

# A STUDY ON PERCEPTIONS, SATISFACTION LEVEL OF TOURISTS IN KASHMIR VALLEY

Ishfaq Ahmad Bhat<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Ritika Moolchandani<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>M. Phil (Research Scholar), Department of Aviation & Hospitality, Bhagwant University, Ajmer, Rajasthan, India

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Aviation & Hospitality, Bhagwant University, Ajmer, Rajasthan, India

## ABSTRACT

*Tourist satisfaction has been recognized as an important concept in establishing the display of various sites. Given the increasing level of competition, tourism management officers are required to understand the main factors causing satisfaction / dissatisfaction for tourism. The way a tourist feels about the places they visit is extremely important to keep in mind. Different types of tourists reach a particular destination with a specific purpose and if the purpose is served, tourists may prefer to visit the site again and recommend the site to others. A tourist destination should ideally meet the expectations of tourists including tourism products and markets.*

*Tourism has become an important global economic and leisure activity due to its growing acceptance and benefits. Travel has been mounting in mature markets, driven by the increasing purchasing power of the middle class in many developing economies including India. Travel and Tourism, thanks to positive global trends emerged as a vital sector for economic development in both the emerged and emerging economies. For instance, Travel and Tourism industry's direct and indirect contribution to the global GDP in 2018 was 8811 billion USD, 940.9 \$ billions in investment, 1643.2 USD in exports and 318,811 Billion jobs. In terms of percentage, the total contribution stand for 10% of the global GDP and one in every 10% jobs has been generated by the travel and tourism industry (World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), 2018). The purpose of this study is to study the impact of tourist perceptions and satisfaction on destination loyalty.*

**Keyword:** - Tourism, Focus, Level, J&K, and Components etc.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is largely influenced by the specific elements that tourists consider essential. The surrounding area or ominous lack and the level of functioning of these variables oversees the supply among tourists. This further prevents or compels tourism in a specific state / site. However, tourism / visitor being the central and main stakeholder of the demand side of the tourism value chain due to their demand for various tourism services, provides an input to tourism service suppliers and encourages them to achieve balanced growth and sustainable equilibrium. Does. Due to this nature of tourists, it also helps in maintaining the general balance of the tourism industry. Subsequently, in view of the importance of visitor fulfillment for tourism achievement and advancement, this paper attempts to impart a piece of knowledge into the components that are largely related to the satisfaction of tourists with services provided by specific partners Let's focus on the level. The tourism business and the affinity of travelers will return to the state of Jammu and Kashmir in future.

Tourism has been seen as the main thrust for regional improvement and "effective and successful tourism can create the destination's tourism realizations, income, employment and government revenue" (Chen and Tsai, 2007). Tourist satisfaction is considered to be one of the most important concerns of competitive destinations as it significantly affects tourist's choice about the consumption of a particular destination, services and products and the decision to revisit the destination in the future. The increasing role of tourism in the global economy and the increasing competition in the global tourism market are important for increasing the satisfaction of tourists about the consumption of various services as well as products. This will help the tourism industry create a way to expand and

maintain a large and loyal customer base for long-term success. Satisfied tourists achieve success in business, as they are likely to revisit and support the destination for their families and friends. On the other hand, disgruntled tourists cannot return to the same destination and cannot advise others to travel. Worse, disgruntled tourists may express negative remarks about the destination and damage its market reputation.

## 2. TOURIST SATISFACTION

Tourist satisfaction has been identified as an important concept in establishing the performance of different destinations. Given the increasing level of competitiveness, it is essential for tourism management authorities to understand the main factors causing satisfaction/dissatisfaction for the tourist. It is extremely important to take into account the way a tourist feels about the destinations they visit. Tourist satisfaction is a prime variable that helps the destinations sustain competitive advantage because it influences destination selection, consumption of tourism products and services (Kozak and Remington, 2000). As such, issues related to tourist satisfaction occupy the central stage in tourism research. Tourist Satisfaction may be defined as “a person’s feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product’s perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations. Day (1984) “The evaluative response to the current consumption event and the consumers response in a particular consumption experience to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations (or some other norm of performance) and the actual performance of the product perceived after its acquisition.”

## 3. TOURIST PERCEPTIONS

Perception is a process by which an individual selects organizes and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world.” Perception may be defined as a “complex cognitive process that yields a unique picture of the world, a picture that may be quite different from reality. The ideas of a tourist prior to actual visit. Tourist Perception may be defined as “the ability to see, hear or be aware of tourism destinations through the senses.” (Bruner,1957).

## 4. DESTINATION LOYALTY

Destination loyalty is one of the important intangible assets of tourism business. Destination loyalty may be defined as “tourist’s intention to revisit a destination, spreading positive word of mouth and recommending the destination to potential tourists. *Destination loyalty* encompasses a perspective that indicates tourists' long-term revisit behavior toward a *destination* that connects with their previous travel experiences at the same *destination* (Oppermann 2000).

## 5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Md. Abdul Alim(2018) conducted study on Visitors Perception towards Tour Destinations: A Study on Padma Garden .The main purpose of this study is to find out different aspects of Padma garden at Raj shahithat attract tvisitors. In this study, it is clearly seen that visitors are attracted towards Padma Garden because of several factors among which food and beverage is the highest in preference.

Yousuf. T and Ali. M (2018) conducted study on Tourist Satisfaction, Environmental Concerns and Tourism in and Beyond Dal Lake, Kashmir. It was found that most of the tourists were satisfied with the various facilities available at the moment, with moderate to fair perception about the quality of food available around the lake. Tourists were also asked about their opinion regarding improving of tourism in the lake, with most of the tourists suggesting proper disposal of the wastes and ban on the use of polythene. Most of the tourists appeared satisfied with the present level of tourism activities and condition of the lake. Some tourists, however, were not satisfied with the cleanliness of the lake and felt that proper cleanliness of the lake should be maintained to promote tourism in a broader way. All tourists expressed their positive feelings for revisiting the lake time and again.

Hereli. F. A (2018) Studied the Impact of Destination Image on Tourists’ Satisfaction and Loyalty in the Context of Domestic Tourism. The current study shows that destination image has, indeed, an impact on tourist satisfaction and loyalty in the domestic tourism context, offering a better insight into the relation between these concepts, by trying to determine which constructs have the most influence on tourists’ satisfaction and their intention of revisiting and recommending the destination. The results of this study on destination image and its impact on the satisfaction and

loyalty of tourists in the context of domestic tourism can be useful to several categories of stakeholders at the level of the Romanian destinations

Kanwel .S. et.al., (2019) studied the Influence of Destination Image on Tourist Loyalty and Intention to Visit: Testing a Multiple Mediation Approach. The conclusion of this study consists of several facts and findings regarding destination image, eWOM, tourist satisfaction, as well as tourist loyalty and intention to visit. Destination image is strongly associated with tourist satisfaction, because tourist satisfaction relates to feelings that are created by cognitive features with tourism activities and the accumulated assessment of numerous features and components of the destination image.

## 6. INFLOW OF TOURISTS IN KASHMIR

Kashmir adventure tourism offers a great opportunity for foreign tourists to explore the vast areas of the exotic Himalayan mountain range. Kashmir is the most sought after tourist destination in India. Apart from the natural beauty, the unique landscape of Kashmir also encourages anyone to explore an inherent sports caliber. The expansive Himalayan ranges, fast flowing rivers and lush pastures of vast pastoral lands represent the beautiful state of Kashmir. Kashmir gives tourists the opportunity to choose from a plethora of adventure sports events of trekking, skiing, mountain climbing, river rafting, horse polo, paragliding and para sailing. Kashmir's wide variety of sporting events enable tourists to experiment with their latent sporting enthusiasm and sporting spirit. The exotic landscape of Kashmir is enriched with many beautiful places, where public relations combines nature with many adventurous sports. The high mountain of Kashmir gives tourists a tour of the rugged and bumpy terrain of the Himalayan ranges. The flowing rivers of the mountainous regions provide adventurous visitors to join public relations rafting. List of places of Kashmir Adventure Tourism: Lidder River, Dal Lake and Vullar, Gulmarg, Nigeen Lake. As in the dress of an ideal player, tourists venture into a world of adventure games to explore their sporting abilities. Kashmir Adventure Tourism provides tourists with unlimited joy and enchantment to enjoy their bliss in the exotic landscape. One of the most exciting and thrilling experiences, Kashmir adventure tourism fills tourists with unlimited enthusiasm and enthusiasm.

## 7. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study revealed that tourist perceptions and tourist satisfaction exert significant impact on destination loyalty. Further, the socio-economic and topography variables also influence on tourist perceptions, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Furthermore, earlier studies such as Javier and Bign (2001), Lucio et al., (2006), Chi et al., (2008), Prayag (2008), Quintal et al., (2008), Lee (2009), Prayag (2009), Celeste and Armando (2011), Mahadzirah et al., (2011), Suzan (2012) and Kim and Holland et al., (2012) have proposed that destination loyalty is influenced by tourist perceptions and tourist satisfaction but this study found that in addition to tourist perceptions, satisfaction, socio-economic and topography characteristics of tourists also influence destination loyalty.

## 8. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

In the current global scenario attracting new tourists is more costly than developing loyal tourist base. In this context, it may be appropriate to quote Peter Ducker's (1954) comment on business who said "the purpose of a business is to create a customer". Further to quote Chip Bell (Founder of Chip Bell Consultant) "loyal customers, they don't just come back, they don't simply recommend you, they insist that their friends do business with you". Therefore, it is high time that attributes of tourist perceptions, satisfaction and destination loyalty are understood with clarity. The findings of this study highlighted the significant tourism managerial implications. The exploratory factor analyses identified that tourist perceptions consisting six dimensions such as historical, cultural attractions, affordability, travel environment, natural attractions, amenities and activities and tourist satisfaction encompassed of six factors such as entertainment, attractions, accommodation, service quality, accessibility and shopping and also destination loyalty attributes such as repeat visit, recommending others, positive word of mouth, preferred and beneficial destination. This findings may useful to the destination marketers to design and deliver appropriate tourism products and services on the basis of expectations of the tourists.

In addition to these, study also suggests competitive destination marketing plan. The destination managers ought to strive to improve the satisfaction of the tourists. It is a fact that “once a negative perception is formed in the minds of tourists, it is highly difficult to change”.

## 9. TOURIST SATISFACTION-CONCEPT AND MEASUREMENT

The customer satisfaction is an important theoretical and practical issue. For most marketers and consumer researchers, customer satisfaction is considered as a marketing tool to attract the most variable segments of the market. Satisfaction means perceived discrepancy between prior expectation and perceived performance after consumption - when performance differs from expectation, dissatisfaction occurs (Oliver, 1980). It can be defined as the degree to which one believes that an experience reveals positive emotions (Rust & Oliver, 1994). Bitner and Hubber (1994) described customer satisfaction as a feeling that a customer's feeling or attitude towards a service after being used. According to Spreng and McCoy (1996), there is no clear definition of satisfaction, although most definitions would include "an appraisal, emotional or emotional response". Hansmark and Albinson (2004) also believe that satisfaction is a holistic customer attitude toward a service provider, or an emotional response to differences about the fulfillment of some need, goal, or desire to customers. In the context of tourism, satisfaction is mainly known as a function of pre-trip expectations and post-travel experiences. Tourist satisfaction is an emotional state after experiencing travel (Baker & Crompton, 2000). When the experience results in feelings of satisfaction compared to expectations, the tourist is satisfied. However, when they result in feelings of resentment, the tourist is dissatisfied (Reisinger & Turner, 2003).

Managers in tourism try to improve the level of customer satisfaction by improving the quality of their services with the belief that this effort will create loyal visitors. According to Campo and Yag (2009), tourists' perception of quality has a positive and significant effect on their satisfaction. According to Salazar et. Al., (2004), tourist satisfaction, intention to return and intention to recommend destination are strongly influenced by service quality. Rahman et. Al., (2010), mentioned that overall good service quality brings about customer satisfaction. Al Alak and Alnawas (2010) stated that enriching the production and delivery of service can create customer satisfaction which in turn fulfills customer intent. Therefore, to achieve customer satisfaction, tourism organizations should focus more and more on the quality of service and firstly know the expectations of the customers and how they can meet such expectations as customer satisfaction customer Helps loyalty and retention of (Ojo,) 2010).

Measurement of customer satisfaction with leisure and recreation fields has been an important topic within the related literature (Dorfman, 1979). Different approaches to the measurement of customer satisfaction have been explored extensively during the past three decades, but a consensus approach has not yet been reached. The marketing literature has mainly reflected two approaches to customer satisfaction research. The American school, led by Parasuraman, et. al., (1985), considers customer satisfaction as a negative or positive outcome resulting from a comparison process between initial expectations and perceived performance of products and services. The Nordic school, led by Gronroos (1990), brings a completely different perspective for measuring customer satisfaction by stating that it is only an outcome of the actual quality of performance and its perception by consumers. There has been extensive debate in the marketing literature regarding the nature and determinants of customer satisfaction and how it is best measured (Oh and Parks 1997).

## 10. CONCLUSION

Kashmir tourists' perceptions are influenced by historical, cultural attractions, affordability, travel environment, natural attractions, amenities and activities factors. Further, Kashmir tourists' satisfaction depends on factors such as entertainment facilities, attractions, accommodation facilities, service quality, accessibility and shopping facilities as well as the destination of zero crime against tourists. Kashmir is well known for its beauty and true hospitality which put authenticity on destination loyalty. Destination loyalty is measured with the help of repeat visit, recommending the destination to others and positive word of mouth variables. Furthermore, the study identified that tourist perceptions and satisfaction exert influence on destination loyalty. In addition to these, socio-economic and topography characteristics do play a role in shaping tourist perceptions, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. As such, a comprehensive relationship of perceptions, satisfaction and destination loyalty model is developed with the help of tourist perceptions, satisfaction, destination loyalty, socio-economic and other variables such as JKTDC, Authorities like SDA,GDA,PDA,GDA and other service providers Travel Agents, Tour operators and Hoteliers should to make frequent customers and customer satisfaction and customer loyalty should be incorporated into the

long –term goals of our business. Keep an eye on what customers say about kashmir on social media and give every customer the same excellent treatment as you would like to receive yourself. If you want make a strong loyal customer then the tourist in such a way that they must feel as if they are VIPs. On the other hand if JKTDC wants to create strong loyalty in the minds of tourist than we must give the Value, Quality, Experience, Convenience and give rewards, coupons who frequently make purchases our services as well as if possible try to offer free return during winter season.

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