Tourists' Satisfaction with Key Coastal Tourism Destinations of West Bengal, India

Anirban Baitalik*, Sankar Majumder†
& Tanmoyee Bhattacharjee‡

Abstract

This study is an attempt to analyse the satisfaction level of tourists' visiting the popular coastal tourist destinations in the state of West Bengal in India. Simple checklist approach along with Likert scale techniques was employed as a response format to collect primary data from the sample of 300 tourists. Simple statistical techniques were used to analyse the so-collected data. This study indicate that the sample tourists were more satisfied with the scenic beauty of the places, transportation facilities, availability of food & beverages. They were also satisfied with the cleanliness, and accommodation facilities. But they were relatively less satisfied with the state of sanitation & safe drinking water, health facilities, and safety-security of the area. The study revealed that the marital status, household's income, travel distance, and cost of accommodation had a significant positive association with the tourists' satisfaction. Strangely, this study found significant negative association between per capita expenditure of the tourist and level of their satisfaction. This study revealed that the service-wise levels of satisfaction were

* Department of Pure & Applied Science, Midnapore City College, West Bengal, India; anirbanbaitalik@gmail.com
† Visva-Bharati (A Central University), West Bengal, India; sankar.majumder@visva-bharati.ac.in
‡ Department of Pure & Applied Science, Midnapore City College, West Bengal, India; tanmoyee2009@gmail.com

highly sensitive to social, demographic as well as visitation characters of the tourists. It is expected that the findings of this study would be very useful in appropriate policy making for tourism development.

1. Introduction

Tourism is considered as one of the most diversified, widely acknowledged, complex societal phenomenon and one of the fastest growing sectors in the segment of global economy and multicultural world (Getz & Page, 2016). It has significant impact in terms of employment creation and contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product (WTO, 1995; WTTC, 2013; WTTC, 2019). The dimension of tourism economy has changed radically since the middle of the last century by vast revolutions in the field of science and technology and over time, a significant amount of investment is coming into this sector and tourism is becoming an important determining factor for local socio-economic development in many developed and developing nations (Baitalik, 2019; Snajdar, 2020). Destination performance in terms of service and facilities available in a specific tourist spot and motivation of tourists to visit those sites as well as the improvement of tourism economy is highly dependent on the satisfaction level of the tourists (Song & Cheung, 2010). The tourists' satisfaction level is also a fundamental aspect in understanding the state of tourism as a whole of a specific tourism destination (Zhang, 2010; Woyo, 2019). While travelling, tourists enjoy a variety of tourism products and services of a specific tourism destination that are expressed through their satisfaction level (Tian-Cole, 2002). Thus, satisfaction level of tourists' is a very important parameter for successful marketing of a tourist destination because it influences the choice of destination, the consumption of tourism products and services, and the decision to return. The tourism economy in the tropical coastal region of the world continues to grow, and the coastal areas of Southeast Asia, including those in India have played a major role in this regard.

The Indian state of West Bengal is a land of splendid places with varieties of rich natural and cultural attractions (Baitalik &

Majumder, 2018). The coastal tract of West Bengal is about 220 Km (IESWM & ISRO, 2001) along the shoreline of Bay of Bengal. These coastal areas are associated with outstanding morphological features, such as virgin beaches, series of coastal sand dunes, mangroves, casuarina groves, cashew plantation, and fishing harbours (Paul, 2002). All these attractions are promoting the West Bengal's coast as a preferred tropical tourism destination by attracting large number of domestic as well as international visitors (GoI, 2017). In recent times the Government of West Bengal has been promoting Public Private Partnership (PPP) model for infrastructural development in these areas and the state government is also considering tourism as an integral part of the development programme of the state (Pan, 2011). Starting from beach beautification, various tourism infrastructure has already been developed along the West Bengal coast under the World Bank funded ICZM project. With the growth of tourist influx, various types of required and desire services have not yet made corresponding growth. In this background this paper is an attempt to investigate this important issue of the satisfaction level of the tourists with regards to the existing services required by the tourists.

2. Objectives of the study

The broad objective of this paper is to know the state of satisfaction of the tourists visiting the coastal area. Specifically this study has some interrelated objectives: (i) to know the socio-demographic and visitation characteristics of the tourists (ii) to assess the level of satisfaction of the tourists in respect to the existing services they receive and its differences from the services as per their expectation, and (iii) to identify the determining factors behind tourists' level of satisfaction.

3. Literature review

3.1. Concept of tourist satisfaction

Satisfaction is one of the more interesting topics in tourism research and it plays an important role in the tourists' decision to recommend a place to others as well as revisit the tourist sites

(Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Banyai, 2012). The concept of tourist satisfaction may be described as 'cumulative satisfaction' as well as 'an abstract construct of total consumption experience with a product or service' at the tourism sites (Jönsson, 2008). It is a post-purchase construct (Woodside et al. 1989) or attitude (Swan & Combs, 1976) of a service or product after experiencing it. Satisfaction of tourist is obtained when the appropriate processes are designed in such a way that the services provided meet the expectations of the tourist (Gholipoor & Rashidi, 2008). Level of tourist satisfaction is also defined as the results of the comparison between a tourist's experience at the destination visited and the expectations about the destination (Pizam et al. 1978). Visitors perception about any travel destination can be indicated through the mental assessment of their travel experience (Sangpikul, 2108; Sharma & Nasyak, 2019).

3.2. Destination attributes of tourist satisfaction

Satisfaction level of tourists' has been measured with destination environment (Vengesayi, 2003), image of the location (Carvlho, 2022; Dai et al. 2022; Elbaz et al, 2021; Sangpikul, 2018; Soliman, 2019), accessibility (Reitsamer et al. 2016), attractions (Valduga, 2019), facilities/amenities and services (Anson et al. 2018; Ghanbri et al. 2019, Lee et al. 2009), ambiance (Woyo & Amadhila, 2018; Reitsamer & Brunner-Sperdin, 2017), and price (Cracolici & Nijkamp, 2008; Hu & Ritchie, 1993) factors by various scholars in their studies. Other destination factors like attractions, behaviour of vendors, transport and parking facilities, safety and security also affects the satisfaction level of tourists (Zeinali et al. 2014). Satisfaction level of tourists with nature based tourism in South West Virginia is associated with various factors, namely, friendly services, outdoor activities, lodging and natural scenery (Meng et al. 2008).

Studies on forest based tourism showed that information services, recreational facilities, safety and sustainability are important factors of tourist satisfaction (Lee, 2015). The levels of tourist satisfaction in Greece have been measured by the elements like food, excursion facilities, socialisation situation and landscape varieties (Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006). Previous studies suggested that both attractions and

services should be considered when examining tourists' overall satisfaction (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Whipple & Thach, 1988).

A study classified the various types of destination factors of tourist satisfaction into five major groups, viz. i) accessibility including road conditions, ii) costs including tolls and fuel or tickets, accommodation, food, recreation and entertainment, iii) natural attractions, iv) artificial attractions including bars, restaurants, shopping malls, cinemas, artworks, art and religion, and v) infrastructure including housing, access to information, communications, roads, health and safety (Bardin,1977).

3.3. Socio-demographic attributes of tourist satisfaction

Various studies demonstrated that the satisfaction level of tourists may vary across different socio-demographic and visitation characteristics, such as: age, occupation, lifestyle, geographical origin, and trip purpose (Reisinger & Turner, 1997; Cho, 1998; Crotts & Erdmann, 2000; Master & Prideaux, 2000; Yu & Goulden, 2006; Fuller & Matzler, 2008; Ghanbri et al. 2019). The effect of age on the level of satisfaction of tourists in Montenegro revealed that age had no significant effect on the satisfaction level of tourists (Perovick et al. 2012; Saayman & Saayman, 2009). But it was found that older people with higher education experienced more satisfaction during their trip (Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006; Jang, 2007; Barros et al., 2008; Jönsson & Devonish, 2008). A study done in New Zealand showed that middle aged tourists (31 to 49 years) perceived more satisfaction with attractions and activities compared to that of younger tourists (Mohsin, 2008). Gender also plays an important role in tourists' overall satisfaction (Banyai, 2012; Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006; Zainli & Goujali, 2015). It was found that female travellers perceived more satisfaction with natural attractions like beaches (McGehee et al. 1996, Mohisn, 2008). Other study found that mainland Chinese male tourists (Qu & Li, 1997) and Turkish tourists (Ozturk & Hancer, 2009) were most satisfied than their female counterparts during their trip. In the case of marital status of tourists, some studies highlighted that it has a significant role in satisfying the tourists (Chen, 2006). Married couples with children were found to be more satisfied than childless couples at Marbella in the Southern Spain (Arrebola,

2006). However, other studies revealed that there were no significant associations in tourist satisfaction between single and married tourists (Hwang, 2013; Rafael & Almeida, 2017; Ghanbri et al. 2019).

There are several studies in the areas of tourism indicated that there is no significant different in overall satisfaction in terms of geographical origin (Calantone et al. 1989; Yu & Goulden, 2006), whereas, another study indicated a positive relationship between visitors' satisfaction and geographical origin (Spinks et al., 2005, Salim & Mohamed, 2014). It is interesting to note that there is a significant difference in the level of expectations and satisfaction of tourists based on their level of education (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Mellina & Aballe, 2013). Level of education can differentiate between two groups of tourists (very satisfied and less satisfied) (Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006). Previous studies found that satisfaction level with destination attractiveness was higher among well-educated tourists (Mohisn, 2008; Chen et al. 2009; Salim & Mohamed, 2014; Woyo et al. 2019).

In terms of occupation, it has significant influence on tourist satisfaction (Chen & Kerstetter, 1999; Master & Prideaux, 2000; Lin, 2006; Wu, 2008; Song & Cheung, 2010). Satisfaction level on service quality was not high among the students and self-employed (Master & Prideaux, 2000). Significant difference was found between family income and the level of satisfaction of tourists (Shahrivr, 2012). Tourists with higher income level had higher expectations during their trip (Salim & Mohamed, 2014; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). Previous study revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the income level and the level of satisfaction in Montengro (Perovic et al. 2012) as well as in Panama Canal Watershed (Weiler & Ham, 2004).

3.4. Visitation attributes of tourist satisfaction

Repeat visitors of a specific tourist site indicate the destination attractiveness as well as reveal that previous experiences lead to increase in their satisfaction level (Geva & Goldman, 1991; Pearce & Moscardo, 1998; Yuksel, 2001; Tian-Cole et al. 2002; Valduga, 2019). Repeated visitors felt slightly more satisfied compared to the first timers in the context of cruise tourist passenger (Petrick 2004;

Petrick, 2006; Ramukumba, 2018; Seetanah et al. 2020; Showket et al. 2021), alpine ski resort tourists (Matzler et al. 2008), and tourists at the Sarein Hot Spring in Iran (Shavanddasht & Allan, 2018). Distance from residence to destination also influences the satisfaction level of tourists positively and negatively (Harrison-Hill, 2000; Mokhtarian & Solomon, 2001; Nicolau, 2008; Armario, 2008). Travel distance affects the various dimensions of tourist behaviour such as trip frequency, destination choice, mode choice and trip or tour complexity (Iacono et al. 2010; Hwang et al. 2013) and usually influences trip expenditure (Hwang et al. 2006). Tourists generally associate greater geographical distances and longer trips (Bornhorstet al. 2010); because longer distance increases the degree of disruption in daily routine as well as more distance destinations contributes to the tourist interest in engaging various recreational activities, which will then affect their level of satisfaction (Armario, 2008). Travel party composition affects the leisure behaviour and satisfaction level of tourists during their trip (Woodside & Dubelarr, 2002; Knox & Walker, 2003; Pearce, 2005). Satisfied tourists generally depend on their positive experiences of their travel group (Cheng, 2017). Young people prefer trips with their close friends as they share more entertainments behaviour during leisure time (Huebner & Mancini, 2003; So Siu-Ian & Lehta, 2007), whereas tourists with their family members can't share same travel interests (Crompton, 1981). Couples spend more time for their trip planning as well as stay more time at tourist destinations than friends and colleagues (Knox & Walker, 2003).

Length of stay is an important tourist demand variable (Uysal & McDonald, 1989). It depends on multiple determinants which are associated with tourism destination (Barros et al. 2008; Menezes et al. 2008; Barros & Machado, 2010). Moreover, length of stay was estimated by previous scholars' using various models such as traditional demand model (Crouch, 1994), survival model (Hong & Jang, 2005), Cox & Weibull model (Gokovali et al. 2006). These models demonstrated that length of stay affects tourists' overall spending and level of satisfaction (Davies & Mangan, 1992). A study in Azores found that a tourist with higher education was associated with shorter expected stays (Menezes et al. 2008). Mode of transport use is another attribute for tourists' satisfaction and it depends on time, speed, comfort, cost, flexibility and availability

and all these provides consumer satisfaction as well as travel experience to tourists (Shahrin et al. 2014). The use of public transport system has various socio-emotional and environmental benefits (Litman, 2007; Litman, 2011; Guiver et al. 2007) and also adds to the total tourist experience (Duval, 2007). The availability and suitability of public travel system enhances the tourists' perceived attractiveness of a destination (Parahoo et al. 2017). Public transport, especially rail travel system was believed to enhance the overall satisfaction compared to road travel (Becker & George, 2011). Public transport (mainly buses) in the rural areas of United Kingdom generally received relatively high satisfaction levels (Guiver et al. 2007).

Accommodation is a vital part of tourism product and also an important attribute to the level of satisfaction (Barsky, 1992; Danaher & Arweiler, 1996; Andaleeb & Rohipour, 2006). Level of expectation of the tourists' increases simultaneously with the level of hotel rates (Sammy, 2016). Tourists who preferred budget hotels may only expect minimum product and services (Hua et al. 2009). This type of hotel provides their service with the zone of tolerance between desired and adequate level of services (Sammy, 2016). Log logistics and Cox Survival Models showed that there was a statistically significant relationship between types of accommodation choice and level of satisfaction in the context of Spain (Martinez-Garcia & Raya, 2008). Another study also found that affective-cognitive approach demonstrated the significant relationship between tourists' event experience and their satisfaction about event setting in the hotel (Boo & Bosser, 2018). Expenditure is an important measure of individual's demand for tourism because the tourists spend their money on a variety of commodities during their trip (Wang & Davidson, 2010). But the relationship between level of tourist satisfaction and expenditure has rarely been explored in the previous studies (Zhang et al. 2010). Very few studies have found that level of satisfaction is a significant predictor of expenditure in the context of accommodation sector (Kim & Cha, 2002), festival and events (Kim et al. 2010), theme park (Bigne et al. 2005), and exhibition (Zhang et al. 2010).

The above literatures related to various aspects of tourist satisfaction have demonstrated the existence of association between socio-demographic, visitation characteristics and satisfaction level of tourists' in a specific tourism destination with a certain degree of similarity between them. Satisfaction level has strong linkages to tourist activities and on-site experiences. Information regarding the satisfaction level of tourists' are very useful to policy makers in formulating better policy and planning in the areas of tourism marketing, management and product development in a sustainable way. As this is a relatively untouched area, it will add to the existing literature relevant information regarding tourist satisfaction which will help in formulating time-space specific tourism policies by taking into account tourist perspectives. Studies on tourist satisfaction and motivation still remain to be investigated to a great extent. Hence, present study is an attempt to fill up this gap.

4. Hypothesis

Following hypothesis have been formulated on the basis of literature review:

H_1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample tourists influence the levels of tourists' satisfaction.

H_2: Sample tourists from the study area experienced different levels of satisfaction based on their visitation characteristics.

5. Database & Methodology

5.1. Sources of data

This study is based on primary data, collected through interview method following a structured and validated questionnaire. The interviews were conducted during the period from March 2017 to October 2018. All respondents were informed about the purpose of research as well as the identity of researchers.

5.2. Selection of study area

To fulfil the objective of this study, three well known sub-tropical coastal tourism geosites, viz. Digha, Shankarpur and Mandarmoni

under the administrative area of Digha-Shankarpur Development Authority (DSDA) of Purba Medinipur district in the state of West Bengal have been selected as the dominance of coastal tourism activities are maximum in these areas. Coastal areas of Digha, Shankarpur and Mandarmoni are the part of Contai (Kanthi) coastal plain which is covered by tertiary alluvium deposits and the sea front is dominated by marine and sub-aerial-fluviatile sediments. Geologically this area is a natural museum of many outstanding morphological features like virgin sandy beaches, beach berms, offshore bars, runnels, beach ridges along with tidal basins, natural levees, salt marshes, undulating older and younger coastal sand dunes as well as estuary of Champa River (Digha Mohona) etc. From the geographical point of view this area is identified as an eco-sensitive, fragile and dynamic zone that is composed by saltmarsh ecosystem and casuarina groves along with fishing harbours (locally known as Khuti). In addition, a variety of man-made tourism infrastructures like marine aquarium, amusement parks, toy train, light house, science centre, shopping complex etc. make this site even more attractive to tourists. The study area is also famous for its outstanding conch shell handicrafts, jute handlooms and varieties of cashew nut products. All these interrelated components of the study sites have enriched its aesthetic beauty as well as make this area an exceptional site of coastal geoheritage in the state. Historically British ruler started development of Digha ('Brighton of the East' – as noted by Governor General W. Hastings in the British Period) as a tourist spot in 1770s, but its actual development related to tourism was started in 1980s. At present, efforts are being made for the overall development of the study sites through Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) project with the support of the World Bank. Today this area is one of the most famous and attractive coastal geoheritage sites in the state of West Bengal, India.

Fig. 1: Location of the Study Area.
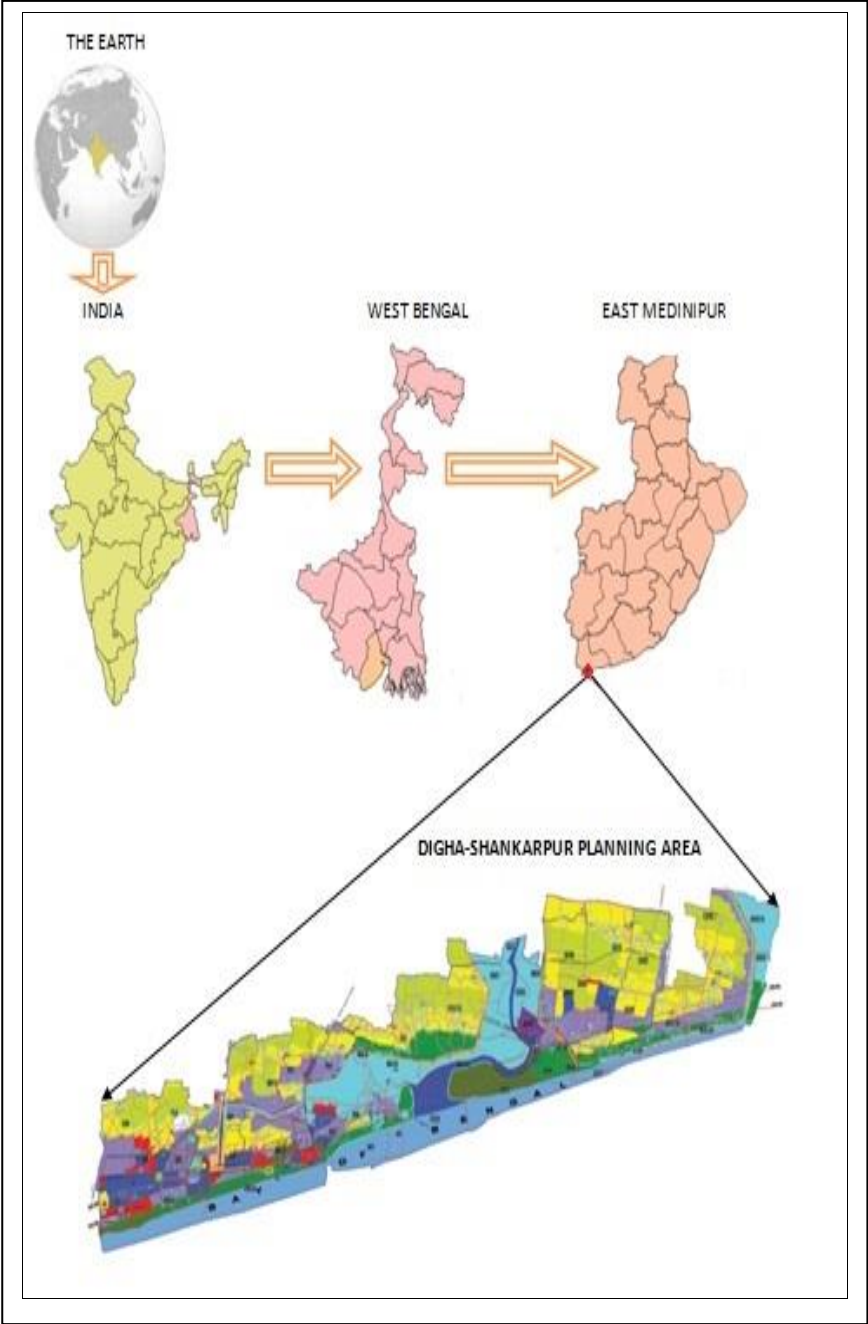
Source: Baitalik, 2019

Fig. 2: Some Images of the Study Area.

Digha Beach

Beach with Coastal Sand Dunes

Subarnarekha Estuary near Digha

Concrete Embankment of Digha

Recreational Facilities at Digha Beach

Beach Vendors at Udaypur (near Digha)

Source: Photo clicked by the authors

5.3. Selection of samples

The information related to demographic, socio-economic, visitation characteristics of the sample tourists have been collected through in depth interview. Only domestic tourists have been considered in the present study as they are the dominant part of local tourism development in the study area. Altogether 300 numbers of domestic tourists were interviewed by selecting them randomly from the entire study area. Only one respondent from each tourist group was considered for interview. Tourists below the age of 18 were not considered for interview.

5.4. Measurements & Analytical Tools

Simple statistical tools like descriptive statistics, regression coefficient, ANOVA etc. have been used for the analysis of primary data. The interview schedule consisted of three parts. The first part included the social-demographic characteristics (i.e. age, sex, marital status, religion, education, occupation, household income etc.) of the tourists. The second part was designed to explore the visitation profile (i.e. frequency of visit, distance from home, purpose of visit, accompanying person, length of stay, mode of transport, demand for accommodation, and per-capita expenditure etc.) of the tourists. The third part consisted of the levels of satisfaction of tourists visiting geosites within the study area. To assess the satisfaction level of tourists towards existing services in the study area, the four point Likert scale was used. The four point Likert scale considered here are: (1) poor, (2) average, (3) good, and (4) excellent. Opinions expressed by the sample tourists, satisfaction index for each of the required and desired services have been calculated by using the following formula:

$$SI_i = \frac{\sum(M_i \cdot N_i)}{N}$$

Where,

SI_i denotes the Satisfaction Index for the ith factor,

M_i denotes the numerical values for particular level of satisfaction for the ith factor,

N_i denotes the number of respondents deriving the particular level of satisfaction for the ith factor, and

N denotes the total number of respondents for that factor for all level of satisfaction.

6. Empirical Results & Discussion

6.1. Characteristics of the sample tourists in the study area

6.1.1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample tourists

Table 1 shows that the percentage share of male tourists (61.33%) was almost double that of the female tourists (38.67%). Maximum of the sample tourists were in the age group of 31 to 40 years (37.33%) and of 21 to 30 years (37.33%). Among the sample tourists, 71.33% and 28.67% were married and unmarried, respectively. About 90% of the sample tourists were Hindus, 6% Muslim and other communities' account for only 4%.

From the Table 1, it can be seen that majority of the sample tourists came from the semi-urban areas (46.67%) followed by urban (39.33%) and rural areas (14%). Most of the sample tourists were graduates (38.66%). 28.67% of the tourists had a pre-degree level education while only 1.67% had 8th standard education. 25.33% of the sample tourists were Govt. Employees followed by self-employed (22.67%), professionals (16.67%), businessman (13.33%), students (12.67%), agriculturalists (8.00%) and retired persons, who accounted for 1.33% of the sample tourists. Most of the sample tourists had a monthly family income range of Rs. 25001-30000 (37.3%) followed by range of Rs. 30001-35000 (21.3%) and very few had a monthly family income of Rs. 40000 and above (4.7%).

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample tourists in the study area

Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics		No. and Percentage of the Sample Tourists		Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics				No. and Percentage of the Sample Tourists	
		No.	%					No.	%
Gender	Male	18	61.3	Educationa	Up	to	8th	5	1.67

		4	3	l Level	Standard		
	Female	116	38.67		10th Standard	21	7.00
	Total	300	100		Pre Degree (12th)	86	28.67
Age Group (Years)	Up to 20	6	2.00		Graduation	116	38.66
	21 – 30	112	37.33		Post-Graduation and Above	72	24.00
	31 – 40	116	38.67		Total	300	100.0
	41 – 50	34	11.33		Student	38	12.67
	51 - 60	26	8.67		Govt. Employee	76	25.33
	Above 60	6	2.00		Business	40	13.33
	Total	300	100	Occupational Status	Agriculture	24	8.00
Marital Status	Married	214	71.33		Professional	50	16.67
	Unmarried	86	28.67		Retired Person	4	1.33
	Total	300	100		Others (Self Employed/House wife)	68	22.67
Religion	Hindu	270	90.0		Total	300	100.0
	Muslim	18	6.0		Up to 15000	18	6.0
	Others	12	4.0		15001-20000	16	5.3
	Total	300	100.0		20001-25000	54	18.0
Rural-Urban Background	Urban	118	39.33		25001-30000	112	37.3
	Semi-Urban	140	46.67	Household Income (Rs.)/Month	30001-35000	64	21.3
	Rural	42	14.00		35001-40000	22	7.3
	Total	300	100.0		Above 40000	14	4.7
					Total	300	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

6.1.2. Visitation characteristics of the sample tourists

Table 2 clearly shows that majority of the sample tourists came from Zone-4 (46.67%), which covers the capital city of Kolkata and adjoining areas.

Table 2: Classification of the Sample Tourists According to their Zone of Origin

Zone	Distance (Km.)	Area of Residence/Origin of the Sample Tourists	No. of the Sample Tourists	Percentage of the Sample Tourists (%)
1	Up to 50	Egra, Contai, Paniparul, Depaul, Boga, Haria, Tangra, Demuria	36	12.00
2	51 – 100	Bajkul, Medinipur, Belda, Kharagpur, Tamluk	30	10.00
3	101 – 150	Amta, Bagnan, Haldia, Kolaghat, Kulpi, Moyna, Uliiberia, Panagarh	40	13.33
4	151 – 200	Howrah, Hoogly, Baguihati, Jadavpur, Dum Dum, Barasat, Kolkata, Taratala, Batanagar, Baranagar, Kachrapara, Habaria, Birati, Belgharia	140	46.67
5	201 - 250	Bandal, Burdwan, Naihati, Memari	24	8.00
6	Above 250	Bolpur, Malda, Berhampur, Dhupguri, Rampurhat, Balanjir, Bihar	30	10.00
	Total		300	100

Source: Field Survey, 2017-18

Table 3 revealed that 14% of the sample tourists reported that it was their first visit, and the remaining 86% reported that they had visited the site earlier. Majority of the sample tourists came for holiday, leisure and recreational purpose (80%) followed by educational purpose (6.67%). Majority of the sample tourists were accompanied by their family members (66%) followed by colleagues (13.33%), friends/lovers (10.67%). Majority of the sample tourists came with the group of 4 members or less (53.33%) followed by the group of 5-8 members (32.67%). Duration of stay of the sample tourists' was short. 67.33% stayed for '1 night 2 days', 20.67% stayed for 2 nights and 3 days , 10.67% of the sample tourists were day trippers. Only 1.33% of the sample tourists stayed for more than 3 nights and 4 days. Majority of the sample tourists

managed their tour by themselves (88%). Bus services (40.67%) were the main mode of transport used by the sample tourists to reach the sample tourist sites followed by rental car (23.33%), both bus & train services (21.33%), only train (9.33%) and private cars (5.33%).

About 71.86% of the sample tourists (overnight visitors) stayed in hotels, 12.59% stayed in the holiday homes and only 2.96% stayed in youth hostels. About 12.59% of the sample tourists (overnight visitors) found accommodation in the house of their friends or relatives. Majority of the sample tourists (overnight visitors) preferred for medium budget accommodation (59.26%) followed by low budget (24.44%) and high budget/luxury (16.30%) accommodation. Majority of the sample tourists' had per capita expenditure range of Rs. 1001-1500 (36.3%) followed by range of Rs. 2001-2500 (25.0%) and Rs. 1000 or less (17.3%). Only 4.3% of the sample tourists spent more than Rs. 3000/Person during their whole trip.

Table 3: Visitation characteristics of the sample tourists in the study area

Visitation Characteristics		No. and Percentage of the Sample Tourists		Visitation Characteristics			
		No.	%				
Frequency of Visit	First Time	42	14.00	Length of Stay	1day (Day Trippers)	32	10.67
	Twice	122	40.66		1 night 2 days	202	67.33
	Three Times	72	24.00		2 nights 3 days	62	20.67
	Four Times	32	10.67		3 nights 4 days or more	4	1.33
	Five Times or More	32	10.67		Total	300	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	Arrangement of Trip	Independent	264	88.00
Distance from Residence	Up to 50	36	12.00		Friends/Colleagues	26	8.67
	51 – 100	30	10.		Agents	4	1.3

(Km.)			00				3
	101 – 150	40	13.33		On a Package	6	2.00
	151 – 200	140	46.67		Total	300	100.0
	201 - 250	24	8.00		By Train	28	9.33
	Above 250	30	10.00		By Bus	122	40.67
	Total	300	100		Both Train and Bus	64	21.33
Purpose of Visit	Holiday, Leisure, Recreation	240	80.00	Mode of Transport	Private Car	16	5.33
	Religious/Pilgr images	6	2.00		Rental Car	70	23.33
	Education/Fiel d Excursion	20	6.67		Total	300	100.0
	Health/Medica l Care	2	0.67		Hotel	194	64.7
	Business	12	4.00		Holiday Home	34	11.3
	Official Meeting/Confe rence	6	2.00	Demand for Accommo dation (Types)	Youth Hostel	8	2.7
	Scientific/Acad emic Research	2	0.67		Friend's House	34	11.3
	For Professional Training	12	4.00		Day Trippers Halt**	30	10.0
Accompa nying Persons	Total	300	100.0		Total	300	100.0
	Family	198	66.00		Luxury	10	3.3
	Friends/Lover	32	10.67	Demand for Accommo dation (Budget)*	Medium	150	50.0
	Colleagues	40	13.33		Low	76	25.3
	In a Group	28	9.33		Others (Day Trippers Halt**/Frien d's House)	64	21.3
	Alone	2	0.67		Total	300	100.0

	Total	300	100.0		Up to 1000	52	17.3
Members in a Group	Up to 4	160	53.33	Per Capita Expenditure (Rs.)	1001-1500	109	36.3
	5 – 8	98	32.67		1501-2000	75	25.0
	9 - 12	30	10.00		2001-2500	30	10.0
	Above 12	12	4.00		2501-3000	21	7.0
	Total	300	100.0		Above 3000	13	4.3
					Total	300	100.0

*Demand for Accommodation (Budget): [1]Luxury (Above Rs. 1200/Room/Day); [2]Medium Budget (Rs. 601-1200/Room/Day); [3]Low Budget (Up to Rs. 600/Room/Day)

**Tourist who goes on a journey for pleasure that is completed in one day

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

6.1.3 Satisfaction level expressed by the sample tourists

In order to attract tourists at a specific tourism destination, it is very important to ensure availability of the required and desired services to the tourists and that too up to their level of satisfaction. The required and desired services of the tourists coming to this tourist area are as follows: i) State of the Beach and Dyke, ii) Transportation Service, iii) Food and Beverages, iv) Accommodation Service, v) Cleanliness, vi) General Price Level, vii) Information Regarding Tourism Sites, viii) Market Facilities, ix) Sanitation and Drinking Water Facilities, x) Health/Medical Facilities, xi) Safety and Security.

Required and desired service-wise levels of satisfaction of the sample tourists from Digha coastal area are given in Table 4.

Table 4: Required and desired service-wise level of satisfaction expressed by the sample tourists at Digha coastal area

Sl. No.	Satisfaction Factor	No. and Percentage of the Sample Tourists								Mean	Standard Deviation
		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		

1	State of the Beach and Dyke	0	0.0	0	0.0	42	42.0	58	58.0	3.5800	.49604
2	Transportation Services	0	0.0	20	20.0	54	54.0	26	26.0	3.0600	.67898
3	Food and Beverages	0	0.0	40	40.0	36	36.0	24	24.0	2.8400	.78779
4	Accommodation	0	0.0	60	60.0	40	40.0	0	0.0	2.4000	.49237
5	Cleanliness	0	0.0	42	42.0	50	50.0	8	8.0	2.6600	.62312
6	General Price Level	0	0.0	70	0.0	24	0.0	6	0.0	2.2400	.42923
7	Information Regarding Tourism Sites	2	2.0	58	58.0	34	34.0	6	6.0	2.4400	.64071
8	Market Facilities	0	0.0	64	64.0	32	32.0	4	4.0	2.2400	.56854
9	Sanitation and Drinking Water Facilities	32	32.0	36	36.0	32	32.0	0	0.0	2.0000	.80408
10	Health/Medical Facilities	20	20.0	50	50.0	30	30.0	0	0.0	1.9800	.61922
11	Safety and Security	0	0.0	56	0.0	44	44.0	0	0.0	2.4400	.49889

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

Required and desired service-wise levels of satisfaction of the sample tourists from Shankarpur coastal area are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Required and desired service-wise level of satisfaction expressed by the sample tourists at Shankarpur coastal area

Sl. No.	Satisfaction Factors	No. and Percentage of the Sample Tourists								Mean	Standard Deviation
		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1	State of the Beach and Dyke	0	0.0	0	0.0	68	68.0	32	32.0	3.3200	.46883

2	Transportation Services	0	0.0	12	12.0	70	70.0	18	18.0	3.0600	.54717
3	Food and Beverages	0	0.0	40	40.0	38	38.0	22	22.0	2.8200	.77041
4	Accommodation	0	0.0	50	50.0	42	42.0	8	8.0	2.5800	.63850
5	Cleanliness	0	0.0	36	36.0	52	52.0	12	12.0	2.7600	.65320
6	General Price Level	2	2.0	72	72.0	22	22.0	4	4.0	2.5400	.73057
7	Information Regarding Tourism Sites	2	2.0	58	58.0	36	36.0	4	4.0	2.4200	.60603
8	Market Facilities	0	0.0	68	68.0	32	32.0	0	0.0	2.3200	.46883
9	Sanitation and Drinking Water Facilities	66	66.0	30	30.0	4	4.0	0	0.0	1.3800	.56461
10	Health/Medical Facilities	16	16.0	84	84.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1.9000	.46057
11	Safety and Security	52	52.0	48	48.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1.4800	.50212

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

Required and desired service-wise levels of satisfaction of the sample tourists from Mandarmoni coastal area are given in Table 6.

Table 6: Required and desired service-wise level of satisfaction expressed by the sample tourists at Mandarmoni coastal area

Sl. No.	Satisfaction Factors	No. and Percentage of the Sample Tourists								Mean	Standard Deviation
		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1	State of the Beach and Dyke	0	0.0	0	0.0	50	50.0	50	50.0	3.5000	.50252
2	Transportation Services	0	0.0	34	34.0	62	62.0	4	4.0	2.7000	.54123
3	Food and	0	0.0	52	52.	40	40.	8	8.0	2.56	.64071

					0		0			00	
	Beverages				0		0			00	
4	Accommodation	0	0.0	66	66.0	34	34.0	0	0.0	2.3400	.47610
5	Cleanliness	0	0.0	50	50.0	50	50.0	0	0.0	2.5000	.50252
6	General Price Level	0	0.0	72	72.0	24	24.0	4	4.0	2.1800	.43531
7	Information Regarding Tourism Sites	4	4.0	62	62.0	34	34.0	0	0.0	2.3000	.54123
8	Market Facilities	0	0.0	72	72.0	28	28.0	0	0.0	2.2800	.45126
9	Sanitation and Drinking Water Facilities	72	72.0	16	16.0	12	12.0	0	0.0	1.4000	.69613
10	Health/Medical Facilities	26	26.0	74	74.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1.8000	.53182
11	Safety and Security	29	29.0	55	55.0	16	16.0	0	0.0	1.8700	.66142

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

Required and desired service-wise levels of satisfaction of the sample tourists from the entire study area are given in Table 7.

Table 7: Required and desired service-wise level of satisfaction expressed by the sample tourists from the entire study area

Sl. No.	Satisfaction Factors	No. and Percentage of the Sample Tourists								Mean	Standard Deviation
		Poor		Average		Good		Excellent			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1	State of the Beach and Dyke	0	0.0	0	0.0	160	53.3	140	46.7	3.4667	.49972
2	Transportation Services	0	0.0	66	22.0	186	62.0	48	16.0	2.9400	.61454
3	Food and Beverages	0	0.0	132	44.0	114	38.0	54	18.0	2.7400	.74448
4	Accommodation	0	0.0	176	58.7	116	38.7	8	2.7	2.4400	.54839
5	Cleanliness	0	0.0	12	42.	15	50.	20	6.7	2.640	.60411

				8	7	2	7			0	
6	General Price Level	2	0.7	214	71.3	70	23.3	14	4.7	2.3200	.57040
7	Information Regarding Tourism Sites	8	2.7	178	59.3	104	34.7	10	3.3	2.3867	.59862
8	Market Facilities	0	0.0	204	68.0	92	30.7	4	1.3	2.3333	.49972
9	Sanitation and Drinking Water Facilities	170	56.7	82	27.3	48	16.0	0	0.0	1.5933	.75044
10	Health/Medical Facilities	62	20.7	208	69.3	30	10.0	0	0.0	1.8933	.54431
11	Safety and Security	81	27.0	159	53.0	60	20.0	0	0.0	1.9300	.68312

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

6.1.4. Satisfaction Index

Required and desired service-wise satisfaction index with ranks is given in Table 8. Opinions of the sample tourists regarding level of satisfaction and measured item of the satisfaction index reveals that the sample tourists felt that they received maximum satisfaction from the scenic beauty of the tourism spots in the study area. As per calculated values of the index of satisfaction level from different required and desired services, transport service was 2nd best, food and beverages 3rd best, cleanliness 4th and accommodation service 5th best. Calculated indices also show that the satisfaction levels of the sample tourists were least from sanitation & drinking water, health facilities, and safety-securities. These findings are very important for making policies for developments of tourism in the study area.

Table 8: Factor-wise Satisfaction Index (SI) with ranks

Sl. No.	Satisfaction Factors	Digha		Shankarpur		Mandarmoni		Overall in the Study Area	
		Satisfaction Index	Rank	Satisfaction Index	Rank	Satisfaction Index	Rank	Satisfaction Index	Rank
1	State of the Beach and	3.58	1	3.32	1	3.50	1	3.47	1

	Dyke								
2	Transportation Services	3.26	2	3.06	2	2.70	2	2.94	2
3	Food and Beverages	2.84	3	2.82	3	2.56	3	2.74	3
4	Accommodation	2.40	6	2.58	5	2.34	5	2.44	5
5	Cleanliness	2.66	4	2.76	4	2.50	4	2.64	4
6	General Price Level	2.36	7	2.28	8	2.32	6	2.32	8
7	Information Regarding Tourism Sites	2.44	5	2.42	6	2.30	7	2.39	6
8	Market Facilities	2.24	8	2.32	7	2.28	8	2.33	7
9	Sanitation and Drinking Water Facilities	2.00	10	1.38	11	1.40	11	1.60	11
10	Health Facilities	2.10	9	1.84	9	1.74	10	1.87	10
11	Safety and Security	2.44	5	1.48	10	1.87	9	1.93	9

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

6.1.5. Effects of various socio-demographic and visitation characteristics of the sample tourists on their total satisfaction

The effects of various socio-demographic variables on the total satisfaction of the sample tourists have been estimated by a simple linear regression model which is as follows:

$TS_i = \alpha + \beta_1 A_i + \beta_2 G_i + \beta_3 M_i + \beta_4 RU_i + \beta_5 E_i + \beta_6 O_i + \beta_7 FI_i + \beta_8 FV_i + \beta_9 TD_i + \beta_{10} PV_i + \beta_{11} AP_i + \beta_{12} MG_i + \beta_{13} LS_i + \beta_{14} LS_i + \beta_{15} AT_i + \beta_{16} MT_i + \beta_{17} AT_i + \beta_{18} AB_i + \beta_{18} PCE_i + \varepsilon$..... (1)

Where,

TS_i = Total satisfaction of the ith respondent; A_i = Age of the ith respondent (in years); G_i = Gender of the ith respondent (1=Male and 0=Female); M_i = Marital status of the ith respondent (1=Married and 0=Otherwise); RU_i = Rural-urban background of the ith respondent (1=Urban and 0=Otherwise); E_i = Educational level of the ith respondent (1=Graduate and 0=Otherwise); O_i = Occupation of the ith respondent (1=Public sector employees and 0=Otherwise); FI_i = Monthly family income of the ith respondent (in Indian Rupees); FV_i= Frequency of visit of the ith respondent (1=Repeated visitor and 0=First time visit); TD_i = Travel Distance of the ith respondent (in Kilometres); PV_i= Purpose of visit of the ith respondent (1=Recreation and 0=Otherwise); AP_i= Accompanying persons of the ith respondent (1=Family and 0=Otherwise); MG_i= Members in a group of the ith respondent (in number); LS_i = Length of stay by the ith respondent (1=Overnight stay and 0=Day trippers); AT_i = Arrangement of trip of the ith respondent (1=Self independently and 0=Otherwise); MT_i = Mode of transport used by the ith respondent (1 = Public transport and 0=Otherwise); AT_i = Accommodation types used by the ith respondent (1=Hotel and 0=Otherwise); AB_i = Accommodation budget spent by the ith respondent (1=Medium and 0=Otherwise); PCE_i = Per-capita expenditure of the ith respondent (in Indian Rupees); β = Slope; ε = Random error term with spherical classical linear regression properties.

Table 9 presents the regression results of Equation 1, which indicate that marital status, household income, travel distance, and accommodation budget have had a positive and statistically significant correlation with the satisfaction level of sample tourists. However, there was a significant negative association between per capita expenditure and tourists' satisfaction.

Table 9: Effects of socio-demographic and visitation characteristics of the sample tourists on their total satisfaction

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	25.870	1.379		18.762	.000

Age in years	-.006	.020	-.023	-.319	.750
Gender	-1.294	.375	-.202	-3.448	.001
Marital status	.685	.520	.099	1.318	.189
Rural-urban background	-.976	.370	-.153	-2.639	.009
Educational level	.314	.401	.049	.784	.434
Occupational status	.114	.537	.016	.212	.833
Household income per month	.000	.000	.566	5.602	.000
Frequency of visit	-.606	.468	-.067	-1.295	.196
Travel distance in Km.	.004	.001	.170	2.958	.003
Purpose of visit	-.477	.420	-.065	-1.135	.257
Accompanying persons	-.273	.494	-.041	-.552	.582
Members in a group in Nos.	-.190	.070	-.185	-2.707	.007
Length of stay	1.594	.793	.157	2.010	.045
Arrangement of trip	-1.344	.554	-.140	-2.425	.016
Mode of transports	-.578	.501	-.084	-1.154	.249
Accommodation type	-.110	.505	-.017	-.218	.828
Accommodation budget	1.219	.409	.195	2.984	.003
Per capita expenditure in INR	-.003	.000	-.709	-7.136	.000

R=.583, R²=.340, F=8.046

a. Dependent Variable: Total satisfaction of tourist

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018 (Processed by SPSS)

6.1.6. Effects of the sample tourists' socio-demographic and visitation characteristics on the required and desired service-wise satisfaction factors in the study area

Table 10 shows the ANOVA results regarding the effects of various socio-demographic characteristics of the sample tourists on the required and desired service-wise satisfaction factors of the study area. Results reveal that age, geographical origin (i.e. rural-urban background), occupation, education and monthly income have had significant effects in explaining various satisfaction factors such as

transportation, food and beverage, accommodation, cleanliness, general price level, and market facilities etc. Gender, marital status and religion of the sample tourists had no significant association with the satisfaction factors of the study area.

Table 11 shows the ANOVA results regarding the effects of visitation characteristics of the sample tourists on the required and desired service-wise satisfaction factors in the study area. Further analysis of the results shows that travel distance, members in a group and accommodation budget have had a significant positive association with the tourists' satisfaction.

Table 10: ANOVA results of main effects of tourists' socio-demographic characteristics on the required and desired service-wise satisfaction factors.

Satisfaction Factors	Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Tourists															
	Age		Gender		Marital Status		Religion		Rural-Urban Background		Education		Occupation		Family Income (Rs.)/Month	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
State of the Beach & Dyke	1.840	.105	5.874	.016	2.256	.134	.038	.846	1.195	.304	3.250	.022	3.194	.005	2.767	.012
Transportation Service	1.820	.109	.040	.841	.347	.556	8.029	.005	5.256	.006	5.182	.002	2.460	.025	4.364	.000
Food & Beverages	10.218	.000	3.785	.053	.389	.533	.765	.382	4.143	.017	7.853	.000	4.040	.001	5.133	.000
Accommodation	6.717	.000	2.274	.133	5.324	.022	31.614	.000	7.048	.001	6.785	.000	5.427	.000	2.695	.015
Cleanliness	9.408	.000	.119	.730	.412	.521	.373	.542	8.293	.000	1.883	.132	5.093	.000	6.530	.000
General Price Level	30.639	.000	5.185	.023	1.529	.217	2.582	.109	10.048	.00	18.430	.00	9.448	.00	2.718	.014
Information Regarding Tourism Sites	1.862	.101	3.307	.070	5.330	.022	1.527	.218	8.230	.00	4.613	.04	2.714	.014	2.211	.042
Market Facilities	14.357	.000	.100	.752	4.968	.027	.947	.331	3.643	.027	3.235	.023	1.177	.318	3.801	.001
Sanitation & Drinking Water Facilities	2.126	.062	9.434	.002	2.369	.125	.048	.826	2.463	.087	3.397	.018	8.505	.00	1.496	.179
Health/ Medical	1.617	.155	5.176	.024	.037	.847	.863	.354	6.631	.02	3.056	.029	6.935	.00	2.343	.032

Facilities																
Safety and Security	1.758	.121	.789	.375	2.256	.134	2.863	.092	1.354	.260	.165	.920	4.292	.000	3.880	.001

Notes: all variables were measured on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Poor; 2 = Average; 3 = Good; 4 = Excellent).

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

Table 11: ANOVA results of main effects of tourists' visitation characteristics on the required and desired service-wise satisfaction factors.

Satisfaction Factors	Visitation Characteristics of the Sample Tourists																					
	Frequency of Visit		Travel Distance (Km.)		Purpose of Visit		Accompanying Persons		Members in a Group		Length of Stay		Arrangement of Trip		Mode of Transport		Demand for Accommodation (Types)		Demand for Accommodation (Budget)		Per Capita Expenditure (Rs.)	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
State of the Beach & Dyke	.312	.870	3.734	.003	1.118	.351	1.328	.260	7.018	.000	4.208	.006	5.845	.001	9.857	.000	7.475	.000	1.955	.121	3.179	.008
Transportation Service	3.149	.015	9.826	.000	3.006	.003	15.562	.000	17.539	.000	5.000	.002	4.889	.690	4.857	.001	11.208	.000	6.372	.000	5.208	.008
Food & Beverages	9.509	.000	7.439	.000	3.282	.001	3.651	.006	6.215	.000	15.476	.000	2.299	.078	2.828	.025	19.693	.000	1.460	.225	2.677	.022
Accommodation	.805	.523	8.669	.000	1.783	.083	5.236	.000	4.866	.003	5.598	.001	1.336	.263	6.298	.000	4.575	.001	6.387	.000	2.281	.047
Cleanliness	3.720	.006	4.481	.001	3.754	.000	4.690	.001	4.617	.004	1.968	.119	1.231	.299	3.197	.114	4.313	.002	1.361	.255	3.132	.009
General Price Level	10.866	.000	2.378	.039	3.246	.001	.200	.938	9.973	.000	2.241	.084	1.385	.248	10.387	.000	17.770	.000	8.854	.000	4.035	.001
Information Regarding	2.607	.036	2.944	.013	1.708	.096	3.580	.007	1.523	.209	3.110	.027	2.233	.084	4.907	.001	4.726	.001	1.926	.125	4.423	.001

Tourism Sites																						
Market Facilities	10.504	.000	3.009	.011	.929	.493	1.492	.204	3.762	.011	4.407	.005	4.226	.006	1.804	.128	7.732	.000	4.141	.007	6.695	.000
Sanitation & Drinking Water Facilities	1.660	.159	.942	.454	1.522	.149	4.669	.001	4.368	.005	2.351	.072	.562	.641	4.703	.001	3.774	.005	5.881	.001	.129	.986
Health/ Medical Facilities	1.688	.153	5.437	.000	3.985	.000	7.921	.000	10.322	.000	7.596	.000	1.755	.156	2.697	.031	9.334	.000	4.403	.005	3.379	.006
Safety & Security	2.473	.045	1.972	.083	2.235	.025	2.134	.077	.948	.418	1.297	.275	11.711	.000	12.508	.000	2.128	.077	.262	.852	2.30	.949

Notes: all variables were measured on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Poor; 2 = Average; 3 = Good; 4 = Excellent).

6.2. Discussion

This study includes an analysis of certain pull factors as antecedents to tourist satisfaction. It provides sufficient empirical evidences to accept the relationship between socio-demographic profile and satisfaction level of tourists. The findings provide a basis for concluding that various pull factors like scenic beauty of the tourist sites, transport and communication, food and beverage as well as destination cleanliness play a key role in creating satisfaction of tourists (Alcocer, et al. 2019; Ragab et al. 2019; Králiková et al. 2020). Since the dawn of civilisation, the coastal areas have attracted people and perhaps in the early days tourism developed around the coastal areas especially in the developed countries. Later on, tourism activities took root in the coastal areas of developing nations. The abundance of natural resources of the coastal region and their aesthetic beauty naturally attracts tourists.

So it can be said that, the natural beauty of the study area has a greater influence in increasing satisfaction level of the tourists (Carvlho, 2022; Dai et al. 2022).

Transport and communication systems also play an important role in the development of tourism. The study area is well-connected with different parts of the state by rail and roadways which has greatly increased the connectivity and accessibility of the study sites. Good connectivity and accessibility usually reduces travel time that helps in increasing the satisfaction level of the sample tourists (Dimou & Velissariou, 2016). The fishery sector as well as seafood products have a positive effects on the level of tourist satisfaction (Maliva et al. 2019; Qiu et al. 2021). The study area has a wide variety of marine fishes and other marine resources due to its coastal location. To be an important tourist spot in the state of West Bengal, the study area has developed as a diverse food world centred on fish and other marine resources. The cleanliness of the tourist sites is very important in increasing the mental satisfaction of the tourists because it creates a hygienic situation in the tourist site (Mehri, 2021). Regular cleanliness activities in the study area also have great influence on the level of tourist satisfaction.

Other services like general price level, healthcare and sanitation facilities, safety and security also plays important roles in the development of destination image (Tapak et al, 2019). Being a tourist site, the prices of goods and services in the study area are relatively high compare to that of the other areas of the state. Not only that, this tourist site lacks adequate facilities like healthcare, sanitation, safety and security. As a result, sample tourists are less satisfied with all these required and desired services in the study area.

Satisfaction level of the sample tourists is also explained by multiple factors. Statistical analysis of this study clearly stated that the socio-demographic and visitation behaviour of the sample tourists affects their level of satisfaction (Crotts & Erdmann, 2000; Chu & Choi, 2000; Pjero & Gjermëni, 2020). For example, people who have ample income and adequate leisure time generally love to travel to different sites and generally such tourists spend a lot of time and money during their travels which helps them to increase their satisfaction level which has been proven through this study

(Wang & Davidson, 2010). Other factors like travel distance and accommodation budget also affects the level of satisfaction. The lower the travel distance, the longer it will be possible to stay at the tourist sites. This makes it possible to enjoy the various elements of the tourist site for a longer period of time and it helps to increase tourist satisfaction (Sammy, 2016; Hua et al. 2009). The study area is dominated by various types of accommodation units of different budgets. As a result, the sample tourists of different income groups get budget hotels of their choice which has helped them to increase their satisfaction level (Martinez-Garcia & Raya, 2008).

Tourism is driven by the destination image especially in terms of scenic beauty along with transportation, accommodation, food and beverages that motivates tourists to visit tourist sites (Ryu & Kwon, 2021). As per results of this study, provisions of appropriate tourist facilities like transportation, accommodation, food and beverages, shopping places etc. should come together with natural beauty to increase satisfaction level of tourists (Alcocer, et al. 2019; Ragab et al. 2019; Králiková et al. 2020). The government of West Bengal currently sets high priority on the development of tourism sector. Effective and efficient development of tourism depends on a good plan for required and desired services. These findings could have significant implications for the policies aiming to enhance tourist satisfaction at the travel destination.

7. Concluding remarks

This study explored the required and desired service-wise satisfaction level expressed by the sample tourists with key coastal tourism destinations in the state of West Bengal in India. The association between satisfaction level and its determining factors has also been estimated by a simple regression model. The analysis on satisfaction levels demonstrated that majority of the sample tourists attributed their maximum satisfaction to scenic beauty of the tourist sites followed by transport, food & beverage, cleanliness, and accommodation facilities. But the sample tourists were least satisfied in the areas of sanitation & drinking water, health facilities, and safety-securities. Simple regression analysis and ANOVA model also demonstrated that socio-economic and visitation profiles of the sample tourists' have had a significant

association with on-site satisfaction level. Satisfaction level has strong linkages to tourist activities and on-site experiences and also reveals the quality of destination image. Continuous monitoring of the tourists' satisfaction is very much needed to assist in marketing, tourism product planning and development in a specific tourism destination as it brings benefits for key stakeholders of tourism sector. Policy-makers needs to setup an appropriate tourism management policy in order to gain more benefits from tourism as well as manage the tourist sites effectively, efficiently and sustainably in the context of local situation and needs.

8. Limitations of the study

This study was conducted only in the state of West Bengal in India and thus the result may not represent the entire nation. Sample area and sample size of the study were limited to acquire a more reliable and relevant data. Only domestic tourists were considered for data collection. Only small amount of data were available for reference due to lack of previous information on relevant topic in the study area. The findings of this study are based on expressed opinion of the sample respondents, which might have its own limitations. Therefore, further studies are very much needed to better understand tourists' satisfaction and improve their experiences with destination image and to achieve the goals of tourism development in a sustainable way. It is also suggested to consider foreign tourists in the future studies.

9. Acknowledgements

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