

Effect of Income on the Needs and Expectations of Tourists : A Case Study of Punjab

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Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to understand the effect of income on the needs and expectations of the pilgrims in connection with transportation, accommodation, food, shopping services and with the behaviour of local public with respect to religious tourism in Punjab. The study is based on a convenience sample of 478 tourists visiting the religious places of Punjab. The study indicates that the concerned religious bodies, the Government and NGOs should make a concerted effort to professionally promote and support programmes to strengthen various services and facilities available for the pilgrims. Efficient local transport system, clean and hygienic food and accommodation at reasonable rates, joint regional promotion and publicity specifically during vacations, more diverse type of eating places and shopping pavilions at reasonable and stipulated prices, modernized banking facilities, multilevel car parking, efficient dispensation of religious services and cleanliness of the surroundings of the shrines should be taken care of.

INTRODUCTION

Since ancient times, in almost all parts of the globe, people travel for spiritual and religious satisfaction. They undertake religious journeys at vast expense and in physical discomfort and sometimes at the risk of life. In India, every year a large number of pilgrims belonging to all religions visit many pilgrimage centres and holy places and take holy baths on various religious occasions in quest of

religious satisfaction. Stanley (1991) also introduces India as a birthplace of many religions like *Hinduism*, *Jainism*, *Sikhism* and *Buddhism*, etc. leading to devotion of *Gurus*, *Mahatmas* and *Pirs* visiting far off places of religious importance in quest of religious knowledge with great hardships.

The State of Punjab has very attractive heritage sites and religious places, which attract both domestic and foreign tourists and has significant potential for becoming a major global tourist destination. Every year, millions of tourists from all parts of the world travel to Punjab in the quest of religious knowledge and satisfaction. Thousands of devotees across the globe visit Amritsar every day to pay obeisance at 'The Golden Temple'. The Golden Temple, Amritsar has become internationally famous and popular among the tourists and is being recommended to UNESCO for World Heritage Monument Status. It shows that there is a lot of scope for religious tourism in Punjab.

The pilgrim circuit in Punjab draws an estimated 10 million Sikh diaspora to the 'Harmandir Sahib' and many other Gurdwaras and to such sites as Sultanpur Lodhi, where the first Guru, Guru Nanak Dev Ji got enlightenment (*Hindustan Times*, January 11, 2008). Amritsar, the Gateway of India, has been a trade centre with Central Asia since ages and the recent opening of trade activities between Pakistan and India through Wagah Border has made the city of Amritsar a robust international Trade Centre envisaging a new chapter of rapid growth era (*The Tribune*, June 10, 2008). The Punjab Government is taking lot of initiatives to promote tourism by focusing on religious and heritage tourism, and encouraging private participants. The Central Government is also offering its support with attractive projects to promote tourism in the State of Punjab. These upcoming projects would have a multiplier effect on the economy of the State.

No doubt, the primary motive of the religious tourist is religious/spiritual satisfaction; an effective tourist infrastructure has to be created to cater to the needs of the pilgrims (Jafari, 1982; Mathieson and Walls, 1982; Baker, 1978). A pilgrim needs a comfortable hotel/*sarai/dharamshala* to stay, an efficient and comfortable transport to take him to the place of religious destination, tasty and hygienic food, some kind of souvenirs to take back home as memory of his visit and so on. Fernandes (2006) presents the varying motivations and expectations, with spiritual/emotional connotations of pilgrims visiting sacred sites. In his opinion, "pilgrims and worshippers visit sacred places with the aim of purification, salvation, healing or as an act of penance or thanksgiving". They seek experiences not only while reaching the final destination but also experience along the sacred route and ceremonies and series of interaction at the shrine. For planning and development of physical facilities and for infrastructure requirements, it is important to know the

various attributes of the tourists, such as the mode of travel, the kind of accommodation used, the facilities/services desired by the pilgrims, the level of satisfaction with the available facilities/services, the length of stay and the kind of purchases they make. Mountinho (1987) and Sievers (1987) also agree that all this information is essential for religious tourism marketing and to formulate promotional strategies for the development of religious tourism.

In the light of above discussion, as tourism activity involves expenditure and income directly affects expenditure to be done on tourism activities, the present paper is an attempt to understand the effect of income on the needs and expectations of the pilgrims in connection with transportation, accommodation, food, shopping services and with the behaviour of local public with respect to religious tourism in Punjab.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Since, the present study is focused on Religious Tourism, the theoretical and empirical studies having direct or indirect relevance for the present study have been reviewed as under :

Kye-Sung and Michael (1991) examined the role of destination images in tourism with respect to consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction from the view of (1) the functional congruity between the tourist's expectations and his/her perceptions of performance outcome on specific functional attributes like availability of suitable accommodation, easy accessibility, quality of attractions, etc. of a destination; and (2) the symbolic congruity between the tourist's self-concept and the destination's personality image. The findings indicate that consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction in tourism is related to both functional and symbolic congruity. Ahmed (1992) studied the importance of Islamic Pilgrimage (Hajj) in international tourism and recommended separate marketing efforts for different pilgrim segments with modernized pilgrim infrastructure as per their requirements. His study is also supported by Vukonic's (1996) recommendations that pilgrim destinations should be updated according to the changing needs of the pilgrims with respect to services of transportation, accommodation, food, entertainment and shopping.

Parmar (1996) suggested that to boost both domestic and international tourism in the State of Himachal Pradesh, the government should provide appropriate infrastructure like restaurants, shopping complexes, hotels, entertainment and information centres.

Anju and Arora (2001) revealed that cleanliness of rooms and bathrooms, poor condition of wall papers and carpets, poor condition of blankets and bed sheets, lack of proper functioning of air conditioners, lack of prompt service, lack

of sufficient variety of beverages, non-supply of napkins, poor sitting arrangement in beer bar, lack of room attendants, lack of entertainment facilities and poor quality of furniture used at PTDC complexes are the main reasons for the dissatisfaction of tourists.

Middleton and Hawkins (1998) asserted that the success of tourism is measured in terms of service performance experience regarding relaxation, happiness, entertainment, adventure and satisfaction to its customers. Russell (1999) too thought that pilgrimage tourism is an extremely sensitive area attracting mostly those people who combine religious aspects with sight-seeing, holidaying, culture and relaxation.

Desh and Sharma (1999) proposed private sector participation for better tourism management. Qu and Elsa (1999) recommended that an in-depth study is needed to determine tourist motivation and satisfaction that is essential for marketers and provide greater help to upkeep the improvement of the service quality and enhancement of customer satisfaction. Sharma et al. (2000) suggested further improvement in the hotel services, food and catering, sanitation and hygiene with respect to prices paid by the tourists.

In a behavioural study, Mohanty and Patnaik (2002) concluded that overseas marketing and promotional campaigns in the neighbouring States should also be encouraged to attract both domestic and international tourists. Onome's (2004) study aimed to explore the motivations for tourists, choice of diverse tourism environments in a Third World country, Nigeria. The results show that attractiveness of destination, quality services, facilities/amenities, favourable location and accessibility of centres emerge as important considerations in tourist destination choice. Similar recommendations have also been made by other researchers (Parmar, 1996; Sharma, 2000; Gupta, 2000; Mawa, 2004; and Fernandes, 2006).

Mawa (2004) suggested that changes in the existing organizational structure should be made to provide hygienic food and accommodation services at economical prices and for the deployment of an economical fleet of buses in good condition connecting Jammu and Katra so that visitors do not have any bad experience during their visit.

Woodward (2004) observed that a tourism activity at religious sites represents an important source of income for many faith institutions and organizations, generating funds for repairs and maintenance. In a similar study, Mckercher (2001) said that cultural and heritage assets that are capable of withstanding large visitor numbers and which have strong market appeal will need to be developed quite differently from those that are either fragile or have limited market appeal. He further suggested controlling the tourists' movement in case of

fragile heritage assets.

Rao (2007) identified the relationship between the socio-demographic factors of tourists and their preference towards package tours. His study indicates that propensity to pleasure and time saving transport system has been found to be most driving motivators of tourism. Further, age of the tourists also influences their preference towards package tours. Arabi (2007) discussed online tourism services in developing countries and expressed the need for website marketing infrastructure. Further, he suggested that websites should not only be purely informative but the information should be presented graphically in an attractive way and documented with photographs.

The literature reviewed reveals that not much work has been done to understand the difficulties, needs and expectations of the pilgrims with respect to the availability of various services and facilities at the religious destinations. Therefore, the present study, which focuses on the religious tourism and tourists experiences, is an attempt to fill the gap in tourism research. Such a behavioural study of tourists is essential in order to improve the customer satisfaction level by providing quality services in the state like Punjab which has a great strength as far as religious and pilgrimage sites are concerned.

METHODOLOGY

A convenience sample comprising of 478 respondents was selected. The survey target was confined to the tourists visiting the religious places of Punjab. As majority of tourists visiting religious places of Punjab visit the Golden Temple in Amritsar, therefore, the respondents visiting Golden Temple/other religious places in Amritsar like Durgiana Temple or Ram Tirath were surveyed either directly at the Golden Temple or at various hotels, airport and railway station. Besides tourists were also selected from pertinent religious places of Punjab like Tarn Taran, Goindwal, Khadoor Sahib, Baba Bakala, Fatehgarh Sahib, Roza Sharif at Sirhind and Anandpur Sahib. The data for the study was collected personally by instituting a structured and non-disguised questionnaire to the respondents selected for the study.

The questionnaire was designed to understand the difficulties, expectations and needs of the tourists in connection with transportation, boarding, lodging and shopping services and behaviour of the local public.

The analysis relating to various services has been done on the basis of income groups as income is an important determinant to understand the difficulties, expectations and needs of the tourists in connection with transportation, boarding, lodging and shopping services. Income categories are classified as I₁ (average

family income up to Rs. 20,000 per month), I_2 (average family income more than Rs. 20,000 but less than Rs. 30,000 per month) and I_3 (average family income of more than Rs. 30,000 per month).

A simple description of facts in terms of frequencies and percentages has been used for analysis purposes. In order to sharpen the inferences and for the purpose of testing various null hypotheses regarding the differences in the opinion of different types of respondents with determinant attributes, chi-square test and ANOVA have been applied.

Table 1
Sample Description of the Respondents

Categories	N	Per cent
<i>Type of Tourists</i>		
Indian	310	64.9
Foreigners	66	13.8
NRI	102	21.3
<i>Age-wise Distribution</i>		
Up to 20 Years	48	10.0
21 to 40 Years	282	59.0
41 to 60 Years	139	29.1
61 and Above	9	1.9
<i>Education-wise Distribution</i>		
Up to Matric	106	22.2
Graduates	217	45.4
Post-graduates	87	18.2
Professionally Qualified	68	14.2
<i>Occupation-wise Distribution</i>		
Student	72	15.1
Service	138	28.9
Business	144	30.1
Profession	94	19.7
Housewife	19	3.9
Agriculture	11	2.3
<i>Average Family Income (per month)</i>		
Up to Rs. 20000	78	16.3
Rs. 20001 to Rs. 30000	116	24.3
More than Rs. 30000	284	59.4

The broad null hypothesis (H_0) tested is "Statistically, there are no significant differences in the opinions of respondents belonging to different income groups with regard to the availability of various services/facilities at the religious destination."

Sample Description : A sample description of respondents is given in Table 1.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The responses obtained have been analyzed for tourist experiences in connection with means of transportation, accommodation, food and shopping services available and the behaviour of local public. The results are shown in the following tables.

1. Means of Transport and Local Difficulties Faced in Reaching the Destination

The respondents were asked to specify the means of transport used and difficulties faced by them in reaching the destination. From Table 2, it is seen that 45.8 per cent respondents travelled by air followed by those who preferred rail transport (26.4%) and personal vehicle (17.4%).

Table 2
Distribution of Respondents with regard to Mode of Travel Across Income Groups

Mode of Travel	Income Groups			Total
	I ₁	I ₂	I ₃	
Air	8 (10.3)	36 (31.0)	175 (61.6)	219 (45.8)
Rail	42 (53.8)	40 (34.5)	44 (15.5)	126 (26.4)
Tourist Bus	10 (12.8)	15 (12.9)	12 (4.2)	37 (7.7)
Taxi	7 (9.0)	-	6 (2.1)	13 (2.7)
Personal Vehicle	11 (14.1)	25 (21.6)	47 (16.5)	83 (17.4)
N	78	116	284	478

$\chi^2 = 108.21$; $\nu = 8$; Significant at 5 per cent level of significance.

Note : The figures given in parentheses indicate the percentages.

The analysis of income groups reveals that proportionately, the maximum proportion of respondents travelling by air is from income group I_3 (61.6%) followed by I_2 (31.0%). It can be observed from the table that most of the tourists travelling by rail belong to income group I_1 (53.8%) followed by I_2 (34.5%) and I_3 (15.5%). As far as travelling by personal vehicle is concerned, larger proportion of respondents are from middle income group I_2 (21.6%) followed by I_3 (16.5%) and I_1 (14.1%). The chi-square value reveals that there is a significant difference at 5 per cent level of significance among the respondents belonging to various income groups regarding the preference for different means of transport used to visit the religious places.

With respect to difficulties faced in reaching the religious place, it has been found that 53.6 per cent of the tourists did not face any kind of difficulty, while 46.4 per cent face one or the other difficulty.

The respondents facing the difficulty were further asked the kind of difficulty faced by them. In this context, it has been found from Table 3 that out of 222 respondents, who reported to have faced the difficulties in reaching the destination,

Table 3
Distribution of Respondents with regard to Difficulties in Reaching at Religious Places Across Income Groups

Kind of Difficulty	Income Groups			Total
	I_1	I_2	I_3	
Congested Approach	20 (43.5)	38 (99.4)	120 (80.3)	178 (80.2)
Auto Rickshaw Problem	9 (19.6)	14 (35.9)	24 (17.5)	47 (21.2)
No Sign Boards	10 (21.8)	29 (74.3)	82 (59.8)	121 (45.5)
No Local Guidance	5 (10.9)	13 (33.3)	28 (20.4)	46 (20.7)
Parking Difficulty	19 (41.3)	28 (71.8)	64 (46.7)	111 (50.0)
N	46	39	137	222

Note : (i) The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

(ii) The percentages add to more than 100 because of multiple responses.

a majority of them expressed the problem of congested approach (80.2%) followed by 50.0 per cent tourists who faced the parking problem, and 45.5 per cent of the respondents suffered because of the absence of proper signboards. Across income

groups, the analysis reveals that proportionately, higher percentage of respondents facing all kinds of difficulties fall in middle income group I₂ [(congested approach (99.4%); auto rickshaw problem (35.9%); need of signboards (74.3%); need of local guidance (33.3%); and parking problem (71.8%)].

2. Accommodation

The respondents were asked to be specific about the accessibility, category of accommodation used and difficulties faced at the place of stay. In response to the query whether the accommodation was easily available, a majority of respondents (73%) stated that it was easily available. Table 4 depicts the distribution of respondents with regard to the type of accommodation across income groups.

Table 4
Distribution of Respondents with regard to Type of Accommodation Across Income Groups

Type of Accommodation	Income Groups			Total
	I ₁	I ₂	I ₃	
<i>Dharamshala/Sarai</i>	29 (37.2)	24 (20.7)	63 (22.2)	116 (24.3)
Luxury Class Hotel	4 (5.1)	11 (9.5)	63 (22.2)	78 (16.3)
Economy Budget Hotel	15 (19.2)	34 (29.3)	50 (17.6)	99 (20.7)
Guest House	7 (9.0)	8 (6.9)	30 (10.6)	45 (9.4)
Bed and Breakfast	2 (2.6)	13 (11.2)	11 (3.9)	26 (5.4)
Staying with Friends/Relatives	21 (26.9)	26 (22.4)	67 (23.6)	114 (23.8)
N	78	116	284	478

$\chi^2 = 38.49$; $\nu = 10$; Significant at 5 per cent level of significance

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

The table reveals that most of the tourists (24.3%) stayed in *dharamshala/sarai* inside the religious places followed by those who stayed with their friends or relatives during the visit (23.8%). Some of the tourists (20.7%) stayed in economy budget hotels also. Across income groups, it is observed that most of the respondents belonging to lower income group I₁ either stayed in *dharamshala* (37.2%) or with their friends or relatives (26.9%). Large number of respondents (63

out of 78) staying in luxury class hotel belong to higher income group I_3 . Out of 99 respondents staying in economy budget hotel, larger proportion belongs to middle income group I_2 (29.3%). The chi-square value reveals that statistically, there is a significant difference among the respondents belonging to different income groups regarding the preference for different types of accommodation at 5 per cent level of significance.

The respondents were further asked what mode of accommodation booking they used. Table 5 presents these responses.

Table 5
Distribution of Respondents with regard to the Mode of Accommodation Booking Across Income Groups

Booking of Accommodation	Income Groups			Total
	I_1	I_2	I_3	
Package Tour	4 (5.1)	10 (8.6)	18 (6.3)	32 (6.7)
Directly with the Place of Stay	62 (79.5)	72 (62.1)	185 (65.1)	319 (66.7)
Through the Travel Agent	4 (5.1)	16 (13.8)	36 (12.7)	56 (11.7)
Internet/Online	8 (10.3)	18 (15.5)	45 (15.8)	71 (14.9)
N	78	116	284	478

$\chi^2 = 8.24$; $\nu = 6$; Significant at 5 per cent level of significance

Note : The figures given in parentheses indicate the percentages.

The table reveals that a majority of the respondents (66.7%) availed the accommodation facility by reaching the place directly. It has been found that majority of the respondents from all the income groups got their booking directly with the place of stay after reaching the destination, the percentages being 79.5 per cent for I_1 , 62.1 per cent for I_2 and 65.1% for I_3 . The proportion of respondents availing the online booking facility is almost in equal proportion from the two income groups I_2 and I_3 (more than 15% from each group). The chi-square value reveals that income does not have any significant effect with respect to the choice for the method of accommodation booking at 5 per cent level of significance.

The respondents were further asked to specify whether they have faced any problems at the place of stay. It has been observed that large majority of the

respondents (64.4%) faced no problems at the place of stay, while 170 respondents (35.6%) faced one or the other problem.

The respondents who faced some problems at the place of stay were further asked about the nature of the problems faced, which are presented in Table 6.

Table 6
Distribution of Respondents with regard to Problems at the Place of Stay

Problems	Income Groups			Total
	I ₁	I ₂	I ₃	
Lack of Cleanliness	8 (34.8)	18 (33.3)	27 (29.0)	53 (31.2)
Poor Quality of Bedding	2 (8.7)	10 (18.5)	8 (8.6)	20 (11.8)
No Proper Lights and Ventilation	3 (13.0)	6 (11.1)	11 (11.8)	20 (11.8)
No Food Services	4 (17.4)	13 (24.1)	20 (21.5)	37 (21.8)
Unhygienic Toilets & Bathrooms	6 (26.1)	7 (12.9)	27 (29.0)	40 (23.5)
N	23	54	93	170

$\chi^2 = 17.18$; $\nu = 8$; Significant at 5 per cent level of significance

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

The table indicates that most of the tourists (31.2%) faced the problem of cleanliness at the place of stay followed by some respondents (23.5%) who expressed the problem of unhygienic toilets and bathrooms. The analysis of income groups with respect to problems at the place of stay (in Table 6) reveals that most of the respondents belonging to higher income group I₃ faced the problem of unhygienic toilets and bathrooms (29.0%), lack of cleanliness (29.0%) and no food services (21.5%) followed by many respondents of middle income group I₂ facing the problem of lack of cleanliness (33.3%), no food services (24.1%) and poor quality of bedding (18.5%). Most of the respondents belonging to lower income group I₁ also faced the problem of lack of cleanliness (34.8%), unhygienic toilets and bathrooms (26.1%) and no food services (17.4%). The chi-square value reveals that there is a significant difference amongst the respondents of various income groups over the opinions regarding various problems at the place of stay at 5 per cent level of significance.

3. Food Services

The respondents were asked to state the preferred place for eating food, quality of food served and their satisfaction with respect to number of eating-places. In this context, Table 7 indicates that most of the respondents (57.3%) like to eat *Langar* (community kitchen) while visiting the religious places followed by many tourists who eat their food at restaurants (42.5%). Regarding the analysis across income groups, the table depicts that a higher proportion of respondents belonging to all the income groups enjoy the food at community kitchen inside the religious places, the percentages being 64.1% for I_1 followed by 58.6% for I_2 and 54.9% for I_3 . The proportion of respondents having food at nearby *dhaba* is almost similar for income groups I_1 , I_2 and I_3 with percentages being 24.4, 21.6 and 22.2 per cent respectively. A large proportion of respondents (47.9%) having food at restaurants are from high-income group I_3 .

Table 7
Distribution of Respondents with regard to the Place of Eating Food Across Income Groups

Place of Eating	Income Groups			Total
	I_1	I_2	I_3	
At Community Kitchen	50 (64.1)	68 (58.6)	156 (54.9)	274 (57.3)
Nearby Dhaba	19 (24.4)	25 (21.6)	63 (22.2)	107 (22.4)
At a Restaurant	22 (28.2)	45 (38.8)	136 (47.9)	203 (42.5)
N	78	116	102	478

Note : (i) The figures given in parentheses indicate the percentages.

(ii) The percentages add to more than 100 because of multiple responses.

The respondents were further asked to give their views about the quality of food served. Table 8 reveals most of the respondents (65.1 %) expressed the food as 'tasty and delicious'. Across income groups the table exhibits that majority of the respondents belonging to various income categories I_1 , I_2 and I_3 stated that the food was 'tasty and delicious' with percentages being 64.1%, 60.3% and 67.3% respectively.

The chi-square value also shows significant differences at 5 per cent level of significance, among different income groups with respect to the quality of food served to them.

Table 8
Distribution of Respondents with regard to Quality of Food Served Across Income Groups

Quality of Food	Income Groups			Total
	I ₁	I ₂	I ₃	
Tasty and Delicious	50 (64.1)	70 (60.3)	191 (67.3)	311 (65.1)
Fresh and Hygienic	20 (25.6)	21 (18.1)	36 (12.7)	77 (16.1)
Quality not according to Price	4 (5.1)	9 (7.8)	31 (10.9)	44 (9.2)
Costly but of Good Quality	4 (5.1)	16 (13.8)	26 (9.2)	46 (9.6)
N	78	116	284	478

$\chi^2 = 13.75$; $\nu = 6$; Significant at 5 per cent level of significance

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

Regarding the overall satisfaction with respect to number of eating places, it has been revealed that 317 out of 478 respondents surveyed were not satisfied with number of eating places around the religious places. The respondents were further asked to suggest the type of eating places they wished to have.

Table 9
Distribution of Respondents with regard to Suggestions for More Number of Eating Places Across Income Groups

Number of Eating Places	Income Groups			Total
	I ₁	I ₂	I ₃	
More Restaurants	15 (34.9)	40 (48.2)	88 (46.6)	143 (45.1)
More Sweet Shops	5 (11.6)	9 (10.8)	14 (7.4)	28 (8.8)
More Dhabas	14 (32.5)	25 (30.1)	45 (23.6)	84 (26.5)
More Tea/Coffee Stalls	9 (20.9)	9 (10.8)	44 (23.0)	62 (19.6)
N	43	83	191	317

$\chi^2 = 14.19$; $\nu = 6$; $\chi^2_{0.05} = 12.5$; Significant at 5 per cent level of significance

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

Table 9 depicts that majority of the respondents expressed the need for more restaurants (45.1%) followed by those, in whose opinion more *dhabas* are required around the religious places (26.5%).

Across income groups, the analysis reveals that proportionately larger number of respondents expressing the need for more restaurants is from income group I_2 (48.2%) followed by income group I_3 (46.6%) and I_1 (34.9%). Majority of those expressing the need for more *dhabas* are from income group I_1 (32.5%) followed by I_2 (30.1%) and I_3 (23.6%). The chi-square value infers that statistically, the respondents of various income categories differ significantly with regard to their opinions over more number of eating places at 5 per cent level of significance.

The respondents were further asked whether they liked the taste of north Indian food. It has been found that an overwhelming majority of tourists (around 90%) like the taste of north Indian food.

4. Shopping

In the context of shopping, the respondents were asked to specify the items they wished to purchase and take them home as souvenirs or local specialities. They were also asked to state the reasons in case they were not satisfied with the

Table 10

Distribution of Respondents with regard to Items to Purchase Across Income Groups

Items to Purchase	Income Groups			Total
	I_1	I_2	I_3	
Local Handicrafts	5 (6.4)	18 (15.5)	56 (19.7)	79 (16.5)
Religious Items	31 (39.7)	58 (50.0)	100 (35.2)	189 (39.5)
Souvenirs	7 (9.0)	24 (20.7)	70 (24.6)	101 (21.1)
Local Speciality Products	30 (38.5)	35 (30.2)	93 (32.7)	158 (33.1)
Clothes	17 (21.8)	24 (20.7)	54 (19.0)	95 (19.9)
N	78	116	284	478

Note : (i) The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

(ii) The percentages add to more than 100 because of multiple responses.

shopping/retail services. Table 10 reveals that most of the respondents (39.5%) wish to purchase religious items like religious books, pictures of the religious places, etc. Many tourists (33.1%) are interested in purchasing local speciality products.

The analysis with regard to income groups shows that a larger proportion of tourists purchasing the religious items are from income group I₂ (50%) followed by I₁ (39.7%) and I₃ (35.2%). Additionally, most of the tourists purchasing local speciality products are from income group I₁ (38.5%) followed by I₃ (32.7%) and I₂ (30.2%). The proportion is almost similar among the respondents belonging to income groups I₃ and I₂ (21.8% and 20.7% respectively), who are interested to purchase clothes for their near and dear ones as memories.

Further, it has been observed that 35.6 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with shopping services, while majority of them (64.4%) have shown dissatisfaction in this respect. The respondents who expressed dissatisfaction in this regard were further asked about the reasons for this feeling. Table 11 furnishes the reasons for dissatisfaction across income groups.

Table 11
Distribution of Respondents with regard to Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Shopping Across Income Groups

Reasons for Dissatisfaction	Income Groups			Total
	I ₁	I ₂	I ₃	
Inadequate Shopping Items	5 (10.9)	14 (17.1)	46 (25.5)	65 (21.1)
Few Fixed Price Shops	11 (23.9)	20 (24.4)	56 (31.1)	87 (28.2)
No Government Emporiums	10 (21.7)	26 (31.7)	51 (28.3)	87 (28.2)
Shopkeepers Cheat the Pilgrims	16 (34.8)	13 (15.8)	26 (14.4)	55 (17.8)
Items Costly in Souvenir Shops	10 (21.7)	12 (14.6)	21 (11.7)	43 (13.9)
N	46	82	180	308

Note : (i) The figures given in parentheses indicate the percentages.

(ii) The percentages add to more than 100 because of multiple responses.

It has been found that equal proportion of respondents expressed the need for fixed price shops and government emporiums (28.2% in each case). Some of the tourists have not been satisfied with the quality of shopping items (21.1%).

Across income groups, the table reveals that relatively higher proportion of respondents belonging to income group I_1 felt being cheated by the shopkeepers (34.8%) and also found the prices of gift items high (21.7%) as compared to other income groups. A major proportion of respondents expressing the need for government emporiums (31.7%) and more fixed price shops (24.4%) are from income group I_2 . A larger proportion of respondents expressing the non-availability of adequate shopping items (25.5%), less number of fixed price shops (31.1%) and no government emporiums (28.3%) are from income group I_3 .

5. Behaviour of the Local Public

Table 12 indicates the distribution of respondents with regard to the behaviour of the people in the region across income groups. It has been found that most of the respondents (56.7%) expressed the behaviour of the local people as co-operative and helpful. In the opinion of some of the tourists (33.3%), they are hospitable and courteous too. The table shows that behaviour of local persons in the region is 'co-operative and helpful', as opined by most of the respondents belonging to different income groups I_1 , I_2 and I_3 with percentages being 69.2%, 56.9% and 53.2% respectively.

Table 12
Distribution of Respondents with regard to the Behaviour of People in the Region Across Income Groups

Behaviour of Local People	Income Groups			Total
	I_1	I_2	I_3	
Co-operative and Helpful	54 (69.2)	66 (56.9)	151 (53.2)	271 (56.7)
Indifferent	4 (5.1)	15 (12.9)	17 (6.0)	36 (7.5)
Hospitable and Courteous	20 (25.6)	32 (27.6)	107 (37.7)	159 (33.3)
Inhospitable and Discourteous	—	3 (2.6)	9 (3.2)	12 (2.5)
N	78	116	284	478

$\chi^2 = 15.37$; $\nu = 6$; Significant at 5 per cent level of significance

Note : The figures given in parentheses indicate the percentages.

The chi-square test shows that there is a significant difference at 5 per cent level of significance regarding the opinions of different types of respondents

over the behaviour of local public.

The distribution of respondents with regard to the behaviour of staff at the religious complex across income groups is given in Table 13. The table depicts that most of the respondents (43.9%) expressed the behaviour of the staff on duty as 'polite and courteous'. Across income groups, the analysis reveals that the response pattern of all income categories respondents is almost similar as staff members on duty are polite and courteous with the tourists with percentages being 43.6, 34.5 and 47.9 per cent for income groups I₁, I₂ and I₃ respectively. Only 9.4 per cent respondents of the total sample revealed that the behaviour of the staff was indifferent.

Table 13
Income Group-wise Behaviour of Staff at the Religious Place

Behaviour of Staff	Income Groups			Total
	I ₁	I ₂	I ₃	
Knowledgeable	6 (7.7)	24 (20.7)	28 (9.9)	58 (12.1)
Discourteous	2 (2.6)	6 (5.2)	15 (5.3)	23 (4.8)
Polite and Courteous	34 (43.6)	40 (34.5)	136 (47.9)	210 (43.9)
Indifferent	6 (7.7)	8 (6.9)	31 (10.9)	45 (9.4)
Fair in Dealing and Helpful	30 (38.5)	38 (32.8)	74 (26.1)	142 (29.7)
N	78	116	284	478

$\chi^2 = 19.18$; $\nu = 8$; Significant at 5 per cent level of significance

Note : The figures given in parentheses indicate the percentages.

Statistically, chi-square value does not show any significant difference at 5 per cent level of significance, amongst the tourists belonging to different income groups, with regard to the behaviour of staff at religious place.

The overall satisfaction with these services/facilities was also measured on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = highly dissatisfied and 5 = highly satisfied. Table 14 presents the mean values in this regard with respect to different income categories.

The analysis of the weighted average scores as given in the table reveals no clear-cut differences among the respondents of different income groups with respect to level of satisfaction with the available services/facilities as the mean

Table 14
Means and F-ratio for Degree of Overall Satisfaction about Facilities/Services

Services/Facilities	Income Groups			Total
	I ₁	I ₂	I ₃	
(a) Connectivity with your State	3.92	4.09	4.04	1.001
(b) Local Hospitality	3.86	3.82	3.86	0.105
(c) Transportation Services	3.49	3.59	3.67	1.118
(d) Shopping/Retail Services	3.53	3.49	3.33	2.189
(e) Food Services	3.76	3.86	3.76	0.554
(f) Accommodation Services	3.56	3.78	3.71	1.366
(g) Banking and Forex Services	3.49	3.54	3.45	0.467
(h) Telecommunication Services	3.72	3.88	3.53	6.436*
(i) Tourist Information Services	3.24	3.27	3.12	1.109
(j) Behaviour of the Staff at the Religious Complex	3.81	3.60	3.57	2.049

* Significant at 0.05 level

scores calculated for the components are in the range of 3 and 4.

All the respondents belonging to different income groups I₁, I₂ and I₃ give the highest weightage to 'connectivity' (3.92, 4.09 and 4.04 respectively). On an average, all the respondents belonging to different income groups are satisfied with the 'local hospitality', 'food services', 'telecommunication services' and 'availability of accommodation' with mean values ranging between 3 and 4.

The table depicts that there is a need to improve 'tourist information services' as the average score in each income group is marginally higher than 3, which indicates that there is a need to open more tourist information centres and tourist information services need to be strengthened.

F-ratio values as shown in Table 14 highlight that statistically, there are significant differences across different income groups, at 5 per cent level of significance with regard to 'telecommunication services'. The tourists belonging to different income categories do not differ with respect to satisfaction level with the availability of other services/facilities investigated in the study.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Punjab is a State of India with a rich culture and unique past heritage that has tremendous potential for the growth of tourism. Every year, millions of tourists

from all parts of the world travel to Punjab in quest of religious knowledge and satisfaction. In this context, the present study reveals that in spite of the State being the religious hub and extensively linked to other parts of the country by road, rail and air, the places of pilgrimage are not properly connected. There is a clear problem of congestion and chaotic traffic around these religious places such that pilgrims find it cumbersome to approach the shrines. Similarly, there is a conspicuous absence of indicators and signboards and guidance bureaus. The means of local conveyance are woefully lacking. Further, there is a shortage of package and guided tours and infrastructural facilities like clean environment, hygienic bathrooms and toilets and so on. Fixed price shops and Government emporiums selling traditional cultural artifacts are also scarce.

Therefore, the direct policy implications emanating from the above analysis are as follows :

1. Approach to the shrines has to be streamlined. Traffic signs and signboards should be installed. Proper road maps with different pilgrimage tourist circuits should be developed and displayed at airports, railway stations, Wagha border and also at a prominent place outside 'Golden Temple', 'Durgiana Temple' and 'Anandpur Sahib' so as to familiarize all types of pilgrims with all the religious places of Punjab.
2. Low cost and neat and hygienic accommodation must be provided for low income groups.
3. Aggressive marketing efforts are needed to organize and popularize 'package tours'.
4. There is a strong need to refurbish and expand Government emporiums selling diversified traditional cultural items of Punjab at fixed prices.
5. Eating places with reasonably priced, hygienically cooked and diverse type of food items should be made available.
6. Public-Private sector partnership is now witnessed in the development of infrastructure services for prime religious destinations. Such partnerships should also be undertaken for other important destinations as well. The private sector, as it is by the motive of profit, has the advantage in providing competitive services, running facilities and thereby strengthening tourism with local development.

In conclusion, it may be re-emphasized that the concerned religious bodies, the Government and NGOs should make a concerted effort to professionally promote and support programmes to strengthen various services and facilities available for the pilgrims. Efficient local transport system, clean and hygienic food and accommodation at reasonable rates, joint regional promotion and publicity

specifically during vacations, more diverse type of eating places and shopping pavilions at reasonable and stipulated prices, modernized banking facilities, multilevel car parking, efficient dispensation of religious services and cleanliness of the surroundings of the shrines should be taken care of by the concerned authorities.

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