

A Study On Heritage Tourist Satisfaction In Karnataka

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Abstract: Increased competition in the global tourism industry has forced many countries to adopt various strategies to have edge over their competitors(Pawitra and Tan, 2003). The success or failure of the industry relies on the tourist satisfaction. Hence, tourist satisfaction takes a pivotal role in the growth the tourism industry. Karnataka is one of well-known heritage tourism destinations in India. Large number of heritage tourists visits the state. The tourism has becoming one of the prime source incomes for the state in recent years. The present study made an attempt to analyse the heritage tourists' satisfaction in the three UNESCO listed heritage (Hampi, Pattadakal and Beluru) sites. It is found that, both domestic and foreign tourists are satisfied with all the factors except maintenance of natural environment and cleanliness.

Key Words: Heritage tourist, tourist satisfaction, Karnataka, competition

1. Introduction

Many nations around the world rely heavily on international tourism. The tourism is one of the major contributors the GDP of several nations(Pedak, 2018). As per UNWTO world tourism barometer (2023) in the first quarter of 2023, foreign arrivals across the globe were 80% above pre-pandemic levels. As the data shows, 235 million tourists travelled internationally in the first three months of 2023, which is almost double the same period of 2022(UNWTO 2023). For Asia & Pacific Region total of 100.5 Million tourists have arrived. While, total 6.19 million tourists arrived India with an annual growth of rate of 305.4%. The estimated foreign exchange earnings from Tourism in the year 2022 are INR 134,543 Crore (Tourism Ministry, 2023).

Heritage tourism represents major chunk in the overall tourism industry across the globe with India being no exception(Murali, 2023). The demand for heritage tourism has been growing rapidly which worth billions(Murali, 2023). To attract the tourists there have been many strategies adopted by various countries(Pawitra and Tan, 2003). The tourists satisfaction level is the one of the significant determinant that influences on the prosperity of entire tourism industry. Thus, the present study made an attempt to analyse the level of heritage tourists' satisfaction in Karnataka.

The present study has been divided into six sections: Section one throws light on introduction. Section Two reviews the past literature, section three presents the research methodology, section four presents the results of the study; while, section five concludes and section six focused on the scope for further research.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Tourism products of Karnataka

Karnataka is one of the major contributors for the India's GDP; the state is located on the Southern part of the country. It is known for its many tourism destinations. The state has scenic landscape, panoramic beaches, awesome lakes, cool climate, trekking and fishing opportunities, wild life sanctuaries, waterfalls, and archaeological, historical, cultural and religious places.

There were six UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Karnataka- Hampi, Pattadakal, Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala, Monuments of Srirangapatna Island Town, Monuments and Forts of the Deccan Sultanate, Western Ghats, recently Hoysala temples at Belur, Halebid, and Somanathapur are added into the UNESCO list. Apart

from this UNESCO world heritage sites there are many other well-known heritage tourism destinations in the state such as palaces of Mysuru, Chitradurga Fort, Bengaluru fort, Bidar fort etc.

Though the tourism provides direct and indirect employment to large number people in the state. But the majority of locations with significant tourism potential remain undiscovered.

2.2 Customer Satisfaction

Kotler (2000) defined satisfaction as: “a person’s feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product are perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations”. Whereas, Hansemark and Albinsson (2004) defined customer satisfaction as, “satisfaction is an overall customer attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfilment of some need, goal or desire”.

Customer satisfaction is a crucial consideration when determining whether to proceed with a purchase or not. Since travellers also subscribe to the services offered, the same idea holds true from the perspective of tourism. Therefore, the satisfaction element influences their decision to return (Salleh et al., 2013). Another phrase that is frequently used while discussing the idea of tourist satisfaction is travel satisfaction, which is the outcome of a visitor's contentment following their personal experience or the experience of a good or service received (Heung, 2000).

2.3 Determinants of Tourist satisfaction

As the previous studies reveal tourist satisfaction results in the growth of overall tourism industry (for e.g. Marcussen, 2011; Uysal and Noe, 2003). Thus it leads to gain loyalty if tourist to a particular destination (Alexandris et al., 2006; Nilplub et al., 2016). Bowen and Chen, (2001) in their study on ‘tourist satisfaction in hotel in sector’, it is found that ‘the higher satisfaction leads to greater loyalty’. Hence, such satisfied customers refer others to visit the same hotel or place. Evidence suggests that visitors' contentment is a reliable predictor of their propensity to return and promote appropriate places to others (Kozak and Remington, 2000). Further, they are eager to tell their friends and family about their enjoyable travels (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Thus, it can be inferred that tourist satisfaction is crucial to the success of destination marketing because it influences the choice of location, the consumption of goods and services, and the desire to return.

Tourists' satisfaction with their trip or journey is influenced by a variety of factors, including the standard of the services offered and factors like infrastructure, security, sanitation, the surrounding environment, consumer protection, ease of access and prices (Handszuh, 199; Marcussen, 2011; Nilplub et al., 2016). Service is part of the tourism process which leads to the formation of the overall satisfaction (Ekinci and Riley, 1998). Physical and psychological components, such as the destination's product performance and its significance for the traveller, are additional elements that affect satisfaction and destination loyalty (Uysal and Noe, 2003). However, inclination to return is not just influenced by satisfaction. Other elements, like proximity of the destination to the market, prior knowledge, sociodemographic, and other trip characteristics, are also important (Marcussen, 2011).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Problem statement, Research question and objectives

Tourism sector has emerged has one of the prominent sector which largely contribute to the GDPs of many countries across the globe. India is also no exception; it has been promoting the tourism sector as one of the main focused sector in the country. Since there are large numbers of heritage places in the country many domestic as well as foreign tourist have been attracted towards them. In Karnataka there are seven UNESCO recognized world heritage sites. Hence, there are large number of tourists have been visiting these places. Therefore, such as prominent sector's future is decided by the tourist satisfaction. Hence, there is a need to identify the determinants of the tourist satisfaction. Focusing on such factors results in the progress of the sector and overall growth of the economy of the country as whole. The present study has the following research question: What are the determinants of heritage tourist satisfaction in Karnataka?

Specifically the study has the following objectives:

- i. To identify heritage tourists satisfaction.

- ii. To find the association between the satisfaction level of domestic and foreign tourists.

3.2 Data Sources

The study relies on both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data related to the customer satisfaction has been obtained from well-structured questionnaire. While secondary data has been collected from various published sources such as newspapers, magazines, reports and other relevant sources.

3.3 Sample and Sample Size

Purposive sampling techniques have been followed in the study. Initially UNESCO listed heritage sites are selected. Then, first three UNESCO listed sites(Chronologically) such as Hampi, Pattadakal and Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala in Beluru are chosen. The sample of both domestic as well as foreign tourists has been chosen. The overall 150 responses have been collected from all three heritage destinations in August, 2023. To ensure the appropriateness of the questionnaire, reviews on the questionnaire from three tourism businessmen and three academic experts in the field are collected before distribution of questionnaire.

3.4 Tools of analysis

Reliability Analysis: To examine the reliability of the questionnaire (Likert scaled). The Cronbach's test has been conducted to assess the internal consistency of the statement. If the Cronbach's Alpha for all the constructs is above 0.70 then it can interpreted that there is internal consistency in the data.

Test of Normality: To decide whether to conduct the parametric tests or non-parametric tests the normality check of data is very crucial.

The normality tests are used to determine whether a normal distribution is a good fit for the data and to determine how likely it is that an underlying random variable will be normal. There are several methods available to check the normalcy of the data. Among the available tools we use Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk,

Other relevant statistical tests such as descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation and Chi-square tests are conducted.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Sample

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	93	62.0	62.0	62.0
	Female	57	38.0	38.0	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	
Age	Upton 25 years	6	4.0	4.0	4.0
	25-35 years	32	21.3	21.3	25.3
	35-45 years	41	27.3	27.3	52.7
	Above 45 years	71	47.3	47.3	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	
Marital Status	Married	130	86.7	86.7	86.7
	Unmarried	20	13.3	13.3	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	
Country	India	116	77.3	77.3	77.3
	USA	18	12.0	12.0	89.3
	Bangla	6	4.0	4.0	93.3
	Canada	5	3.3	3.3	96.7
	German	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

In the above table the demographic profile of heritage tourist has been presented. As the table indicates, on the overall sample 62 percent are male and 38 percent are female. While, the age group shows that, 47.3 percent of tourists are above 45 years of age; 27.3 percent of them are 35 to 45 years; 21.3 percent of the respondents 25 to 35 years of age and 4 percent of the respondents are up to 25 years of age. However, the table also shows, 86.7 percent of respondents are married, while 13.3 percent are unmarried. Further, 77.3 percent of the heritage tourists are from India and 22.7 percent of the tourists are other countries. Among the foreign tourists large (12 percent) number of tourist are USA takes major, Bangladesh are in second place (4 percent), whereas Canada and German in third place with 3.3 percent.

The heritage tourists' level of satisfaction is interpreted as below:

The level of tourist satisfaction of respondents' opinion is interpreted as below:

1. High (overall mean score between 3.4 to 5)
2. Moderate (overall mean score between 1.68 to 3.33)
3. Low (overall mean score between (1.00 to 1.67))

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics – Heritage Tourists satisfaction

Sl No	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I am Satisfied with the Accommodation	150	4.31	.685
2	I am Satisfied with the Restaurants	150	4.20	.751
3	I am Satisfied with the Bus service	150	3.19	.783
4	I am Satisfied with the Taxi service	150	3.68	.698
5	Maintained natural environment and cleanliness	150	3.01	.882
6	Natural environment protection preservation good	150	2.77	.999
7	Built environment is good	150	3.63	.608
8	I am happy with Archaeological cultural sites and monuments	150	4.49	.528
9	Infrastructure is good	150	3.57	.727
10	Activities and entertainment variety are good	150	3.19	.792
11	Activities and entertainment quality are good	150	3.71	.574
12	Activities and entertainment value for money	150	3.62	.711
13	I am satisfied with the Organized trips within	150	3.82	.580
14	I am satisfied with the cruises outside	150	3.33	.945
15	I am satisfied with Shopping in City	150	3.49	.974
16	Feel the trip 'Value for money'	150	3.89	.829
	Valid N (listwise)	150		
	Overall Mean		3.62	

The above table shows that the overall mean is 3.62; it indicates that the heritage tourists' satisfaction is high. The analysis of each statement shows the tourists are highly satisfied with the Archaeological cultural sites

and monuments (the mean score is 4.49) while, they are not satisfied with the ‘natural environment protection preservation good’(the mean score is 2.77).

4.1 Reliability Analysis

The Cronbach’s test has been conducted to assess the internal consistency of the statement.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No of Items
.718	.714	18

The above table shows the results of the Reliability test (i.e., Cronbach’s test). As the table depicts Cronbach’s Alpha for all the constructs is above 0.70. Hence, it can be interpreted that there is an internal consistency. Thus, there questionnaire is reliable.

Table 4: Cross Tabulation of Heritage Tourist Responses

		Tourist				X ²
		India		Foreign		
Accommodation		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	X ² =5.885 P=0.117
	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
	Disagree	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	
	Can't say	10	100.0%	0	0.0%	
	Agree	53	70.7%	22	29.3%	
	Strongly agree	51	82.3%	11	17.7%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Restaurants	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	X ² =18.437 P=0.000
	Disagree	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	
	Can't say	13	72.2%	5	27.8%	
	Agree	46	63.9%	26	36.1%	
	Strongly agree	53	94.6%	3	5.4%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Bus service	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	4	100.0%	X ² =50.941 P=0.000
	Disagree	6	30.0%	14	70.0%	
	Can't say	57	80.3%	14	19.7%	
	Agree	51	96.2%	2	3.8%	
	Strongly agree	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Taxi service	Strongly disagree	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	X ² =1.946 P=0.746
	Disagree	8	72.7%	3	27.3%	
	Can't say	16	69.6%	7	30.4%	
	Agree	88	79.3%	23	20.7%	
	Strongly agree	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Natural Environment cleanliness	Strongly disagree	4	44.4%	5	55.6%	X ² =52.340
	Disagree	10	33.3%	20	66.7%	
	Can't say	55	90.2%	6	9.8%	

	Agree	47	94.0%	3	6.0%	P=.000
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Natural environment protection preservation	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	4	100.0%	X ² =31.970 P=0.000
	Disagree	59	70.2%	25	29.8%	
	Can't say	2	40.0%	3	60.0%	
	Agree	55	96.5%	2	3.5%	
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Built environment	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	X ² =3.078 P=0.215
	Disagree	8	80.0%	2	20.0%	
	Can't say	24	66.7%	12	33.3%	
	Agree	84	80.8%	20	19.2%	
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Archaeological cultural sites and monuments	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	X ² =6.965 P=0.031
	Disagree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
	Can't say	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	
	Agree	57	79.2%	15	20.8%	
	Strongly agree	59	77.6%	17	22.4%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Infrastructure	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	X ² =9.580 P=0.008
	Disagree	20	95.2%	1	4.8%	
	Can't say	13	56.5%	10	43.5%	
	Agree	83	78.3%	23	21.7%	
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Activities and entertainment variety	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	4	100.0%	X ² =112.37 P=0.000
	Disagree	0	0.0%	23	100.0%	
	Can't say	59	93.7%	4	6.3%	
	Agree	57	95.0%	3	5.0%	
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Activities and entertainment quality	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	X ² =8.182 P=0.003
	Disagree	4	44.4%	5	55.6%	
	Can't say	16	61.5%	10	38.5%	
	Agree	96	83.5%	19	16.5%	
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Activities and entertainment value for money	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	X ² =8.182 P=0.042
	Disagree	14	77.8%	4	22.2%	
	Can't say	16	69.6%	7	30.4%	
	Agree	86	80.4%	21	19.6%	
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Organized trips within	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	X ² =26.252 P=0.000
	Disagree	6	85.7%	1	14.3%	
	Can't say	18	90.0%	2	10.0%	
	Agree	92	79.3%	24	20.7%	

	Strongly agree	0	0.0%	7	100.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Cruises outside	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	5	100.0%	$X^2=46.449$ $P=0.000$
	Disagree	15	48.4%	16	51.6%	
	Can't say	20	71.4%	8	28.6%	
	Agree	77	93.9%	5	6.1%	
	Strongly agree	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Shopping in the City	Strongly disagree	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	$X^2=85.215$ $P=0.042$
	Disagree	6	23.1%	20	76.9%	
	Can't say	13	48.1%	14	51.9%	
	Agree	79	100.0%	0	0.0%	
	Strongly agree	14	100.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	
Value for money	Strongly disagree	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	$X^2=23.446$ $P=0.000$
	Disagree	10	100.0%	0	0.0%	
	Can't say	8	44.4%	10	55.6%	
	Agree	68	73.9%	24	26.1%	
	Strongly agree	28	100.0%	0	0.0%	
	Total	116	77.3%	34	22.7%	

On the overall sample of Indian tourist 104 tourists are satisfied with the accommodation. While only one foreign tourist is neutral on the accommodation facilities remaining all others are satisfied with the accommodation, this shows the tourists are satisfied with the accommodation. The Chi-square test results shows ($X^2=5.885$, $P=0.117$) there is no significant association the statements tourist domestic and foreign tourists responses on accommodation. While, tourists opinion towards the restaurant facility shows, none of the tourists have strongly disagree with the statement, whereas only four Indian tourists have disagree with the statement 'I am satisfied with the Restaurant'. This shows the tourists are satisfied with the restaurant facility. Further, the Chi-square test shows ($X^2=18.437$, $P=0.000$) there is a significant association between the tourist type and their responses to the statement.

None of the Indian tourist have strongly disagreed with the statement 'I am Satisfied with the Bus service' while only 4 foreign tourist are strongly disagree with the statement. However, none of the foreign tourist strongly agreed with the statement, only 4 agreed. This shows foreign tourists are not satisfied with the bus services. The Chi-square test results shows ($X^2=50.941$, $p=0.00$) there is a significant association between the responses of Indian and foreign tourists responses. While, large numbers of foreign tourists are satisfied with the cab services.

The table also shows that none of the foreign tourists have strongly agreed with the statement 'Maintained natural environment and cleanliness', large number of them are disagreed with the statement. Thus, it can be interpreted that the foreign tourist are not satisfied with the 'Maintained natural environment and cleanliness'. The Chi-square test results shows ($X^2=52.340$, $P=.000$) there is a significant association between tourist type and their responses to the statement. While, the we found similar sort of responses to the statement 'Natural environment protection preservation is good'.

The tourists are happy the built up area. It is worth the mention here that none of the tourists neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed with the statement 'I am happy with Archaeological cultural sites and monuments'. This indicates the tourists are satisfied with the Archaeological cultural sites and monuments. The Chi-square ($X^2=6.965$, $P=0.031$) shows there is significant association between the responses of both Indian and foreign heritage tourists.

Only 21 tourists (14 percent) are dissatisfied with the infrastructure. This shows the tourists are satisfied with the infrastructure. The chi-square ($X^2=9.58$, $P=0.008$) test results shows there is significant shows there is significant association between the responses of both Indian and foreign heritage tourists.

None of the Indian heritage tourists have neither strongly disagreed nor disagreed with the statement 'Activities and entertainment variety is good'. This reveals the Indian tourists are satisfied with the entertainment activities and their variety. The Chi-square test results ($X^2=112.3$, $P=0.000$) shows there is significant association between statement of both domestic and foreign tourists.

On the overall 80 percent of the respondents are either agreed or strongly agreed with statement 'Feel the trip value for money'. Thus, it indicates that the heritage tourists are satisfied. Further, the Chi-square test results show that ($X^2=23.44$, $p=0.000$) there is significant association between the responses of domestic and foreign heritage tourists.

5. Conclusion

The tourism sector plays very crucial role in the economic growth of a country. Karnataka state is one of the prominent tourism destinations in the country. In the present study the customer satisfaction of three UNSECO listed sites (Hampi, Pattadakal and Belur) analyzed. On the overall it is found that both domestic and foreign tourists are satisfied.

6. Scope for further research

Though Karnataka state has many heritage tourism destinations. In the present study only three UNESCO listed sites are considered. A further study of all the Heritage sites in the state with large sample by size can be conducted. Such study helps the policy makers to take corrective actions to improve the tourism sector in the state.

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