

Pilgrimage Satisfaction of Religious Event: An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

Considering a need for understanding the pilgrim satisfaction of a religious event, a study was organized. The objectives of the study include measuring pilgrim satisfaction, exploring differences in pilgrim satisfaction across selected demographic characteristics, identifying key factors that influence pilgrim satisfaction and know their relative importance. Mahakumbh Allahabad 2013 was taken as case study for this paper. This paper presents the findings of the study. About 200 pilgrims who visited event were interviewed as a sample with a structured questionnaire and responses were sought. Results indicate that providing basic facilities to the pilgrims would be single most important factor influencing the satisfaction. Further details of the results along with the implications and limitations are presented in the paper.

KEYWORDS: *Tourism, Religious event, Pilgrim Satisfaction, Maha Kumbh*

Introduction

Tourism in India contributes 6 percent to GDP, has 9 percent of the employed population. As per Tourism Ministry report, India witnessed a positive growth in foreign tourist arrivals for the last three years reaching a level of 3.92 million against 3.46 million during last year. The growth rate is about 13.2 percent as against 5–6 percent of growth worldwide during 2005. The report also states that tourism contributes over Rs. 25,170 crores to the foreign exchange earnings. Nearly 3.92 million foreign tourists arrived in India during 2005 and the domestic tourists also stood high at 382 million in 2005. As India is a land of ancient civilization, intense spirituality and religious faith, it is no wonder that most of the tourists – both domestic and foreign – are pilgrims. There is a paradigm shift in tourism consumption throughout the world moving towards culture, history and nature seeking perspective which India attempted to capture. India has perhaps the oldest continually operating pilgrimage tradition in the entire world. Reasons include deeply ingrained religious philosophy in every walk of life of the people, existence of numerous religious destinations and an array of religious festivals and fairs

organised round the year. In spite of the importance of religious tourism, scholars have not widely researched especially in the area of understanding the key factors that can influence the pilgrim satisfaction of a religious event. If the organisers realize and identify the critical factors that influence satisfaction of pilgrims they can take appropriate action in the present and future. In fact, worldwide, understanding key variables influencing the pilgrim satisfaction is still inadequate in spite of a large body of literature available on tourist satisfaction like Pizam and Taylor, Choi and Chu, and Ibrahim and Gill. Some of the important reasons for understanding pilgrim satisfaction are as follows;

1. Many agencies like government, organizing committees, private players involved in organizing and marketing religious events spend huge amount of money every year. If organizers have to judiciously spend the money, imperative is the knowledge of pilgrim satisfaction. If they can identify the key factors which influence the pilgrim satisfaction, resources can be diverted accordingly.
1. Many agencies would like to organize events on regular basis at the behest of the pilgrims. For this, they need to ensure that the arrangements for the current event are satisfying. If pilgrims are satisfied with the arrangements, positive word of mouth spreads and the propensity of the pilgrims' recommendation of the events to others would increase.
2. Satisfaction of pilgrims is an indication of the quality of services rendered by the event organisers. It acts as a yardstick for measurement of the success of the event by the organisers.
3. In India, responsibility of organizing and managing mega religious events to some extent remains on the government. If government fails to provide adequate facilities at the events, then it has to face the wrath of the public. As per a popular belief, few years back the ruling party of the Government of Andhra Pradesh failed to provide basic facilities to a well known religious event in the region of Telangana. As a consequence the party lost many votes in the election that immediately followed the religious event.

Considering the need and importance of exploring key variables influencing pilgrim satisfaction, a study was conducted. Objectives of the study include measuring pilgrim satisfaction, exploring differences in pilgrim satisfaction across selected demographic characteristics, identifying key factors that influence pilgrim satisfaction and know their relative importance. Initially the paper details about the conceptual details of pilgrim satisfaction, methodology and results of the study. Finally, an attempt is made to summarise the findings, discuss implications and limitations of the study.

Pilgrim Satisfaction

Definition

A tourist can be called a pilgrim if the purpose of travel to a destination or event is to perform rituals driven by religion or spirituality and not any activity remunerative in nature. Generally, visit is for less than a year and more than 1 day. A pilgrim can visit any of the following four types of attractions; natural attractions, manmade objects created for purpose other than attracting pilgrims and eventually become attractions, sights constructed from the beginning as attractions and cultural events, and religious events.

Pilgrimage to sacred place as an act of religious devotion is an age old tradition, followed by religions all over the world and especially in India. Pilgrimage involves sightseeing, travelling, visiting different places, in some cases, voyaging by air or sea etc. and buying the local memorabilia, almost everything a tourist does.

Pilgrim satisfaction of religious events indicates the quality of services rendered by the event organizers, prevents negative evaluation and unfavourable word of mouth of the events. This is similar to a tourist future behaviour as observed by Gyte and Phelps and Kozak. For the study, pilgrim satisfaction can be defined as the *outcome of the pilgrims' subjective comparison of the expected and actual facilities and arrangements at the event*. This conceptualisation is similar to consumer or tourist satisfaction of a product or destination which is the outcome of consumers' subjective comparison of expected and received product or destination attribute levels.

Satisfaction Measurement Paradigms

Tourist satisfaction is widely researched in the marketing domain. Much of this satisfaction literature in tourism is drawn from the theories propounded in consumer behaviour. Consumer satisfaction is considered as a major issue in post purchase period. It determines the quality delivered to customers through the product or service and the accompanying services. Broadly, there are two paradigms of satisfaction research observed in consumer behaviour literature, which include Expectancy Disconfirmation Approach (EDA) and Emotional Perspective. However, in the recent past, theories which are in mid-way between these two paradigms are also proposed. As per Expectancy Disconfirmation Approach, a consumer is considered as rational and that he / she evaluates his experiences with an attraction against an ideal standard or comparative standard or minimal standard or to his/her own expectations. As a result of interaction between the consumers' pre purchase expectations and post purchase evaluations, consumer would be either satisfied or dissatisfied. If outcomes match expectations conformation occurs, lest disconfirmation.

Emotional perspective scholars raise their eyebrows against EDA approach and question if a consumer is always rational. Scholars in this paradigm define consumer satisfaction as consumer's emotional response to use of a product or service. Many do not agree completely to either the first or second paradigms as they believe that consumer satisfaction is a complex human process that involves cognitive and affective processes, psychological and physiological influence. Anton defines consumer satisfaction as a state of mind in which the customer's needs, wants and expectations throughout the product or service life have been met or exceeded resulting in subsequent repurchase and loyalty. WTO (1995) also consider consumer satisfaction as a psychological concept that involves the feeling of well being and pleasure that results from obtaining what one hopes for and expects from an appealing product and / service. For this reasons, the present study follows the mid path.

Operationalisation of Satisfaction Construct

Operationalisation of satisfaction has been done on the basis of performance evaluation, making the inclusion of disconfirmation process unnecessary. Many scholars attempted to measure attribute satisfaction so as to identify the extent of consumer satisfaction with products and services. Attribute satisfaction refers to individual assessment of the degree to which a service performance is perceived to have met or exceeded desires and expectations. In tourism research, such measurement of attribute satisfaction gives direction to the extent of the tourist satisfaction for an attraction. Some tourism experts have even identified key factors that affect the tourist satisfaction. For example, Goodall and Bergsma consider total cost a fifth component, in addition to environment, facilities/ services, accessibility and image. Kozak and Remington identified five broad categories after synthesizing several studies on tourist destinations. These are environment, facilities and services, infrastructure, hospitality, and cost.

Review of literature also suggests that satisfaction measurement (whether consumer or tourist) has broadly followed two perspectives, viz. transaction and cumulative. With regard to pilgrim satisfaction measurement, transaction specific satisfaction is a post experience evaluative judgment of specific occasion that pilgrim would have encountered in the entire event. Cumulative satisfaction on the other hand is the overall evaluation based on the entire experience of the visit to event. The present study considers pilgrim satisfaction on the basis of attributes of the various services provided at the event and follows a cumulative satisfaction measurement.

Methodology

The study was exploratory in nature and is based on a survey conducted on pilgrims who visited Maha Kumbh 2013. This event was chosen for the study for several reasons. Firstly, it is an international event which received wide media coverage and importance in the recent past. Secondly, as both domestic foreign and

pilgrims were expected to attend the event, the study would likely receive a wider validity. Thirdly, the arrangements and allocation of resources for the event have been elaborate giving the study a wider scope to measure the pilgrims' satisfaction. Finally, the event was at a nearby destination to us and we could optimize our time and money.

Instrument

Questionnaire comprised of two sections. First section attempted to capture demographic characteristics of the respondents and the second section measured pilgrim satisfaction. As there is scant literature on pilgrim satisfaction, items for measuring the construct have been generated from various studies, which measured tourist and consumer satisfaction. Twenty-five items were initially identified and were pretested in two phases. In the first phase, pretesting was conducted using expert opinion. Four experts of marketing and tourism were requested to reduce the number of items and the experts suggested deleting seven items. Later a pilot testing was done on 20 respondents by asking them to recollect any recent religious event they attended and evaluate the event on the items given to them. Among eighteen five items were found to be not worth mentioning and hence were deleted from the scale. After pretesting, the modified instrument was used for the study. The 13 item, pilgrim satisfaction scale was used to rate the satisfaction of the pilgrims for the event 'Mahakumbh 2013' on a five point Likert like scale ranging from 1 (Highly Dissatisfied) to 5 (Highly Satisfied). An item was also included to measure the overall pilgrimage satisfaction on a five point Likert like scale ranging from 1 (Highly Dissatisfied) to 5 (Highly Satisfied).

Sample Plan

Questionnaire was administered on 200 pilgrims who stayed at least one day at venue and attended the event. Each respondent was requested to spare fifteen minutes of their time to complete the questionnaire. In case the respondent felt he had no time immediately, he or she were contacted in the evening in their respective pandals after seeking permission.

Result

Sample Respondents

Among 200 respondents, 118 respondents were below 30 years, 56 respondents were between 31 - 50 years and 26 respondents were 51 years and above. 134 respondents were male and 64 were female. Of the total respondents 180 were from India, 2 were from Tibet, 10 from Nepal, 2 from Bhutan and 6 from other countries. 12 respondents were monks, 30 were business men, 70 were students and 88 were employed in various occupations. Among the respondents, 186 were Hindu, 6 were Christian and 8 belonged to other religions. 186 respondents visited MahaKumbh 2013 for participating in the rituals, 12

respondents visited the event as a part of their overall tourist visit to India, and 2 respondents visited the event for business purposes. The number of respondents with income range of ‘below \$500’ were 100, between ‘\$501 - \$1000’ were 12, between ‘\$2001 - \$5000’ were 22 and ‘\$5001 and above’ were 12 pilgrims.

Pilgrim Satisfaction Scale

Reliability and Content Validity

The thirteen-item pilgrim satisfaction scale had shown Cronbach alpha value of 0.798 (Table 1). Alpha value indicates that the items are highly internal consistent.

Pearson correlation between mean of the overall satisfaction of the event and the mean of the pilgrim satisfaction scale stood at .864 (Table 1) which was significant at .01 level indicating that the scale used for measuring pilgrim satisfaction is content valid.

Mean Scores of the Scale

Mean score of the pilgrim satisfaction scale was found as 25.70 and the mean score of the item ‘overall satisfaction’ stood at 3.30 (Table 1). Using quartiles, mean scores of the pilgrim satisfaction scale were divided into three groups as follows; ‘dissatisfied (DS)’ pilgrims who are in the range of mean scores 13 - 22, ‘moderately satisfied (MS)’ pilgrims who are in the range of mean scores 23 – 26 and ‘highly satisfied (HS)’ pilgrims who are in the range of mean scores 27 - 36. The number of dissatisfied, moderately satisfied and highly satisfied pilgrims is 66, 54 and 80 respectively.

Table 1 : Cross Tabulation and Correlations of Demographics and Pilgrim Satisfaction

Demographic Variables		Pilgrim Satisfaction Scale [#]						Overall Satisfaction	
		DS	MS	HS	N	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Age	Below 30	34	24	60	118	26.46	6.060	3.39	1.206
	31 - 50	22	24	10	56	24.57	4.085	3.20	.796
	51 and above	10	6	10	26	24.69	6.380	3.08	1.324
Sex	Male	36	26	72	134	27.01	6.096	3.49	1.168
	Female	30	28	8	66	23.03	3.406	2.89	.914
Occupation	Monk	6	2	4	12	24.50	4.462	3.17	1.030
	Employee	14	22	12	48	25	3.925	3.33	.808
	Business	10	8	12	30	26.07	4.893	3.30	1.022
	Student	20	16	34	70	26.09	5.561	3.30	1.232

Demographic Variables		Pilgrim Satisfaction Scale [#]					Overall Satisfaction		
		DS	MS	HS	N	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
	Others	16	6	18	40	25.95	8.130	3.28	1.377
Religion	Hindu	5	30	151	186	25.54	5.819	3.25	1.201
	christen	4	1	1	6	26.20	5.862	3.40	.990
	Others	2	2	4	8	25.50	2.316	3.42	.669
	Religious Practices	10	6	6	22	26.64	6.918	2.86	1.320
Education	12 th Standard	16	8	24	48	25.50	6.748	3.23	1.309
	Graduation	24	24	34	82	26.32	5.326	3.46	1.009
	Post Graduation	8	14	12	34	26.12	3.444	3.38	.922
	Others	8	2	4	14	23.23	5.734	3.00	1.109
Income	Below \$500	38	18	44	100	25.06	6.045	3.15	1.290
	\$500 - \$1000	0	0	12	12	32.33	4.334	4.33	.651
	\$1000 - \$2000	14	22	18	54	25.78	4.978	3.39	.940
	\$2000 - \$5000	8	10	4	22	25.18	5.342	3.23	.869
	\$5000 and above	6	4	2	12	25.00	2.697	3.17	.577
Nationality	India	20	25	141	186	26.38	5.965	3.38	1.036
	Tibet	0	0	2	2	25.97	5.436	3.44	1.149
	Nepal	0	4	6	10	24.20	6.453	2.95	1.356
	Others	1	1	6	8	24.14	4.486	2.93	1.052
Total		66	54	80	200	25.70	5.670	3.30	1.124
Number of Items					13			1	
Cronbac Alpha					.798			NA	
Pearson Corr. (2 tailed)						.864**			

Here DS – Dissatisfaction, MS – Moderately Satisfied, HS – Highly Satisfied,
N – Number of Sample Respondents, S.D. – Standard Deviation

Pilgrim Satisfaction was measured on five point scale with 1 = Highly Dissatisfied, 2 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Neither Satisfied nor dissatisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 5 = Highly Satisfied.

** indicates significance at .001 level.

Demographics and Pilgrim Satisfaction

To know if there are differences in pilgrim satisfaction across the demographic variables chosen for the study, cross tabulation, mean scores and ANOVA have been used. To know which means are significantly different from others; equal variances was assumed and Post hoc tests were conducted using Fishers LSD. Results of cross tabulation, mean scores, Pearson Correlation value are presented in Table 1 and results of ANOVA and multiple comparisons are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 : ANOVA and Multiple Comparisons using Fisher’s LSD

	ANOVA		Fishers’ LSD			
	F	Sig (2 tail)		DS	MS	HS
Age	3.675	.027	DS			*
			MS			*
			HS	*	*	
Sex	19.077	.000	DS			*
			MS			*
			HS	*	*	
Occupation	3.860	.023	DS			
			MS			*
			HS		*	
Religion	3.834	.023	DS		*	
			MS	*		*
			HS	*	*	
Education	.427	.653	DS			
			MS			
			HS			
Income	6.574	.002	DS		*	
			MS	*		*
			HS	*	*	
Nationality	2.981	.050	DS			*
			MS			
			HS	*		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Here DS – Dissatisfaction, MS – Moderately Satisfied, HS – Highly Satisfied

Note: As ANOVA for Education was not significant, multiple comparisons was not calculated

Cross tabulation, results presented in Table 1 indicate that there are more highly satisfied pilgrims in the age group of 'Below 30'. In other age groups, many pilgrims were found to be either moderately satisfied or dissatisfied. Mean scores of overall satisfaction item for all the three age groups is higher than the theoretical mean of three. F value is significant across the pilgrim satisfaction mean scores (Table 2) which indicates that there are significant differences in the mean values of pilgrim satisfaction across age groups. Multiple comparisons using LSD results indicate that, mean values of (DS, HS) and (MS, HS) are significantly different from other mean values.

Table 1 indicates that there are many male pilgrims who are satisfied and many female pilgrims who are dissatisfied. Mean values of the pilgrim satisfaction scale and overall satisfaction item also indicate the same trend. F value is significant across the pilgrim satisfaction mean scores (Table 2) which indicates that there are significant differences in the mean values of pilgrim satisfaction between both the sexes. Multiple comparisons using Fishers LSD indicate that (DS, HS) and (MS, DS) are significantly different from other mean values.

Among various occupational categories only 'students' and 'others' were found to be highly satisfied with the event. Many other occupational category respondents were either dissatisfied or moderately satisfied. Mean scores of all the occupational categories fall under moderately satisfied class. For the item overall satisfaction, mean score of all the occupational categories was found to be higher than the theoretical mean of three. F value has been found significant across the pilgrim satisfaction mean scores (Table 2) which implies that there are significant differences in the mean scores of pilgrim satisfaction across the occupational categories. Fishers LSD multiple comparisons indicate that the mean values of (MS, HS) are significantly different from other mean values.

Pilgrims from various religions were found to be moderately satisfied on the whole. Mean values substantiate this trend (Table 1). For the item overall satisfaction, mean values of all the religions was found higher than theoretical mean of three. F value across the pilgrim satisfaction mean scores has been found to be significant (Table 2). This implies that mean values of pilgrim satisfaction is different across religions. Fishers LSD multiple comparisons indicate that the mean values of (DS, MS), (MS, HS), (HS, DS), and (HS, MS) are significantly different from other mean values. Among education levels, pilgrims from 12th standard and Graduation were found to be highly satisfied and pilgrims from other educational levels were mostly either dissatisfied or moderately satisfied. Mean values of the pilgrim satisfaction scale for the respondents of all age groups indicate that many are moderately satisfied. For the overall satisfaction item, mean value was found to

be higher than theoretical mean of three. F value across the pilgrim satisfaction mean scores was not significant (Table 2) and hence multiple comparison tests are not conducted.

Cross-tabulated results and mean values of the pilgrim satisfaction scale between income and pilgrim satisfaction levels (Table 1) indicate that there are many highly satisfied pilgrims in most of the categories. For the item overall satisfaction, mean values of the income categories are higher than the theoretical mean of three. F value has been found significant (Table 2) which implies that there are significant differences among various levels of pilgrim satisfaction. Fishers LSD multiple comparison test indicate that (DS, MS), (MS, HS), and (HS, DS) mean values are significantly different from other mean values.

Among the Indians and Tibetans, many pilgrims were highly satisfied with the event. However many pilgrims from Nepal and other countries were either moderately satisfied or dissatisfied (Table 1). Mean values of the pilgrim satisfaction scale indicate that pilgrims from all the nationalities are moderately satisfied. For the item overall satisfaction, mean values of only Indians and Tibetans is higher than theoretical mean. Pilgrims from Nepal, and other countries was lower than the theoretical mean of three. F value (Table 2) is significant which implies that there are significant differences among various levels of pilgrim satisfaction. Fishers LSD multiple comparison test indicate that (DS, HS) mean values are significantly different from other mean values.

Factor Analysis

Pilgrims' perception of thirteen attributes were factor analysed using principle component analysis with orthogonal VARIMAX rotation to identify the underlying dimensions that explain the variance in the attributes. Table 3 provides details about the factor analysis of the scale. KMO measure of sampling adequacy was .768 which is above the prescribed minimum level (19) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity value has been found to be significant. These two values indicate that the factor structures can be approved for further analysis.

From the VARIMAX rotated component matrix, four factors with eigen values greater than 1 representing 61.761 percent of the explained variance were extracted. Factor loadings which are greater than .45 were only considered as prescribed for a sample size of 200 and below by Hair et al (19). The rotated component matrix produced a clear factor structure with relatively higher loadings on the appropriate factors. The four factors extracted were named as follows

Factor 1 - Basic Facilities: This factor contains six_items and explains 30.01 percent of variance in the data and has Eigen value of 3.901. The six items associated with this factor are 'Reception', 'Availability of Information', 'Guidance and Assistance', 'Accommodation Facilities', 'Medical facilities' and 'Water supply'.

Table 3 : Factor Analysis ^a

		Component ^b			
		1	2	3	4
		Basic Facilities	Support Facilities	Enhancers	Concerns
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.768				
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Approx. Chi Square)	742.460**				
Communalities					
Reception	.632	.791			
Availability of Information	.680	.797			
Guidance and Assistance					
Transport			.703		
Accommodation Facilities					
Medical Facilities					
Banking Facilities	.726		.835		
Communication Facilities	.504		.693		
Security at the destination	.663				.654
Prices / Charges	.729				-.627
Environment	.614			.772	
Cultural Programmes	.587			.709	
Water Supply	.440	.456			
Eigen Values		3.901	1.884	1.199	1.044
Variance Explained		30.010	14.496	9.255	8.029
Factor Mean		11.89	5.78	3.93	4.10

A: Principal Component Analysis using Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

B: Factor loadings more than .45 and factors with eigen values greater than 1 are only considered.

**sig. at .001

Factor 2 – Support Facilities: This factor contains three items and explains 14.496 percent of variance in the data and has Eigen value of 1.884. The three items in this factor are ‘Transport’, ‘Banking facilities’ and ‘Communication facilities’.

Factor 3 – Enhancers: This factor contains two items and explains 9.255 percent of variance in the data and has Eigen value of 1.199. The two items associated with this factor are ‘Environment’ and ‘Cultural programmes’.

Factor 4 – Concerns: This factor contains two items and explains 8.029 percent of variance in the data and has Eigen value of 1.044. The two items associated with this factor are ‘Security at the destination’ and ‘Prices / Charges’. Negative values of Prices / charges indicate inverse relationship with the consumer satisfaction. This implies that more the prices and charges at the destination, lesser would be the satisfaction.

Multiple Regressions

The four factors identified from factor analysis viz. basic facilities, support facilities, enhancers and concerns, were regressed with dependent variable as overall satisfaction. As the construct, validity is not checked and multi collinearity was checked for, summated factor scores were used for the respective factors. The mean item scores of each factor were summed to form a simple summated factor score. One of the objectives in using multiple regression was to identify the relative importance of each factor on pilgrim satisfaction through the beta coefficients. Table 4 details the results of the multiple regression analysis.

Table 4 : Multiple Regression Results

R- 0.87, R²- 0.76, Adj R² -0.75, SEE -0.56

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B		Beta	B	Std. Error
(Constant)	(1.22)	0.19		(6.40)	0.00
Factor 1	0.15	0.01	0.47	12.18	0.00
Factor 2	0.16	0.03	0.24	6.10	0.00
Factor 3	0.21	0.03	0.25	6.46	0.00
Factor 4	0.24	0.04	0.24	5.73	0.00

Dependent Variable: Overall Satisfaction

In the results, four factors collectively explained about 76 percent of variance in the pilgrim satisfaction i.e. R^2 stood at .760. Considering that standard error of estimate is .56 at 0.05 significance level regression estimate is one from the above formula either plus or minus $1.96 \times .566$. The results indicates a good fit. Among the four factors, basic facilities has higher beta values followed by enhancers. Both support facilities and concerns have equal weightage. This implies that the pilgrim visiting the events would be highly satisfied if the basic facilities are provided well. Careful observation indicates that factor one is nearly twice important than any of the other three factors.

Discussion

Cross-tabulated results along with ANOVA results indicate that for the demographic factors like age, sex, occupation, religion, income and nationality there are significant differences in the means. This implies that organisers need to focus on arrangements according the differences in various demographic characteristics of the pilgrims. Cue can be taken from the mean differences among groups given by multiple comparisons.

Regression results have indicated that 'basic facilities' is the key factor influencing the pilgrim satisfaction followed by enhancers. The huge difference in the beta values between basic facilities and other factors indicate the key role and importance of basic facilities in influencing the pilgrim satisfaction. Implication for the organisers of the religious events is that if basic facilities are provided to the pilgrims; a reasonably good level of satisfaction can be ensured. Organisers should invest good amount of their time and human resources in providing the right information at right time and right place. Pilgrims' problems need to be addressed properly through various reception counters. This requires appropriate training of the personnel or scheduling trained personnel to be incharge of the activities which require direct contact with the pilgrims. Training programmes focusing on improving the personnel courtesy, helpfulness, understand ability, language skills, and appearance should be conducted by the concerned organizers of the religious events. Organizers of religious events should place appropriate instructions and guidelines throughout the event location. Added, organisers also should take care of arranging for accommodation facilities. This requires investments in terms of money and personnel. Efforts also should be made to arrange for clean drinking water supply and medical facilities so that no diseases spread. Enhancers play the role of catalysts for the event. If the organisers of religious events choose good locations with serene atmosphere pilgrims would find it comfortable and thus increases their satisfaction levels. Cultural programmes depicting the theme of the event would add to the satisfaction of the pilgrims.

Third position is shared by the two factors; support facilities and concerns. Organisers should choose event locations which has good transport facilities or should ensure that there are special arrangements for the pilgrims for transport. Events which are of international in nature like that of Mahakumbha-2013 shall essential be equipped with banking facilities. As pilgrims require exchange and payment of money, organisers should tie ups with banks to provide required services. Added, the event through various sources like internet, TV and print media should be communicated to the potential visitors. With increased terrorist attacks, concerns like security also form part and parcel of the arrangements. Further, prices charged for various services were found to be negatively related to the consumer satisfaction. This indicates that higher the prices, lower would be the satisfaction.

Summary and Limitations

Using quartile deviations when mean scores of pilgrim satisfaction scale were divided into three groups; it was found that more number of pilgrims were moderately satisfied. This shows that arrangements at the event Mahakumbh – 2013 have been met the expectations of the pilgrims moderately. Further, the scale used for measuring pilgrim satisfaction has been found reliable and content valid. It was identified that there are differences in the pilgrim satisfaction mean scores on various demographic variables like age, sex, religion, occupation, income and nationality. When the scale was subjected to factor analysis, thirteen items gave way to five factors which were named as basic facilities, support facilities, enhancers and concerns. After regressing the factors, basic facilities is found to have strong influence on the pilgrim satisfaction followed by support facilities and enhancers.

One of the limitations of the study is that the scale used for measuring pilgrim satisfaction has been only found internally consistent and content valid. The scale still needs to be tested for other validity tests. Added, the scale has been tested on a moderate sample size and at one event only. Hence, wide generalization of the results from the study would be inappropriate. The behaviour of scale after testing at other events has to be found out in further studies.

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