

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOURAL ASPECTS OF PILGRIM SATISFACTION

BY

SAMEEKSHA SHARMA

FPM SCHOLAR

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT INDORE,

Rau Prabandh Shikhar,

Pithampur Road, Indore, India.

ABSTRACT

Pilgrimage is one of the oldest and most basic forms of population mobility and its political, social, cultural and economic implications have always been, and continue to be, substantial. This study aims to examine the key conceptualisations and gaps in the scholarship on social and behavioural aspects of pilgrim satisfaction. The present paper is a literature review of researches done on motives of pilgrim satisfaction. The 'pilgrim' and 'pilgrimage' as subject matter covers Geography, Psychology, Consumer Behaviour, while 'religious places' or 'destinations' are the interest areas of Sociology, Culture Studies and Marketing and Geography. The detailed analysis presents the trend of past and present focus of research- literature on pilgrim-motive and satisfaction. It has also put forth the gaps and potential areas where the scholars have to ponder.

Keywords: Behavioural, Social, Pilgrim satisfaction, Tourism

INTRODUCTION

A pilgrimage is a special journey made to some sacred place as an act of religious devotion. It also gives opportunity to travel across the boundaries of culture and geography. For this it is considered to be a false friend of tourism. The triad of religion, tourism and occupation is an important business gateway of tourism industry. In fact the modern reality has demonstrated the increasing importance of phenomena such as 'multifunctional journeys' in which the same displacement has several aims including religious-social journeys and cultural-historical pilgrimage in the packages offered by travel agencies. However, the debate of faith that who is a better pilgrim may sometime devalue the idea of multifunctional journeys and the pure spiritual motive of tough- travel or pilgrim-suffering may lead. Sometimes it depends upon the socio-cultural factors of the pilgrim place and pilgrim both (Murthy, 2008).

The business world has a continuous need to understand the expectations and demands of the stakeholders. Then it becomes important, to understand the motivation of pilgrim and to know the factors leading to pilgrim satisfaction in the changing scenario. The academic researches on pilgrim- satisfaction have put forth various dimensions, which in turn points towards issues of changing and continuing concepts, their operationalisation and methodology as gaps and areas for further exploration. As a part of study on Motives of Pilgrim Satisfaction, this paper aims to review the key conceptualisations and gaps in the related scholarships.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The paper examines the previous and present trend of literature available from 1958 onwards by reviewing the objectives, methodology and findings on motives of pilgrim satisfaction. The reviewed literature is multidisciplinary, where Pilgrim and Pilgrimage as subject matter covers Geography, psychology, Consumer Behaviour. Religious places or Destinations are the interest areas of Sociology, Cultures Studies, History, Marketing and also Geography. Published researches on Tourism studies have also been examined, as they bridge for religion and occupation.

The broad objective of the review of studies is to understand the key assumptions, methodology -adopted and the findings for the basic question of " why people go for pilgrimage?" in order to frame the design of future research problem. For that the sub objectives are required for in-depth inquiry.

The sub objectives of the literature –review are as follows:

- a) To understand the need of study on motives and satisfaction of pilgrim.
- b) To understand the key concepts and their standardisation for the purpose of operationalisation.
- c) To know the past and present trends by analysing theoretical framework, objectives, findings and methodology over the period of time .
- d) To find out gaps in the present literature and the scope of future researches.

NEED OF STUDY ON MOTIVES AND SATISFACTION OF PILGRIM

Emphasising on the need of researches on pilgrim satisfaction, scholars have argued that if the organisers realize and identify the critical factors that influence satisfaction of pilgrims they can take appropriate action in the present and future researches. Many agencies like government, organizing committees, private players involved in organizing and marketing religious events spend huge amount of money every year. If organisers 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. Also, 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 events 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. 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. The responsibility of organising 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 a wrath of the public and it may affect Government popularity. In fact worldwide, understanding key variables influencing the pilgrim satisfaction is still inadequate inspite of a large body of literature available on tourist satisfaction like Pizam and Taylor (1993); Ryan, C.(1997) ; Choi and Chu(2000), and Ibrahim and Gill(2000), suggesting scope of future researches .

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK IN THE LITERATURE

DEFINITIONAL ISSUES

In order to understand motives of pilgrim satisfaction, studies have put forth the standardised as well as the operational definitions of pilgrimage. Though emphasising on standard definition to promote clarity in communication and for establishing relationships among phenomena of pilgrimage studies, scholars have been facing lot of ambiguous issues. These difficulties were highlighted in the studies done in the decade of 80s.

Consider the following three definitions:

Definition#1: A journey to a sacred place as an act of religious devotion (Skyles1982,776).

Definition#2: Pilgrimage involves three factors: a holy place; attraction of individuals or crowds to this place; a specific aim, i.e., to obtain some spiritual or material benefit (Bradon 1970, 501)

Definition#3: The term pilgrimage is used in at least three senses. (1) There is first the "interior pilgrimage, " the journey of the soul" in a lifetime of growth from spiritual infancy to maturity. (2) There is , second, the literal pilgrimage to some sacred place as a paradigm of the intent of religion itself. This literal journey may be called "extroverted mysticism" (Turner 1973). (3) Finally, every trek to one's local sanctuary is a pilgrimage in miniature insofar as it acts out on a small scale and new community which pilgrimage in general affords (Crim1981, 569).

These definitions possess some common and individual concepts such as- Distance of movement and Motivation.

DISTANCE OF MOVEMENT

One of the most basic concept in a definition of pilgrimage is movement. However, the concern for the minimum distance required for the movement is the primary definitional problem. Certainly the popular

conceptualization of pilgrimage regards the movement as being longer than the local travel. Furthermore, most pilgrimage scholars including the Turners, have insisted that going on a pilgrimage involves movement away from the 'local' environment (Turner and Turner 1978).

Excluding local journeys from the definition of pilgrimage is consistent with the general meanings of "procession" and "circumambulation". Conceptually, however, long processions and circumambulations seem to merge into short pilgrimages. This poses a question that whether the movements from Mecca to Mina and Arafat and back to Mecca be called processions or short pilgrimages?

Therefore studies suggested that the goals of definitional standardization at this issue could be achieved best by "pilgrimage" defined as movement that is "longer than local" (Stoddard,1997)

MOTIVATION

A second element in the definition of pilgrimage, where the main focus of this paper lies, concerns the motive for the movement. The motive is usually religious. Nevertheless, there is general agreement that the motivation of the traveller must be religious for the event to qualify as pilgrimage. However, the term "religion" is as vague and lacking standardization as the phenomenon being defined here. Even with an assumed working definition of "religious", the actual separation of motives is virtually impossible. Neither observers nor travellers themselves can differentiate motives that are primarily religious from a magnitude of other reasons for making a journey to a place where pilgrims congregate. At a popular pilgrimage sites where fairs, festivals, sporting events and markets concurrently attract pilgrims, tourists, vacationers, excursion groups, traders and hustlers, the true religious pilgrims cannot always be identified(Stoddard,1997).

Furthermore, even if the "true motives" of travellers to pilgrimage sites are known, some conceptual problems remain. One is the fact that motives change. If a person decides to visit a pilgrimage place because of curiosity but experiences a religious conversion while at the site, has the journey become a personal pilgrimage?

Another conceptual problem results from the fact that trips are taken for multiple reasons. If a person travels to a foreign area as a tourist but while in that vicinity also makes a religious journey to a sacred

site, is that person a pilgrim? The issue is well illustrated by the uncertainty about whether the large number of participants in commercial tours to religious sites should be counted as pilgrims (Nolan and Nolan 1989).

However, the pilgrims and tourists are distinct actors situated at two opposite ends of Smith's continuum of travel that first appeared in 1992 proved as a resolution. The polarities on the pilgrimage-tourism axis are labelled sacred vs. secular; between them ranges an almost endless list of possible secular-sacred combinations, with the central area now generally termed 'religious tourism'. These positions reflect the multiple and changing motivations of the traveller whose interests and activities may switch from tourism to pilgrimage and vice-versa, even without the individual being aware of the change. Jakowski and Smith (1992) use the term 'knowledge-based tourism' as synonymous with religious tourism.

The Literature shows that new interest of scholars in pilgrimage emerged in 1990s and especially in 2000s. They raised some interesting political, cultural, behavioural, economic and touristic research subjects. In current usage the term 'pilgrimage' connotes a religious journey, ' a journey of a pilgrim; especially one to a shrine or a sacred place' (Webster Dictionary) but its derivation from the latin perigrinus allows broader interpretations, including foreigners, wanderers, exile and traveller, as well as new comer and stranger. The term 'tourist'- 'one that makes a tour for pleasure or culture' (Webster's Dictionary) also has latin origins, namely tornus, one who makes a circuitous journey, usually for pleasure, and returns to the starting point. Smith (1992), an anthropologist claims that the contemporary use of the terms, identifying the 'pilgrim' as a religious traveller and the tourist as a vacationer, is a culturally constructed polarity that veils the travellers' motives.

THE PILGRIM

A traveller 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. A pilgrim can visit any of the four types of attraction; natural attractions, manmade 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 (Sridhar,2008)

The available literature has classified pilgrims in terms of the attributes such as their age, life-stage, gender, family status, occupation, income and religious affiliations (Stoddard, 1997)

PILGRIM SATISFACTION OF RELIGIOUS EVENTS

Pilgrim Satisfaction can be defined as the outcome of the pilgrims' subjective comparisons of the expectations and achievements. In consumer researches, this conceptualisation is similar to consumer or tourist satisfaction of a product or destination which is the outcome of consumer's subjective comparison of expected and received product or destination attribute levels. (Oliver, 1980; Vavra, 1997; Pizam, 1999; Ibrahim 2005)

In terms of religious events, 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 (1989); Hair (1998); Kozak (1998); Malhotra (2002).

Pilgrim satisfaction as tourist satisfaction is widely researched in the marketing domain (Crompton, 1995; Swarbrooke, 1995; Anderson, 1994; Cho, 1998; Baker, 2000; Foster, 2004). 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 (WTO, 1995). It determines the quality delivered to customers through the product or service and the accompanying services (Vitterso, 2000). 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 the 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 expectations (Westbrook, 1981). As a result interaction between the consumers' prepurchase expectations and post purchase expectations, consumer would be either satisfied or dissatisfied (Vavra, 1997; Engel, 1990). 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. (Oliver,1993; Baker, 2000)

Many do not agree completely to either the first or second paradigm as they believe that consumer satisfaction is a complex human process that involves cognition and effective process, psychological and physiological influences(Oliver,1980; Anton, 1996) 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.

Review of literature also suggests that satisfaction measurement (whether consumer or pilgrim) has broadly followed two perspectives, viz. Transaction and cumulative (Fornell, 1992; Boulding,1993; Olshasky,1972; Anderson,1994; kandampully,2000; Andreassen,2000). With regard to pilgrim satisfaction measurement, transaction specific satisfaction is a post experience evaluative judgement of specific occasion that pilgrim would have encountered in their entire event. Cumulative satisfaction on the other hand is the overall evaluation based on the entire experience of the visit to the event (Sridhar,2008)

STUDIES ON MOTIVES OF PILGRIM SATISFACTION AND THEIR TREND -ANALYSIS

This section deals with the research questions of what motivates people to go for Pilgrimage and what are the factors leading to pilgrim satisfaction ? These issues have been addressed from different perspectives which are extended from religious and spiritual, to sociological and psychological, to cultural and leisure and to tourism and business, as human behaviour has been emphasised by Ryan and Bates(1995) as services are to humans and satisfaction from services can be improved by understanding human behaviour. However, 'visitor -experience' and the psychosocial dynamics have been studied as drive of pilgrimage by Maccannell (1973), Turner and Turner(1978), Cohen (1979,1992, 1998).

The religious motives literature was initiated primarily by Lickorish and Kershaw(1958) who argued that the decision of religious tourists to visit a destination is initiated by forces beyond their control often based on sentiment of great personal interest, or family ties.

People are motivated to go for pilgrimage for personal reasons like to see and touch holy places and objects, hope for forgiveness, for self-realisation, to know possible selves, people go for pilgrimage. It is a feeling of physical nourishment and spiritual well-being which gives satisfaction to pilgrim. People want to believe in some invisible supernatural power, which is miraculous and by visiting such sacred, incredible, apart places, they get satisfaction. They feel that they have approached something which is beyond the reach of common minds and mundane routine. Feeling of having this special diet out of routine gives them lot of satisfaction (Christen,1983 ; Gitelson et al, 1995; Frohlick,2005, Gursoy et al, 2006; lea,2006, karlson and Brandstorm,2008; Liang et al,2008; Lim et al, 2008)

People go for pilgrimage also for social reasons. Man has worshipped nothing but society, throughout the history. Thus accepting and respecting the social norms confirms the group membership and then gives satisfaction. Also, by following community sentiments , one harmonises co-existence and solidarity. In addition people go to pilgrimage for 'identity and existence'. People also go for pilgrimage to support 'religious territory', 'exclusive ownership satisfaction' (Greenwood,1972; Buck,1977; Heenan,1978; Ritche,1984;Cohen 1988; Eder et al,1995; Pritchard et al, 1998 ; Dwyer et al, 2000; De Bres and Davis,2001; Xiao and Smith,2004; Snowball and Wills,2006a; Rooney-Brown,2008)

The assumption that religious elements were at the core of pilgrimage seems to get changed in recent years. There has been a growth in the number of researchers dealing with various aspects of pilgrimages and in their diverse backgrounds like emphasising on Historical and Cultural reasons of pilgrimage, unifunctional journey to multifunctional journeys, religious tourism and sacred pilgrimage . According to Kreiner (2010) Pilgrim destinations direct people to travel across the country, to come out of their own boundaries to see distinct cultures and places is the focus of current researches. However, in such motives of pilgrimage, the 'basic facilities' is the key factor, which influences pilgrim satisfaction, followed by enhancers (Sridhar et al, 2008)

In 1973, MacCannell, a sociologist, was the first to claim that tourism is a quest for the 'authentic' and that it presents the pilgrimage of modern man. He went further, asserting that contemporary tourism embodies many of the same characteristics as pilgrimage. He claimed that the tourism is perceived as pilgrim in the current modern secular world.

According to Turner and Turner (1973) travellers expect a spiritual experience and a chance to meet with other travellers in a classless society called "communitas" (Turner and Turner 1978).

In the 1990s researches started to deal with the complicated relationship between pilgrimage and tourism. This connection is the subject of Eade's (1992) article, which describes the interaction between pilgrims and tourists at Lourdes, in Bowman's (1991) work on the place of Jerusalem in the various Christianities, and in Rinschede's (1992) typology of tourist uses of pilgrimage sites.

Cohen (1992) maintains that the pilgrimage and tourism differ in terms of the direction of the journey undertaken. The "pilgrim" and the "pilgrim tourists" peregrinate toward their sociocultural centre, while the "traveller" and the "traveller-tourists" travel from it toward the periphery.

Tourists and pilgrims are similar, if not one and the same, for "even when the role[s] of tourist and pilgrim are combined, they are necessarily different but form a continuum of inseparable elements (Grabun, 1983:16)".

Sousa (1993) argues that people can switch from being a pilgrim to a tourist without the individual being aware of change from one to another. However, Smith (1992) identifies tourists and pilgrims as two distinct actors situated at opposite ends on a continuum of travel. This shows that the difference of tourist and pilgrim is narrowing down, giving way to dedifferentiation.

Often a journey to sacred sites may have several motivations, interests and other subordinate goals some of which have nothing to do with religion directly, but are closely connected with holiday making and with journeys undertaken for social, cultural or political reasons as is emphasised in the works of Andriotis, (2009) Nolan and Nolan (1992) Rinschede (1992). Likewise, Timothy and Boyd (2003) observed that many people travel to a widening variety of sacred sites not only for religious purposes or to have

experience with the sacred in the traditional sense, but also because they are marked and marketed as heritage or cultural attractions to be consumed

Secular Pilgrimage is another important sector of the tourism industry. Harman and Hyde(2011) have identified five distinct motives for visits to the pilgrimage sites-spiritual, nationalistic, family pilgrimage, friendship and travel motives. These motives share some commonality with the motives for religious pilgrimage, and conversely, with the motives for leisure tourism; yet other motives are unique to the secular pilgrimage. Over the years this discussion expanded especially in the decade of 1990s when various researchers, such as Reader and Walter (1993), Seaton(1999, 2002), Digance(2003) and many more added knowledge regarding secular sites and secular aspects of pilgrimage research. Sites experiences and terms such as 'dark tourism' , 'thanatourism' , 'popular culture' and ' New Age Pilgrimage' have added to the transition of research toward the experience of individual and dedifferentiation. However, the secular pilgrimage and the other terms needs more critical analysis or in other words they are the upcoming research focus.

The overall analysis of the studies suggests that there are personal, social, cultural, historical, and secular travel motives . It is observed that differentiation is giving way to dedifferentiation. Earlier researches have kept pilgrimage and tourism apart from each other. There had been the issues of sacred vs secular, pure pilgrim vs visitors. Some researchers claim that the differences between tourism, pilgrimage and even secular pilgrimage is narrowing (Bilu 1998; Kong 2001)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

CONCEPTS, GAPS AND PRIORITIES

The definition of pilgrim and pilgrimage plays very important role in understanding the motives and satisfaction issues . The review of researches analyses that in place of one standard definition, operational definitions are required, so that the new findings of future researches can be accommodated. The core phenomenon is actually the pilgrimage experience and meanings attached to it. As well, pilgrim motives and satisfaction have importance and multiple meanings within societies and cultures that transcend experiences. To fully understand and create knowledge about motives and pilgrim satisfaction,

all aspects social, personal, cultural, historical and also modern and global changes have to be considered. As far as satisfaction of services are concerned, the management of services have to be understood for who produces them and why, how they are planned and managed, what are the dynamic forces shaping individual experience and collective experience.

THE METHODOLOGICAL GAPS AND PRIORITIES

The current trend of literature covered has over emphasised consumer motivations. This approach is firmly situated within a positivistic, quantitative research paradigm in which consumer behaviour approaches prevail, leaving little room for socio-cultural antecedents and constraints, especially in different cultures and for specific social groups. Thus, researches based on interpretative methods should be done in order to fill this gap. More and more cross cultural studies should be increased. Applying phenomenological (hermeneutics) and experiential assessment methods is a real need and open to both experimental and participant observation method. Cross-cultural comparisons of destinations, festivals and pilgrimages will be useful in generating new ideas from an artistic perspective, as well as in revealing much more in theoretical terms about motives of pilgrim satisfaction and meanings.

The analysis of trend found in the literature, can be categorised as follows:

1. The transformation is from Differentiation to Dedifferentiation.
2. There is an expansion of areas of researches, since new issues such as secular pilgrimage, dark-tourism, thanatourism, New Age spiritual travel, modern secular pilgrimage have been raised but still inadequately studied.
3. There is a shift from 'External' and 'General' elements to the 'Individual Inner Experience'. Many past works presented pilgrimage as a general phenomenon(Turner 1969; Nolan; 1989; Vukonic1996). Over time, in a gradual process a shift has taken place , first towards typologies, for example, Cohen's(1979,

1992, 1998) typology of the different experiences of a visitor. The second stage evolved deconstruction of the typologies, including classification of visitor experiences into sub-types, for example, pilgrims being placed along the pilgrimage experience (Collins-Kreiner, 2000). The next stage in research was to understand that a visitor may have different experiences and may switch from one to another. The experience and mental state of the visitor can change in time and intensity according to his/her different characteristics.

4. Movement from 'objectivity' to 'subjectivity'. In earlier works the emphasis was placed on the way the objective, namely the pilgrimage, provided one kind of experience or another. In later researches the experience is shown to depend on the visitor and how he or she perceives his or her visit and experience.

5. From the 'Either-or' Approach to a 'Both –And' Approach. Researchers speak of 'interpretations' instead of 'true' or 'false'. Every researcher has his or her own assumptions and perceptions with which they interpret the world and its various phenomena. Individual experiences can change from moment to moment and there are no clear –cut distinctions between pilgrimage sites and tourist attractions. The major implication of 'Both-And' approach is that contradictions do not matter, since everything is acceptable. This means the trend shows that current researches are still based on the existing theories, and the transformation is still perceived as an expansion and not contradiction. However, it seems that allowing a multiplicity of interpretations and interpreters, none of which are exclusive, has offered a way out of competing explanations and research agendas.

SUMMARY

This paper is based on review of the researches on motives of pilgrim satisfaction. By understanding the trend and changes that have taken place in research work in the subject, it analyses the concepts, theories and paradigms within the ongoing pilgrim motivation and satisfaction issue. Simultaneously, the gaps and issues for the future researches have also been put forth.

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