093$) respectively.

Conclusion

Tourism is dynamic in nature and has intense impact on the local and global economy; as well as social, cultural and psychological impact on both host and guest. Pilgrim delight is a prominent aspect of pilgrim behavior. Pilgrim delight is a major determinant of the destination selection, consumption pattern and the intension to return as well as recommend the destination. The main aim of the study was to identify major factors constituting tourists delight in Vrindavan city of North India. And, to investigate whether pilgrim delight can be successfully predicted by identified factors. Exploratory factor analysis on the opinion of total 568 pilgrims identified total five factors determining pilgrim delight in Vrindavan city of North India. Identified factors were named Basic facilities, Conveniences, Public, Meal and Protection. Further, linear regression analysis found a significant influence of all identified factors in the pilgrims delight. It concluded that identified factors can be certainly used to predict pilgrim delight.

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