

A study on Tourist's satisfaction with respect to the Krishna Pushkaras

Revathi Padavala¹ & Dr. SujathaPalleti²

¹Full-Time Research Scholar, Department of Tourism Management, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam block, VikramaSimhapuri University, Kakuturu, Nellore-524320, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism Management, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam block, VikramaSimhapuri University, Kakuturu, Nellore-524320, Andhra Pradesh, India

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is a detailed sort-out and critical review of the tourist satisfaction on the holy place of Krishna River during the Krishna Pushkaras. Pushkara is an Indian cultural festival is dedicated to worshipping of 12 major sacred rivers in India, which normally occurs once in every 12 years. In this paper, we know about what are the facilities available at the destination area and investigate the tourist satisfaction through sample data, with the help of scheduled questionnaires.

Keywords: Pushkaralu, 4A's of Destination (Attraction, Accommodation, Amenities, and Accessibility), Tourist's satisfaction.

Introduction:

Holy sites and Religious places attract a lot of devotees and tourists every year. The role of accommodation, services, and facilities is very important in hosting the tourists in religious destinations. Due to increasing growth and competitiveness of the tourism industry, it is necessary to pay attention to develop and promote the quality and quantity of tourist destinations, accommodation, accessibility, services and equipment to satisfy tourists.

Krishna River is the major water system of the district, considered as the one of the longest river in south India, measuring about 1300 km in length. Approximately 105 km of riverine flow covers the districts. The river originates at Mahabaleswar, passes through Maharashtra, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh, conjoins the sea in the Bay of Bengal at Hamasaladevi, southern state of Andhra Pradesh. The delta of the river is one of the most potent regions in India and was the home to ancient Shathavahana and Ikshvaku Dynasty kings. The river flows rapidly, causing much erosion in June and August. During this time, Krishna River takes fertile soil from Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka and western Andhra Pradesh towards the delta region.

The festival of Krishna Pushkaralu is celebrated once in every 12 years to honor River Krishna and seek her blessings. Although the occasion is celebrated all over Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, the focal point of the occasion is the city of Vijayawada. Although theoretically, one can take a holy dip anywhere along the length of River Krishna during Krishna Pushkaralu, the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have organized and constructed several bathing ghats.

The State government of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana provided services, facilities to devotees like amenities, accessibility (transportation) and accommodation facility for the pilgrims in the name pushkaranagars. These pushkaranagars are established near important ghat points, where the traffic is expected to be high. Also promoting events through different medias as a representative of the local culture and tourism. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are fully committed to conducting this Krishna Pushkaralu mainly at four cities, Vijayawada, Guntur, Mahboobnagar and Nalgonda.

Literature Review

Tourist satisfaction is the ration between tourists' real feelings after the travel and their expectations before the traveling. It is a key element to consider a scenic spots competitiveness.

Pizam (1978) proposed tourist satisfaction was the result of comparison between tourists' expectation and real cognition. He believed beach, opportunity, cost, hospitality, catering service, accommodation, environment, and commercial atmosphere were the eight factors that impacted tourist satisfaction of seashore tourism. Beard (1980) emphasized that tourist satisfaction was based on the positive effect of comparison between tourists' expectation and real perception, it should be a "positive" cognition or feeling. Seoho (2006) put forward that tourist satisfaction not only referred to tourists' experience in tourist destinations but rather a reflection of whether the tourist was satisfied with the

treatment he or she received in the tourist destination. Joaquin (2009) analyzed the relationship between tourist satisfaction and motivations to revisit so as to attract more tourists to revisit the scenic spot and based on the overall satisfaction of tourists and revisit motivation in 2010, he made a judgment about the impact of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Wang and Qu (2006) studied on tourist satisfaction which is based upon variables such as accommodations, shopping opportunities, restaurant facilities, quality of accommodation, personal safety, tourist information, road conditions, potable water, and traffic flow and parking facilities. Chi and Qu (2008) identified seven destination attributes which generate tourist satisfaction. It includes accommodation, dining, shopping, attractions, events and activities, environment and accessibility. According to Kozak and Rimmington (2000), satisfaction is important to successful destination Marketing, Philip and Hezlett (1996) recognize the fact that one of the strategic routes used by leisure firms in gaining competitive edge has been through an increasing concentration in Tourist satisfaction. They also seem to be in agreement in the fact that, tourist satisfaction influences the choice of destination, the consumption of facilities, services and the decision to return. Tourist satisfaction is increasingly becoming an industry goal.

Cultural tourism festival

There is copious evidence in the literature on the benefits of cultural tourism festivals to destinations. It is reported that occasion contribute to the local regeneration and prosperity of the destination. Because it generates new employment opportunities for local people (Prentice and Andersen, 2003; Smith, 2004). It encourages the development of infrastructure which is visitor friendly and sustainable.

Bachleitner and Zins (1992) say that festival tourism enhances residents learning, awareness appreciation of community pride, ethnic identity, tolerance of others and brings about the opening of small and medium-sized family enterprises. It is also believed that cultural events foster cross-cultural communication that can promote understanding between the host and the guest (Sdrali and Chazapi, 2007). A region can make a name for itself and establish its competitive position among all countries or nations through tourism (Smith,2004).

Research gap :

There are some studies on Krishna Pushkarasand holy Destinations (D. Srinivasulu(2016), Dr.Basse Benjamin esu(2009), K. Jayaprakash (2016), AnushaPai (2016). Most of the studies focused on secondary sources to explain about Krishna pushkaras and holy destinations. Present study used the Primary data to understand the tourist's satisfaction with respect to the Krishna pushkaras.

Objectives:

1. To know the facilities available in Krishna Pushkaras.
2. To investigate the satisfaction levels of tourists in Krishna Pushkaras.

Hypothesis:

1. **H1:** There is significant difference among the tourist satisfaction with respect to the traveller's Demographics.
2. **H1a:** There is significant difference among the tourist satisfaction with respect to the traveller's age.
3. **H1b:** There is significant difference among the tourist satisfaction with respect to the traveller's education.
4. **H1c:** There is no significant difference among the tourist satisfaction with respect to the traveller's Gender.
5. **H1d:** There is no significant difference among the tourist satisfaction with respect to the traveller's marital status.

Research Methodology:

The researcher used convenience sampling method to collect 400 samples for this study from tourists who visited the Krishna Pushkaralu during the 12th August 2016 to 23rd August 2016,as this is the prime season of tourist arrival to take the holy dip.To investigate tourist satisfaction in Krishna Pushkaras, we have designed a questionnaire to obtain relevant data. The questionnaire concerns about the respondents' basic information such as gender, age, education background, and it also ask them questions on aspects that are considered factors that influence staff satisfaction, namely at Krishna Pushkaras environment, infrastructure, tourism scale, management service, catering, and accommodation. Each question has five options- Excellent, Very Good, Good, Average, Poor.For analysis, we have used SPSS 20.0.

Data Analysis**Demographic Profile*****Table-1: percentage analysis of Demographic respondents***

Demographics of tourists		
Age		
> 20 Years	28	7.0
21-35 Years	146	36.5
36-50 Years	131	32.8
Above 50 Years	95	23.8
Total Respondents	400	100
Gender		
Male	280	70.0
Female	120	30.0
Total Respondents	400	100
Qualifications		
SSC	32	8.0
10+2	119	29.8
Under Graduate	163	40.8
Post Graduate	86	21.5
Total Respondents	400	100
Marital Status		
Married	320	80.0
Unmarried	80	20.0
Total Respondents	400	100

Source of table(primary data)

The demographic characteristics of respondents shown in table-1, indicates that about 70% are male respondents and 30% female respondents. The major age group of the tourists was 21 to 35 years 36.5%, followed 36 to 50 years 32.8% and lowest age group of the tourists are below 20 years 7%. In terms of education qualification, almost 40.8% of the tourists were under Graduates, and 8% of the tourists are SSC.

Table -2 Percentage analysis on Travels Choice

Travels Choice variable		
Visit Frequency	Frequency	Percent
First time	120	30.0
Second time	160	40.0
Third time	80	20.0
Fourth time or more	40	10.0
Total Respondents	400	100
Purpose of Visit	Frequency	Percent
Religion and Culture	206	51.5

Rural Experience	122	30.5
Holidays	40	10.0
Other Reasons	32	8.0
Total Respondents	400	100
<i>Length of Stay</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
One day	120	30.0
Two or Three days	204	51.0
More than three days	76	19.0
Total Respondents	400	100
<i>Source of Information</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Friends/ relatives	164	41.0
Travel Agent	52	13.0
Social media	56	14.0
Newspaper/Magazine	128	32.0
Total Respondents	400	100
<i>Companion</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Alone	24	6.0
Couples (Spouse)	140	35.0
Family/other relatives	186	46.5
Friends	50	12.5
Total Respondents	400	100
<i>Mode of Travel</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Own Vehicle	88	22.0
Public Transport	212	53.0
Pvt Transport	100	25.0
Total Respondents	400	100
<i>Budget For Planning</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1500-2000	68	17.0
2000-5000	140	35.0
5000-8000	140	35.0
8000-1000	52	13.0
Total Respondents	400	100

Source of the table (primary data)

The respondents are found by travel to Krishna Pushkaras for religion and cultural purpose and have visited the destination. 70% of the visitors in the destination are first and second timers. 41% of the respondents came to know of Krishna Pushkaras by their friends and relatives and 53% of visitors prefer to travel by Public transport. It is evident that 46.5% of the respondents preferred to travel with their families and relatives, and stayed between 1-3 days (81%). They mostly preferred to utilize public accommodations and also pre-booking accommodation and 70 percent of the visitors spent an approximate amount of Rs 2000-8000. The above factors are shown in the table-2.

Table-3 Tourist's satisfaction at Krishna Pushkaras with respect to tourist's demographics

Variable	Tourist's demographics	Respondents (n)	Mean	F	Sig	Hypotheses accepted
Tourist Satisfaction	AGE(yrs)					
	> 20	28	3.29	1.333	.236	H ₀
	21-35	146	3.39			
	36-50	131	3.44			
	51<	95	3.47			
	EDUCATION					
	SSC	32	3.34	1.459	.225	H ₀
	10+2 or Technical courses	119	3.45			
	Graduate	163	3.37			
	Post Graduate	86	3.49			
	GENDER					
	Male	280	2.487	2.354	.009*	H ₁
	Female	120	4.402			
	MARITAL STATUS					
Married	320	2.396	1.164	.005*	H ₁	
Unmarried	80	3.484				

Source of the table (primary data), *Significance at 1% level

According to the table-3 the researcher examined that tourist's satisfaction with respects to their demographics. More tourists (n=146) belongs to the 21-35 years of age group followed by (n=131), there is no significance {F= 1.333, P (.236) >.05} difference among the tourist's age groups with respect to their satisfaction regarding krishnapushkara's facilities at 5% level of significance. That means all tourists with respect to their age groups are opined that they satisfied level is good regarding the facilities at krishnapushkaras.

With respect education level more tourists (n=163) are graduates followed by (n=119) +2 level or technical courses, there is no significant difference {F=1.459, P (.225) > .05} between tourist's education groups and their satisfaction levels with respect to the facilities at the Krishna Pushkaras at 5% level of significance. This indicates that the according to the tourist's educational group the facilities at krishnapushkaras are good.

In this study male tourists are more (n=280) and female tourists are, n=120. With respect the tourists gender groups, there is a significant {t=2.354, P (.009) <.01} difference exists among their satisfaction levels at 1% level of significance. Male tourists opined that the facilities at krishnapushkaras are very good (m=2.487). Female tourists opined that the facilities are average (m= 4.402) at krishnapushkaras.

Researcher examined that more (n=320) number of tourists are married and unmarried are 80. According to the marital status of tourists there is a significant {t=1.164, P(.005)<0.01} differences among their opinions about their satisfaction with respect to the krishnapushkaras at 1% level of significance. This can be understand in such a way that the married tourists are opined that the facilities of krishnapushkaras are very good (m=2.396) but unmarried tourists opined that the facilities are good (m=3.484) only.

Conclusions and Suggestions

According to research on tourist satisfaction in Krishna Pushkaras, the following conclusions can be summarized.

On the basis of one-way ANOVA, information acquiring channels have no significant influence on tourist satisfaction while educational background and age.

According to t-test, gender, and marital status are correlated with tourist satisfaction, and males are normally higher than females. Married persons are normally higher than unmarried persons. By analysing factors most of the tourists are satisfied with services and facilities, such as transportation, food, and accommodation.

Krishna Pushkaras is a very famous Hindu religious mass gathering event in Andhra Pradesh which is very famous for holy bath and religious gathering for special occasional days. Religious tourism requires a lot of attention from the local authorities and government to improve the facilities such as infrastructure, transportation, hotels etc. Tourism can be a very good source of income for the local population; hence it is necessary especially for the local authorities to give importance to these factors.

Although tourist satisfaction, on the whole, is good in Krishna Pushkaras, it is low in amenities, safety, and security. These two factors impede the improvement of tourist satisfaction so that they should be the focus of the management team of Krishna pushkaras.

In tourist satisfaction on Krishna Pushkaras, majority of tourists have been satisfied with the existing facilities and services and some more visitors are expecting better facilities and services for the future occasions.

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