

A Study Of Religious Tourism Purposes And Problems At Omkareshwar Jyotirling

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ABSTRACT:

A Religious tourism is the tourism in which people wants to connect with the divine by going to a known sacred place in the form of a pilgrimage. Religious tourism is a transformational journey in which they receive new insights, a deeper understanding and attained blessings for healing their problems. People wants connections with the divine power for appealing of divine intervention to solve their personal problems and seek forgiveness, salvation for their sins and obtain spiritual enlightenment.

Hindus travel (Yatra) to various locations, temples and Samadhi's (shrines) of saints for puja and Parikrama in order to acquire 'Punya' and achieve moksha. There are 12 Jyotirlings dedicated to Lord Shiva and one of them is Omkareshwar Jyotirling. Omkareshwar Jyotirling Is a shiv temple on Omkar mountain an island in mid of Narmada river. On the south side of the Narmada, there is an another shiv temple with the name Mamleshwar.

The present research was conducted to study the various purposes of religious tourists behind visiting Omkareshwar Jyotirling and the various problems they are facing during their visit at Omkareshwar Jyotirling The study is a descriptive research based on primary data collected from the 240 tourists visiting religious site of Omkareshwar Jyotirling, Madhya Pradesh by Interview method. From the

study it is found that tourists visiting Omkareshwar Jyotirling with varying purposes in their mind. During this religious visit they are facing some problems related with various arrangements in and around the religious site of Omkareshwar Jyotirling.

Key Words: Religious Tourism, Omkareshwar, Jyotirling, Purposes, Problems, Madhya Pradesh.

INTRODUCTION:

Religious tourism is one of the oldest forms of tourism. Religious travel is referred as faith travel and it is the practise of travelling for spiritual or religious purposes by individuals or groups in search of a higher purpose. Religious tourism to pilgrimage sites has existed since the dawn of time in every part of the world.

India is a country with huge holy sites and numerous cultural traditions. The population of the nation is divided into several religious groupings, each of which has its own customs, religious formalities, such as sacred sites, modes of worship, and other religious rules incorporated into daily life.

In India in a year 2022, there were 1,433 million domestic tourists who visited religious sites, compared to 6,64 million overseas visitors. According to data given by the ministry of tourism, religious tourism destinations earned 1,34,543 crores in 2022, compared with 65,070 crores in 2021. (Hindustantimes.com). The religious passion accounts for close to 60% of domestic travel. Additionally, religious tourism claims the largest market because it caters to every age and income range. The dynamic growth pattern has been shaped by the expanding middle class and rising disposable income.

For religious travellers, the trip is a transformational journey than a vacation. In which new insights are revealed, a deeper understanding is attained, blessings are received, healing occurs. By Religious tourism people wants connect with the divine by going to a known sacred place in the form of a pilgrimage. People seek connections with the divine in sacred places for appealing for divine intervention to solve their personal problems and seek forgiveness, salvation for their sins and obtain spiritual enlightenment.

Hindus travel (Yatra) to various locations, temples, and Samadhi's (shrines) of saints for puja and "Parikrama" in order

to acquire 'Punya' and achieve moksha. There are 12 Jyotirlings dedicated to Lord Shiva and four Dhams (Char Dham) in India, listed in order of importance for pilgrims.

Madhya Pradesh:

Madhya Pradesh was officially recognised as a separate state in 1956. As the "heart of India," Madhya Pradesh serves as a prime model for supporting a secular state because it is home to several divine temples, mosques, forts, and palaces with rich historical backgrounds.

The state has a lot to offer tourists, including historical landmarks, cultural legacies, wildlife, and sacred sites. Famous religious sites include Ujjain, Maheshwar, Chitrakoot, Omkareshwar, Bhojpur, and Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh. The state of Madhya Pradesh is endowed with natural beauty. Its flat terrain is predominantly dotted with the Vindhya and Satpura mountain ranges, which rise to form six rivers: Narmada, Tapti, Chambal, Sone, Betwa, and Mahanadi.

Omkareshwar:

Omkareshwar is an important pilgrimage destination in Madhya Pradesh state of India. Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga a shiv temple on Omkar mountain an island in mid of Narmada river. It is one of the world's twelve Jyotirlinga temples. On the south side of the Narmada, there is a temple with the name Mamleshwar that is likewise highly significant. Annually millions of tourists visiting the place. The place is called as Mandhata, which is situated 80 km away from Indore.

This sacred site attracts a lot of pilgrims, especially on the occasions of Kumbh, Mahashivratri, Shravan, and Naramda jayanti. Mainly the religious tourist visiting this place for Jyotirlinga darshan and Narmada bath.

Narmada is one of the five holy rivers of India. It is the only one which has the tradition of being walking around (Prikrama) from source to sea and back. People from various regions of India have been performing parikrama for decades, and devotees from different states aspire to take part in this sacred journey once in a lifetime. The pilgrim starts Parikrama from the place called Gau Ghat in Omkareshwar with holy water of the river Narmada.

Purposes of Religious Tourism:

In its broadest meaning, religious tourism is defined as travel undertaken primarily for the purpose of engaging in religious activities, as well as those pertaining to art, culture, customs, and architecture. Religious (pilgrimage) sites are visited by religious, spiritual, and non-religious tourists with four types of purposes.

1. Religious purpose:

It is generally understood that most religious travel is performed as an act of worship. There are two main reasons for which people travel to religious destinations for worship are. The first is to show gratitude or make a promise and the second is to acknowledge sin or apologies for previous wrongdoing. In both the cases they are expected to make fresh commitments for an ideal life in the future.

2. Spiritual purpose:

The spiritual purpose of any religious visit is to resolve personal problems or find purpose for life. The spiritual purposes include things like acquiring life lessons and going on transformational journeys, facing challenges and learning about oneself with obtaining social and spiritual salvation.

3. Historical and Academic purpose:

One group of visitors to religious sites is interested in seeing the historical items and monuments. This type of group can be inspired by a variety of interests, including those related to religion, art, architecture, history and family history. All these are history lovers, whether they are religious or not.

Another group is a group of tourists who are academics. Such tourism involves a voyage that offers fresh perspectives, deepens awareness, and explores both new and historic locations in search of knowledge.

4. Joy and pleasure purpose:

A group of tourists visiting a religious place for joy and pleasure and relax from the daily life stress. These tourists are consciously or unconsciously looking for solutions to the problems they are experiencing in life.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Ms. Rajpriya Laxmichand Patel (2020) in his research paper found that there is no significant difference between type of

tourist place and education of tourist. There is no any impact of education on the place selection. Transportation facility shows impact on place selection and the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of respondents were different as per their different education.

Dr. Kavita Dive & Dr. Archana Dubey (2021) explains that Madhya Pradesh has important pilgrimage canter and religious sites such as Ujjain, Omkareshwar, Maheshwar, Amarkantak and Chitrakoot in the centre of India. Madhya Pradesh department is now working on growth of the sustainable religious tourism with well plan tourism model involving various recreational activities to develop the opportunities of entrepreneurship in tourism industry in the state.

Lateef Ahmed Mir & Sangram Bhushan (2016) studied successful pilgrimage tourism of Jammu in their research. Jammu is the attraction of religious tourist of India due to sacred places of Hindu religion. They suggested to offer tourist packages to tourists with including visits to adventures and scenic beauty destinations.

Yogesh Hole & E.B. Khedkar (2019) in their research paper identified that pilgrimage tourism having tremendous potential to offer growth and revenue to the economy of the country with adverse impact on the environment. By increasing accommodation facilities and wastage dumping on land polluting water bodies and environments. They suggested that government bodies and local agencies should work together to develop sustainable practices for pilgrimage tourism.

Rajeev Ranjan Mishra & Pallavi Tandan(2022) in their research paper identified the problem of lesser number of International tourist visiting Madhya Pradesh is due to lesser number of International Airport and infrastructure of international standard. The Madhya Pradesh government is planning to boost the tourism industry by various schemes such as caravan tourism, watersport tourism.

Ar. Vinamrata Sugandhi & Dr. Anjali Patil (2019) discussed the mobility plan and its various aspects with required improvements of Omkareshwar. Mainly during the festive days' roads are overcrowded causes a great inconvenience to

the tourists visiting Omkareshwar Jyotirling. The pilgrims facing transportation problem. To overcome these problems, they suggested ways such as widening of roads, parking space, separate path for pedestrian and rope way.

Dipankar Basak & Dr. Rajesh Deb Barman (2023) suggested the solutions on problem of religious tourism in Assam. They recommended the provision of education facilities to reduce language problem for local peoples, guides and manpower involved in transportation and restaurants. They also recommended the development of roads and infrastructure facilities required to tourists.

S. Vijaynand (2014) identified the problems is pilgrimage tourism in Tanjavur. The tourist facing problems such as purified drinking water, rest shed, toilets and washrooms. They recommended the improvements roads, transportation and parking facilities by government or private partners.

Prachi Agarwal & Arunesh Parashar (2021) studied the purpose of religious tourism because religious tourism exists from the old age. Tourist travels to religious sites frequently despite of hard journey and inconveniences. They identified that tourist visits religious sites to obtain the benefits such as 1) Religious 2) Spiritual 3) Academic and 4) Pleasure purpose.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study the purpose of visit to Omkareshwar Jyotirling
2. To study the problems of pilgrims at Omkareshwar Jyotirling
3. To study the relation between purpose of visit satisfaction level of pilgrims at Omkareshwar Jyotirling
4. To study the prospects of Religious tourism at Omkareshwar Jyotirling

HYPOTHESIS:

H1: The tourists are visiting Omkareshwar for specific purpose.

H2: The tourists are facing problems at Omkareshwar Jyotirling

H3: There is a correlation between Purpose of visit to Omkareshwar Jyotirling and their satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present study is a descriptive research based on primary data. The primary data has been collected from the 240 tourists visiting religious site of Omkareshwar Jyotirling. A structured questionnaire has been used to collect data from these tourists engaged in religious tourism by observation and Interview methods. Simple random sampling technique was used to collect the responses of tourists engaged in religious tourism at Omkareshwar Jyotirling. The collected data was analyzed by SPSS software.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

Table No. 1 Demographic Data of Respondents

Sr. No.	Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	up to 30 years	21	8.8
		30 – 40 years	99	41.3
		40 – 50 years	105	43.8
		Above 50 years	15	6.3
		Total	240	100.0
2	Education Level	Secondary	36	15.0
		Under Graduate	42	17.5
		Graduate	96	40.0
		Post Graduate	66	27.5
		Total	240	100.0
3	Profession	Service	123	51.3
		Self Employed	54	22.5
		Business	63	26.3
		Total	240	100.0
4	Source of Motivation for Visit to Omkareshwar	Tourism websites	90	37.5
		Friends	18	7.5
		Family members	99	41.3
		Spiritual Guru	12	5.0
		Emotional feelings	21	8.8
		Total	240	100.0

From the Table no. 1 maximum 43.8% tourist performing religious tourism are from 40 to 50 years of age followed by 41.3% from 30 to 40 years of age groups. The tourist of below 30 years and above 50 years are very less. The education level of maximum 67.5% tourist was graduation and post-graduation, while under graduate and secondary educated tourist was 32.5% only. By profession the 51.3% tourist visiting Omkareshwar was service employees while

26.3% was business professional and 22.5% was self-employed.

For major 41.3% of tourist the source of motivation to visit Omkareshwar was family members and 37.5% tourist was motivated by Tourism website to visit Omkareshwar. Friends, Spiritual Guru and Emotional feelings plays very small role in motivation of tourist to visit Omkareshwar.

Table No. 2 The Purpose of Tourism at Omkareshwar

Sr. No.	Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	The Purpose of Tourism at Omkareshwar	Religious purpose	51	21.3
		Spiritual purpose	108	45.0
		Historical and Academic purpose	48	20.0
		Joy and pleasure purpose	33	13.8
		Total	240	100.0

The maximum 45% tourist coming to Omkareshwar with the Spiritual Purpose of visit and 21.3% tourist visits this place with the Religious Purpose. The 20% tourist visits Omkareshwar with purpose of Historical and Academic Purpose, they are there to study the historical monuments. Tourist visiting with Joy and Pleasure Purpose are only 13.8%.

Table No. 3 Problems Faced by Religious Tourist at Omkareshwar

Sr. No.	Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Quality of Roads	Yes	12	5.0
		No	228	95.0
		Total	240	100.0
2	Good quality accommodation	Yes	207	86.3
		No	33	13.8
		Total	240	100.0
3	Eating Places	Yes	150	62.5
		No	90	37.5
		Total	240	100.0
4	Transportation facility	Yes	54	22.5
		No	186	77.5
		Total	240	100.0
5		Yes	39	16.3

	Availability of Tourist Guide	No	201	83.8
		Total	240	100.0
6	Shops for Purchasing	Yes	21	8.8
		No	219	91.3
		Total	240	100.0
7	Entertainment Places	Yes	210	87.5
		No	30	12.5
		Total	240	100.0
8	Behavior of Local People	Yes	21	8.8
		No	219	91.3
		Total	240	100.0
9	Accommodation tariff	Yes	165	68.8
		No	75	31.3
		Total	240	100.0
10	Perform Spiritual Activities	Yes	21	8.8
		No	219	91.3
		Total	240	100.0
11	Cleanliness in temple	Yes	153	63.8
		No	87	36.3
		Total	240	100.0
12	Cleanliness on Ghats	Yes	54	22.5
		No	186	77.5
		Total	240	100.0
13	Facilities on Ghats	Yes	183	76.3
		No	57	23.8
		Total	240	100.0
14	Discipline in temple	Yes	207	86.3
		No	33	13.8
		Total	240	100.0

Total 14 probable problems were considered for the study which may be faced by Religious tourist at Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga. From the frequency distribution out of 14 total considered problems only five problems were faced by the tourist in this Religious tourism. Those five problems are Entertainment Places, Accommodation tariff, Cleanliness in temple, Facilities on Ghats and Discipline in temple.

Table No.4: Rating of Problems faced by Religious Tourist at Omkareshwar

Sr. No.	Variable	Ranking	Frequency	Percent
1	Quality of road	Very Good	201	83.8
		Good	21	8.8

		Ok	3	1.3
		Moderate	15	6.3
		Total	240	100.0
2	Good Quality Accommodation	Very Good	12	5.0
		Good	21	8.8
		ok	54	22.5
		Moderate	75	31.3
		Bad	78	32.5
		Total	240	100.0
3	Eating Places	Very Good	12	5.0
		Good	18	7.5
		Ok	102	42.5
		Moderate	90	37.5
		Bad	18	7.5
		Total	240	100.0
4	Transportation facility	Very Good	15	6.3
		Good	90	37.5
		Ok	102	42.5
		Bad	33	13.8
		Total	240	100.0
5	Availability of Tourist guide	Very Good	12	5.0
		Good	81	33.8
		Ok	57	23.8
		Moderate	42	17.5
		Bad	48	20.0
		Total	240	100.0
6	Availability of Shops	Very Good	9	3.8
		Good	126	52.5
		Ok	75	31.3
		Moderate	21	8.8
		Bad	9	3.8
		Total	240	100.0
7	Entertainment places	Very Good	0	0
		Good	12	5.0
		Ok	12	5.0
		Moderate	21	8.8
		Bad	195	81.3
		Total	240	100.0
8	Behaviour of local people	Very Good	0	0
		Good	117	48.8
		Ok	108	45.0

		Moderate	15	6.3
		Total	240	100.0
9	Accommodation tariff	Very Good	12	5.0
		Good	57	23.8
		Ok	72	30.0
		Moderate	99	41.3
		Total	240	100.0
10	Spiritual activity	Very Good	57	23.8
		Good	153	63.8
		Ok	18	7.5
		Moderate	12	5.0
		Total	240	100.0
11	Cleanliness in temple	Very Good	15	6.3
		Good	45	18.8
		Ok	84	35.0
		Moderate	96	40.0
		Total	240	100.0
12	Cleanliness on Ghats	Very Good	27	11.3
		Good	183	76.3
		Ok	12	5.0
		Bad	18	7.5
		Total	240	100.0
13	Facility on Ghats	Very Good	9	3.8
		Good	27	11.3
		Ok	12	5.0
		Moderate	81	33.8
		Bad	111	46.3
		Total	240	100.0
14	Discipline in temple	Very Good	9	3.8
		Good	15	6.3
		Ok	12	5.0
		Moderate	51	21.3
		Bad	153	63.8
		Total	240	100.0

The above 14 problems were ranked by the Religious tourist visited Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga. The five problems were ranked Moderate and Bad by tourist in Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga visit. From this ranking it was proved that Religious Tourist faced these five problems. Those five problems are Entertainment Places, Accommodation tariff,

Cleanliness in temple, Facilities on Ghats and Discipline in temple.

Hypothesis Testing:

H0: The tourists are visiting Omkareshwar for specific purpose.

H1: The tourists are not visiting Omkareshwar for specific purpose.

The hypothesis is tested with Chi-Square test at 5% level of significance, i.e. $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table No. Chi – Square test frequencies

Purpose of Visit at Omkareshwar			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Religious purpose	51	60.0	-9.0
Spiritual purpose	108	60.0	48.0
Historical and Academic purpose	48	60.0	-12.0
Joy and pleasure purpose	33	60.0	-27.0
Total	240		

Table No. Chi-Square test statistics

Test Statistics	
	Purpose of Visit at Omkareshwar
Chi-Square	54.300 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 60.0.	

The significance value 'p' of the test is 0.00 which is less than the α level 0.05; we reject the null hypothesis and infer that the tourists are not visiting Omkareshwar for specific purpose.

From Chi-square frequency table, tourists are visiting Omkareshwar for four different purposes such as Religious purpose, Spiritual purpose, Historical & Academic purpose and Joy & pleasure purpose.

H0: The tourists are facing all problems equally at Omkareshwar Jyotirling

H1: The tourists are not facing all problems equally at Omkareshwar Jyotirling

The hypothesis is tested with One Sample t-test at 5% level of significance, i.e. $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table No. One-Sample t-Test

One-Sample Test				
	Test Value = 0			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Quality of the road	25.732	239	.000	1.300
Good Quality Accommodation	51.197	239	.000	3.775
Availability of Eating Places	56.932	239	.000	3.350
Transportation facility	40.458	239	.000	2.775
Availability of Tourist guide	39.689	239	.000	3.138
Availability of Shops	46.652	239	.000	2.563
Entertainment Places	91.278	239	.000	4.663
Behaviour of local people	65.500	239	.000	2.575
Accommodation tariff	51.734	239	.000	3.075
Spiritual activity	42.001	239	.000	1.938
Cleanliness in the temple	52.397	239	.000	3.088
Cleanliness on Ghat	37.121	239	.000	2.163
Facility on the Ghat	55.373	239	.000	4.075
Discipline in the temple	62.642	239	.000	4.350

The significance value 'p' of the test is 0.00 which is less than the α level 0.05; we reject the null hypothesis and infer that the tourists are not facing all problems equally at Omkareshwar Jyotirling.

The tourists are not facing all problems equally, but are facing problems in different proportions at Omkareshwar Jyotirling. The mean difference of test proved that tourists are facing four major problems at Omkareshwar Jyotirling. Those four major problems are Entertainment Places, Discipline in the temple, Facility on the Ghat and Good Quality Accommodation. The Availability of Eating Places, Availability of Tourist guide, Cleanliness in the temple and Accommodation tariff are moderate problems tourist facing at Omkareshwar Jyotirling.

H0: There is a correlation between Purpose of visit to Omkareshwar Jyotirling and their satisfaction.

H1: There is a no correlation between Purpose of visit to Omkareshwar Jyotirling and their satisfaction.

The hypothesis is tested with Oneway ANOVA test at 5% level of significance, i.e. $\alpha = 0.05$.

ONEWAY Satisfied BY Purpose of visit to Omkareshwar Jyotirling

ANOVA					
Purpose of visit to Omkareshwar Jyotirling					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.613	1	2.613	2.935	.088
Within Groups	211.850	238	.890		
Total	214.462	239			

The significance value 'p' of the test is 0.88 which is greater than the α level 0.05; we accept the null hypothesis and infer that there is a correlation between Purpose of visit to Omkareshwar Jyotirling and their satisfaction.

CONCLUSION:

The maximum tourists visiting Omkareshwar Jyotirling with the Spiritual Purpose of visit and Religious Purpose of visit. Less tourists are visits Omkareshwar Jyotirling with Historical and Academic Purpose as well as Joy and Pleasure Purpose of visit. From the first hypothesis testing it is proved that the tourists are not visiting Omkareshwar for specific purpose. Each tourist has different purpose in their mind for visiting Omkareshwar Jyotirling.

The Religious tourists at Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga faced five problems out of 14 considered probable problems. Those problems are Entertainment Places, Accommodation tariff, Cleanliness in temple, Facilities on Ghats and Discipline in temple. From the second hypothesis testing it is proved that all tourists are not facing all 14 problems equally. They are facing problems in varied proportions at Omkareshwar Jyotirling. The major problems they are facing at Omkareshwar Jyotirling are Entertainment Places, Discipline in the temple, Facility on the Ghat and Good Quality Accommodation.

It is observed that the satisfaction of tourists at Omkareshwar Jyotirling is dependent on their purpose of visit. From the third hypothesis testing it is proved that there is a correlation between Purpose of visit to Omkareshwar Jyotirling and their satisfaction.

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