



A Study On Identifying Tourist Satisfaction And Loyalty Towards Religious Tourism In Kamrup (M) District

Dipankar Basak^{1*}, Dr. Rajesh Deb Barman²

^{1*}Research Scholar Bodoland University Kokrajhar, Btr, Assam

²Assistant Professor Bodoland University Kokrajhar, Btr, Assam, rajesh.barman19@gmail.com

***Corresponding Author:** Dipankar Basak

*Research Scholar Bodoland University Kokrajhar, Btr, Assam

Abstract

The objective of the study was to find out the various factors identifying the tourist satisfaction through visiting two religious destinations in Kamrup(M) district. The researcher tried to examine the demographic profile in the visiting pilgrim areas. The study also tried to find out the relationship between overall satisfaction and the visitors satisfaction in the study area and its purpose. Based on primary data the research reveal that there is significant amount of positive relationship in the level of satisfaction of tourist in the variables like accomodation, transporation, cleanness, free meals, darshan etc. For measuring and analysing the variable of level of satisfaction, the researcher used five-point Likert Scale, with 1=much worse than expected; 2 = worse than expected; 3 = neutral; 4 = equal to expectations; 5 = better than expected.

Keywords: Kamrup(M), Tourist Satisfaction, pilgrim, religious tourism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Religious tourism is a social and economic phenomenon that confers new value on tourist destinations, both for visitors and for the recipient communities. Visiting emblematic sites of religious pilgrimage has evolved into the creation of a tourism product. Religious tourism consumers have experiences that produce complex interactions of feelings, mixing purely religious sentiments with tourism, leisure and recreation activities Any attempt to analyse tourist satisfaction with an experience must take these interactions into account, within the subjective context of the individual consumer, the personal meaning for that individual and the fundamental purpose of the visit.

Assam is a treasure trove of natural beauty and diverse history, remaining as one of the most bountiful untouched regions in the country. Known as the land of 'Blue Hills and Red River', the state is home to wild forests, mighty rivers, and acres and acres of tea plantations. Popularly known as the home to the one-horned rhino, the state is one of the top biodiversity hotspots in the entire world. With the majestic Brahmaputra River, magnificent hills, rich flora and fauna, the state is every tourist's paradise. One of the most beautiful states of India, Assam is the gateway to the enchanting and unexploited northeastern part of the country.

A veritable paradise, Assam shares international borders with both Bangladesh and Bhutan and boasts of its vibrant culture and scenic beauty, as well as its historical significance. The state enjoys a climate similar to tropical regions and has evergreen vegetation throughout the year.

Guwahati, the largest city, known as the city of temples, is home to Maa Kamakhya Devi Temple, one of the most sacred temples for Hindus. Another beautiful highlight of the state is Majuli, which is the largest river island in the world and is famous for its vibrant Assamese neo-Vaishnavite culture. Further up north, located near the Dibru river, is Dibrugarh city, known as the Tea City of India.

Hajo, an extremely ancient pilgrimage centre for not one or two but three different religions, stands as a beautiful example of the secular diversity that exists in India. The area is dotted with numerous temples, mosques and churches, and other religious and sacred artifacts. Haflong, Assam's only hill station is a stunningly beautiful place, marked with rolling mountains and lush green valleys.

Tourism in Guwahati is mostly considered as pilgrimage and heritage tourist destination. The centuries old glorious temples and colourful religious events attract millions of domestic as well as foreign tourists. The statistics reflect that the top 7 states with regard to inflow of domestic tourists in India during 2021. Assam is a well acknowledged pilgrimage destination which is a home to different religious pilgrim centres. In Assam particularly Kamrup (M) has considerable amount of religious destination which attract millions of tourists. The famous shakti temple of mother Goddess Kamakhya is situated on the top of the Nilachal Hills. During Ambubashi Mela large number of devotees come from all over India, to visit this place. Besides Guwahati is blessed with Umananda temple located at Peacock Island on a hillock named Bhasmacala in the middle of river Brahmaputra.

2. STUDY AREA

Assam is one of the states in India. It is surrounded by the kingdom of Bhutan and the state of Arunachal Pradesh, to the east by the states of Nagaland and Manipur, to the south by the states of Mizoram and Tripura, and to the west by Bangladesh and the states of Meghalaya and West Bengal. It is situated in the northeastern part of India. The name of Assam is come from the word Asom meaning “peerless” and the state language is Assamese. The study is confined religious tourism in Kamrup(M) District

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Al-Majali (2012) observed some factors that might impact tourist satisfaction, such as “image of Jordan, perceived risk, and service climate” and its impact on tourist’s satisfaction. The study showed that there is a positive significant relationship between image of Jordan and tourist satisfaction, while perceived risk and service climate has no impact on tourist satisfaction. The study suggests other factors to be studied, such as infrastructural factors and on-site related services.
 - Dr. Jayanta Gogoi(2013) *Assessing Tourist Satisfaction in Assam : A Case Study* analyses Tourism plays a vital role in the growth of an economy. Its contributions are primarily related to increase foreign exchange earnings, provide employment opportunities, fair return on investment, and conservation of resources. Assam is a rich biodiversity zone in the North East Region of India with extensive forest areas, flora and fauna. It has tremendous strength of Tourism potential due to its scenic beauty, cultural heritage, ethnic mixture and diverse flora and fauna. Such wealth of tourism resources endows Assam with comparative advantage over many other states. The present study shall concentrate assessing satisfaction of both domestic and foreign tourists in the state.
 - Prodip Gogoi and Ratan Borman(2017) in his journal *Tourist Expectation and Satisfaction: An Analysis on Selected Heritage Destination of the Sivasagar District of Assam* attempts to investigate overall satisfaction of tourists at selected cultural heritage destination in the district. The area of the study is Sivasagar district, which is the pride of Assam due to its rich heritage and historical importance. Once it was the capital of the great Ahom kingdom, the brave dynasty who ruled Assam for glorious six hundred years, where 551 historical monuments were commissioned during the era of Ahom periods (1228-1826 AD). Heritage tourism is an important aspect of Indians tourism industry. It is one of the largest and fastest growing global tourism markets and it covers all aspects of travel that provide an opportunity for visitors to learn about other areas’ history, culture and life style. The recent studies about heritage tourism focused on the tourists satisfactions who visited Sivasagar.
 - Ismaiel Abuamouda, Amal Ibrahim, and Ramzi Mahmoud Alrousan (2018) *Measuring Tourists’ Satisfaction and Loyalty: A Perception Approach* purpose of this study was to measure tourist satisfaction with the services at two tourist sites in Jordan (the Citadel and Jerash), analyze their characteristics, identify the sources of information tourists used, and categorize their reasons for visiting and the transportation methods they used. Most respondents reported being unsatisfied with the overall experience of on-site services; tourists were less satisfied with cleanliness, restrooms, souvenirs, and lighting.
 - Dr. Mriganka Saikia (2019) examine the level of tourist’s satisfaction visiting Assam regarding infrastructure, tourist facilities, hospitality of local community found in tourist destinations. The study has used 5-point Likert Scale. The study is expected to be a useful addition to the growing literature and research on the level of tourist’s satisfaction and dissatisfaction touring Assam. It is recommended for improvement infrastructure, tourist facilities and creation of new markets for local crafts and handicrafts.
 - Dr. P.K Sharma(2020) *RURAL TOURISM IN ASSAM: SATISFACTION OF FOREIGN AND THE DOMESTIC TOURISTS* present article has been designed to examine the Attitudes of the Foreign and the Domestic Tourists towards Rural Tourism. Assam is concerned, the scenario is still discouraging in spite of its huge potentials in the field of rural tourism.
- Assam is a state of India which is the pioneer in respect of tourism among North Eastern states. The state is endowed with many basic resources, unique natural beauty, different species of wild-life, religious places, historical sites, attractive rural cultural heritage and hospitable rural people for which the state can rightly be designated as paradise state. Thus the state has vast potentials to develop the rural tourism sector for the development of rural people and places.
- Joyeeta Chatterjee, Nigel Raylyn Dsilva (2020) in the paper a study on the role of social media in promoting sustainable tourism in the states of Assam and Odisha determine the role played by social media platforms in promoting sustainable tourism in the states of Assam and Odisha. The study provides insights on sustainable tourism and related products of the above-mentioned destinations that need to be promoted on social media. It also recommends strategies to augment the sustainable tourism in the two states
 - Anil Tanti(2021) in his paper *AN ANALYSIS OF TOURISM STATUS AND PROSPECTS IN ASSAM* attempt to Analysis of Tourism Status and Prospects in Assam. Assam is a land of wild forests, natural beauty, diverse history, rich culture, mighty rivers, historical monuments and over lakhs acres of tea plantations are making magnificent resources for tourism. Besides it, the majestic Brahmaputra River, Majuli the largest river island of Asia, royal hills, rich flora and fauna of the state are the paradise for tourists. It has breath- taking scenery which is known to be one of the pinnacle biodiversity hotspots in the whole world. Today tourism is considered as the biggest tool for generating revenue and employment. Ministry of Tourism is realizing that tourism is becoming an important sector of Indian economy and earning foreign exchange. Hence both central and state governments are adopting various policies to extend new field of tourism. Thus the new approaches are added to tourism which is called Tea Tourism, Golf Tourism, water tourism, agriculture tourism,

cultural tourism etc.

• S. Sochipem Zimik, Arup Barman and Rajib Dey(2022) Re-Designing Tourists’ Satisfaction Models through Review Triangulations attempts to redesign a conceptual model through an in-depth examination of several existing models that pertain to tourist satisfaction by conducting a thorough analysis of the pull strategies and influencers. The study focus on proposing strategies for raising the number of contributions from various partners and investors. One of the most important takeaways from the study will be that policymakers need to be more aware of the importance of tourism and infrastructure development.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- I. To analyze the characteristics of pilgrims visited in Maa Kamakhya Devalaya and Umananda temple.
- II. To investigate Pilgrims Satisfaction and loyalty in the Maa Kamakhya Devalaya and Umananda temple.
- III. To identify the purpose of the visit in the Maa Kamakhya Devalaya and Umananda temple.

5. RESEARCH METHOD

For this study two religious spots of Kamrup(M) namely famous shakti temple of mother Goddess Kamakhya and Umananda temple were selected on the basis of convenience sampling method. Taking these two spots into consideration this study aims to showcase the different types of tourist visited in these two tourist spots and tries to bring out the various factors which affects the visitors satisfaction towards these religious spots.

A survey was developed to address the study objectives and to answer a series of questions. The questions were designed to measure the variables used in the study model. Study participants were asked questions regarding their characteristics, such as gender, education, and age.

The second group of questions was related to general information of the visit, such as aim of the visit, number of visits to these two spots, and spending time.

The third group of questions was designed to measure tourist satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5 in the following areas: information, transportation, cleanliness, souvenirs, friendliness etc of these two spots. The levels of satisfaction were: 1 = much worse than expected; 2 = worse than expected; 3 = neutral; 4 = equal to expectations; 5 = better than expected. Based on contrast theory, it has been hypothesized that product perceptions will vary inversely with the level of expectations, and satisfied tourists must perceive perception at least equal to expected.

Therefore, the hypothesized test value in this study is “equal to expected = 4.” The null and the alternative hypothesis are specified as follows:

H1: Service quality has met customer’s expectation.

H2 Service quality has not met customer’s expectation.

To achieve the goals of the study, a field survey was conducted to 100 respondents from two religious spots; they were interviewed to elicit their satisfaction. The questionnaire was distributed at two different religious sites.

6. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

1.THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS: N=100

VARIABLES		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
GENDER	MALE	35	35
	FEMALE	65	65
AGE	0-20	12	12
	21-40	35	35
	41-60	38	38
	61 and above	15	15
STATE	WITHIN ASSAM	40	40
	OUTSIDE ASSAM	60	60
EDUCATIONS	UNDER GRADUATE	30	30
	GRADUATE	22	22
	POST GRADUATE	20	20
	OTHERS	28	28
INCOME	UNEMPLOYED	15	15
	BELOW 2 LAKH	10	10
	2LAKH-4LAKH	29	29
	4LAKH-6LAKH	27	27
	6LAKH AND ABOVE	19	19
MARITAL STATUS	SINGLE	33	33
	MARRIED	40	40
	WIDOWED, DIVORCED	27	27
Occupation:	Business Men	26	26
	Professionalist	09	09
	Employees	36	36
	Farmers	13	13
	Students	16	16

Source- Field Survey

In the gender distribution almost (65%) respondents was female and only 35% were male respondents. The dominant age group of the respondents was 41-60 years (38%), followed by 21-40 years (35%), below 20 years (12%), and older (15%). Most of the respondents reported that they live in the outside state of Assam (60%), and 40% respondents were live in Assam. In terms of level of education almost 30% were under graduate and 22% were graduate whereas a few respondents were PG degree (20%) & others (28%). With regard to respondents' annual income, the largest group included those with an annual income of 2-4 Lakh per year, followed by 4-6 Lakh and below 2 lakh (10%).whereas15% respondents were unemployed.

2.GENERAL INFORMATION OF THE TOURISTS VISIT

TABLE-2 TOURIST BEHAVIOUR CHARACTERISTCS

VARIABLES		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
SOURCE OF INFORMATION	OWN	77	77
	FRIENDS	12	12
	OTHERS	11	11
PURPOSE OF VISIT	REST AND RELAXATION	13	13
	VISITING RELATIVES AND FRIENDS	20	20
	RELIGIOUS	50	50
	OTHER	17	17
TYPES OF ACCOMMODATION	HOTEL	47	47
	HOSTEL	15	15
	RELATIVES AND FRIENDS	20	20
	DHARMASALA	18	18
DURATION OF STAY	1 DAY	46	46
	2 DAYS	50	50
	3 DAYS	04	04
MEMBER OF THE GROUP	ALONE	11	11
	COUPLE	25	25
	FAMILY	40	40
	FRIENDS	06	06
	GROUPS	18	18

Source- Field Survey

Tourist behavior characteristics of the respondents are shown in the Table- 2. In the category of the source of information about Goddess Kamakhya Temple was almost well known among themselves but only smallest group of respondent about Umananda Temple was known from others. The purpose of visit to the religious spots for 50% respondents was for religious purpose followed by 20% for reason for visiting friends and 17% visited for any other purpose. Moreover 47% respondent prefers to stay in hotel nearby Kamakhya Temple and 20% respondent prefers to stay with relatives followed by 18% stayed in Dharmasala. With regard to the length of the stay at the destination almost half of the respondents stayed for 2 days and nearly 46% respondents stay only for a day. Lastly, in the category of members of the group most respondents (40%) travelled with a family, 6% respondents travelled with friends, whereas 25% were found couple and 18 % were fund in groups.

3.DETERMINANTS OF TOURIST SATISFACTION

TABLE-3 MEASURES OF RESPONDENT SATISFACTION

VARIABLES	N	MEAN	STD.DEVIATIONS	MIN	MAX
OVERALL SATISFACTION	100	36.1	2.963	1	5
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION	100	3.2	0.752	2	4
INFORMATION CENTER	100	3.2	0.603	2	4
MANAGEMENT	100	3.0	0.636	2	4
ACCOMODATIONS	100	3.9	0.704	3	5
GUIDES	100	1.5	0.674	1	3
RESTROOM	100	3.4	0.492	3	4
CLEANLINESS	100	3.3	0.644	2	4
SAFETY	100	3.5	0.674	3	5
DARSHANS	100	3.2	0.603	2	4
FREE MEALS	100	3.3	0.785	2	5
EASE TO ACCESS	100	1.8	0.603	1	3
SERVICE	100	2.8	0.603	2	4

Source- Field Survey

Table 3 reveals that the respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with products and service offered at the two pilgrimage sites. The researcher could select from a list of items, which were measured on a five-point Likert Scale, with 1=much worse than expected; 2 = worse than expected; 3 = neutral; 4 = equal to expectations; 5 = better than expected. The results reveal that satisfaction in regards to accommodation with the visitors was highest (mean-3.9) in this two pilgrimage site followed by followed by satisfaction with safety (mean-3.5) and restrooms(mean- 3.4). Some of the respondents feel that they are satisfied with the free meals(mean-3.3) provided by the temple society and also satisfied with the cleanliness of the sites(mean-3.3). Table also reveals that the visitors are quite comfortable with the facilities of Darshan(Mean-3.2)in the two sites and the information center(mean-3.2) in the pilgrimage area followed by transportation facilities(mean-3.2). Facilities provided by the management in those two pilgrimage area are neutral according to some of the respondents. They feel that in some areas like maintaining long ques which sometimes took 5-6 hours for visiting inside the temple premises is a matter of concern. That is why some of the respondents feel dissatisfied or not an easy access (mean-1.8) for some tourist particularly for old age visitors to enter inside the temple premises through standing on long quest for many hours. Lastly, most of the visitors reveal that there is absence of guides (mean-1.5) in those two pilgrimage area.

4. CUSTOMERS LOYALTY

TABLE-4 LOYALTY FACTORS

VARIABLES	YES	NO	MAY BE	TOTAL
Would you like to come to this place again	70	15	15	100
Would you recommend this spiritual place to others	85	10	05	100

Two questions were asked to measured customer loyalty: intention to visit again and likelihood of recommending a visit these places to others. Respondents were asked, "Would you be willing to visit these two spiritual places again?" They were also asked, "Would you recommend visiting these two places to a friend or relative?" A yes/no scale were used to answer these questions. The majority of respondents (70 percent) were willing to visit two spots again. The majority of respondents (85 percent) would also strongly recommend visiting these two places to a friend or relative. The relationship between overall satisfaction and intent to return and recommending visiting these religious places again to others. The results revealed that there is a positive relationship between overall satisfaction and intent to return and recommending others.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in India. Kamrup district is fortunate to have an infrastructure quite suitable to promote religious tourism (as Kamrup the name itself came from Kamrupa). Though Assam tourism Department has been practiced so many innovative policies & strategies which have been proved successful in attracting Tourists in the district thereby contributing to the States income, but unfortunately religious tourism is not promoted in the State. So it is the right time that the Tourism Department should start focusing on this sector of tourism as well. If we look at the tourist's satisfaction level it is quite satisfactory. Although in Kamrup district, religious tourist spots face several barriers but the same can be overcome by building better and all seasoned infrastructure. Efforts need to be made to create congenial environment for private sector investment in the tourism sector in the State.

8. REFERENCES

- Al-Majali (2012) AL-Majali, M. M. 2012. International tourist's satisfaction: Case of Jordan. *International Business Research* 5 (9):210–216.
- Anil Tanti(2021 *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Review (AJMRR)* ISSN 2582 8088 Volume 2 Issue 5 [October - November 2021]
- Barman, D. R. D., & Gupta, J. (2020). A Study On Stress Management In Capfs With Reference To Family Accommodation At Border Outpost Duty. *European Journal of Molecular & Clinical Medicine*, 7(3), 8-16.
- Barman, R. D., Hanfy, F. B., Rajendran, R., Masood, G., Dias, B., & Maroor, J. P. (2022). A critical review of determinants of financial innovation in global perspective. *Materials Today: Proceedings*, 51, 88-94.
- Basak, D., & Barman, R. D. (2023). A Study On Problems And Prospects Of Eco- Tourism And Religious Tourism In Assam. *Journal of Pharmaceutical Negative Results*, 103-109.
- Bhaskarjyoti, B., & Rajesh, D. B. (2010). Environmental Issues and Financial Reporting Trends: A case study on selected Public Sectors Oil Companies in Assam. *Advances In Management*.
- Boro, K., & Barman, R. D. Agricultural Marketing System In North-East India: Problems And Prospects With Special Reference To Assam.
- Chandrasekeran, I., Dharmaraj, A., Juyal, A., Shravan, M., Barman, R. D., & Lourens,
- M. (2023, May). Cryptocurrency and Data Privacy in Human Resource Management. In *2023 3rd International Conference on Advance Computing and Innovative Technologies in Engineering (ICACITE)* (pp. 126-130). IEEE.
- Chaudhary, V., Abidi, N. A., Barman, R. D., Bansal, R., Bania, S. S., & Gupta, N. (2022). Impact of social entrepreneurship on different industries, work systems, and organizations. *Materials Today: Proceedings*, 51, 832-836.
- Das, P. P., & Barman, R. D. (2022). AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON ECOTOURISM AND ITS IMPACT ON

- LIVELIHOOD WITH REFERENCE TO MANAS NATIONAL PARK. *Ann. For. Res*, 65(1), 7650-7659.
12. Economics survey of Assam,(periods 2012-13), Directorate of Economic and Statistical, Assam planning and development, Govt. of Assam.pp-132.
 13. Gupta, J., & Barman, R. D. A Study on Re-Employment Process to Mitigate the Stress in Central Armed Police Forces.
 14. Haloi, D., & Deb Barman, R. (2010). Eco-Tourism in Assam: A Swot Analysis.
 15. Indian Tourism Statistics 2003, Market Research Division, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Dated: 5-11-2004.
 16. Ismaiel Abuamouda, Amal Ibrahim, and Ramzi Mahmoud Alrousan (2018) QUALITY MANAGEMENT JOURNAL 018, VOL.25, NO. 2, 101–107 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10686967.2018.1436352>
 17. Jain, N., Sharma, S., & Barman, R. D. (2023). Northeast India: The Convergence Point of India’s Act East Policy and Japan’s Vision For Free and Open Indo-Pacific. *resmilitaris*, 13(2), 6725-6732.
 19. Jayanta Gogoi(2013) Volume : 2 | Issue : 11 | November 2013 • ISSN No 2277 –8179
 20. Joyeeta Chatterjee, Nigel Raylyn Dsilva (2020) <https://www.emerald.com/insight/2633-1225.htm>
 21. Mriganka Saikia (2019) THINK INDIA JOURNAL ISSN:0971-1260 Vol-22- Issue-35- December-2019
 22. P.K Sharma(2020) RURAL TOURISM IN ASSAM : SATISFACTION OF FOREIGN AND THE DOMESTIC TOURISTS PJAEE, 17(5)(2020)
 23. Prodip Gogoi and Ratan Borman(2017) International Journal of Business and Management Invention ISSN (Online): 2319 – 8028, ISSN (Print): 2319 – 801X www.ijbmi.org || Volume 6 Issue 8 || August. 2017 ||PP—22-28
 24. Raisal, I., & Kurniullah, S. S. R. A. Z. (2020). Anjali Kulkarni. *Nordiana Ahmad Nordin, Roy Setiawan, Girish Bagale, Rajesh Deb Barman, “Positive Outcomes of Human Resources Engagement and Impact on Motivation”*, *Productivity Management*, 25(1S), 638-667.
 25. S. Sochipem Zimik, Arup Barman and Rajib Dey(2022) Manager-TheBritishJournalof AdministrativeManagement ISSN - 1746 1278 Volume 58 Issue 154 Sep 2022