



**TO STUDY AND DETERMINE THE TOURIST
SATISFACTION INDEX OF MALGANGA PILGRIM STATION
IN PARNER TAHSIL, AHMEDNAGAR DISTRICT,
MAHARASHTRA**

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ABSTRACT:

In today's world, the tourism industry is the largest and most well-known economic sector. This popular industry is fast growing in many parts of the world, opening the path for more growth. The purpose of this paper is to find out what aspects influence visitor contentment and loyalty to devotees and visitors at the existing holy location. Thousands of visitors come from all across India to see this spiritual and natural landmark. In order to evaluate visitor satisfaction and identify current facilities and their level of development, field work was organized to collect tourist views, attitudes, and recommendations recorded in well-designed questionnaires, group discussion, and surrounding personal observations during the field survey. Tourists filled 110 questionnaires in total during the field survey. Using visitor responses that were transformed into arithmetical values, the satisfaction ratings of selected facilities were determined. Based on this assessment, tourist satisfaction levels were divided into four categories: unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good, and extraordinary. With an average score of 23.86 percent, this location's overall satisfaction level is satisfactory. The average of the Malganga holy site satisfaction index could be useful in future planning and development of this religious tourism attraction.

Key Words: *Tourist, Satisfaction Index, Amenities, Personal Rank*

INTRODUCTION:

Many regions rely on tourism to support their economies; nevertheless, tourist numbers in some areas are stagnating (Diane, Natalie, & Hong, 2016). Throughout history, tourism has evolved into one of the world's fastest-growing segments in the service and other sectors. If the goal is to build a well-organized tourist business, the first step should be to satisfy the needs and desires of visitors. Visitor satisfaction measurement is the most widely used approach for determining the compatibility of tourist demands and knowledge with tourism

destinations (Pileliene & Grigaliunaite, 2016). The Malganga is a promising religious and environmental tourism destination. Students, teachers, geographers, worshippers, hikers, bird watchers, botanists, and environmentalists visit this site for a variety of purposes throughout the year. The Navratri festival, the Pola festival in the Shravan month, Chaitra and Magh Shuddha Astanmi, and other major days are all observed every year. As a result, Malganga has become one of the most famous and well-known locations in the Ahmednagar district, and it requires proper planning and management in order to grow and develop sustainably.

STUDY AREA:

The Malganga religious and natural site is located in Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra, in Parner tahsil, near Nighoj village. This centre lies near the southerly limit of Malganga. This religious site is well-known in the district, and it is also known for its scenic splendor, which includes potholes, the Sahyadrian Hills, and a well-known temple. Malganga is an extremely prominent holy site, with around 70% of kuldevi worshippers in the Ahmednagar area. Malganga sits between latitudes $21^{\circ} 18' 17''$ north and longitudes $75^{\circ} 33' 32''$ east on the district's north side, along the Sahyadri mountain ranges. This Malganga religious centre is located at a height of 623 meters above sea level (MSL).

OBJECTIVE:

1. To assess the status of satisfaction levels of available facilities at Malganga Religious tourist place and their development.

DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY:

This research is solely based on primary data collected using a questionnaire during fieldwork. To gather feedback on the 14 different facilities available at the Malganga tourist area in order to determine the level of satisfaction of visitors. For this study, 110 tourists were randomly selected from Malganga tourist attractions and asked to rank and remark on the amenities on a scale of excellent, good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory. 110 questionnaires were completed on the spot during a field survey, observation, and discussion with tourists. All tourist perspectives should be converted to arithmetical criteria, such as 0 to 4 for unsatisfactory, 4 to 6 for satisfactory, 6 to 8 for good, and 8 to 10 for excellent. The satisfaction levels for each component should be calculated and recorded in a table. Factor-by-factor average values were generated and tested in order to compute factor-by-factor satisfaction levels, average satisfaction levels, factor ranking, and satisfaction index.

The following formula is used for computation of satisfaction index.

$$\text{Formula:- } st_i = \frac{\sum M_i N_i}{N}$$

Where, St_i = satisfaction index for the i^{th} factor

M_i = For the i^{th} factor, a numerical number for a specific level of satisfaction.

N_i = The number of responders who derive the i^{th} factor's specific level of satisfaction.

N = For all levels of satisfaction, the total number of responses for that factor.

As a final point ranks are given to these satisfaction index.

MALGANGA RELIGIOUS PLACE:

Table: 1. Factor wise Levels of Satisfaction

Sr. No.	Factors / Facilities	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Total Tourist
1	Parking	32	52	15	11	110
2	Accommodation	6	12	45	47	110
3	Natural Beauty	52	42	16	0	110
4	Recreation	10	15	35	50	110
5	Food and Drinking water	12	18	42	38	110
6	Shopping	6	10	38	56	110
7	Transportation	42	36	22	10	110
8	Security	22	33	36	19	110
9	Behavior of Local People	49	39	20	2	110
10	Toilet blocks	26	52	29	3	110
11	Cleanliness and Health	12	13	40	45	110
12	Guide	2	4	6	98	110
13	Mobile Network	26	31	50	3	110
14	Emergency Facilities	8	11	32	59	110
	Total Average (%)	19.81	23.90	27.66	28.64	100.00

Source: Survey by Researcher.

The above table no. 1 provides detailed information about the number of tourist facilities that are present and selected (14) for evaluations at Malganga religious tourist site, with the goal of determining the In order to determine the weighted score, the average factor-wise satisfaction level was divided into four categories: Excellent, Good, Satisfactory, and Unsatisfactory.

The degrees of satisfaction with the Malganga Religious Place were reported in table no. 1 by factor. On average, 23.90 percent of visitors felt the

facilities at this location are satisfactory. Tourists rated the experience as great in 19.81 percent of cases, satisfactory in 27.66 percent of cases, and disappointing in 28.64 percent of cases.

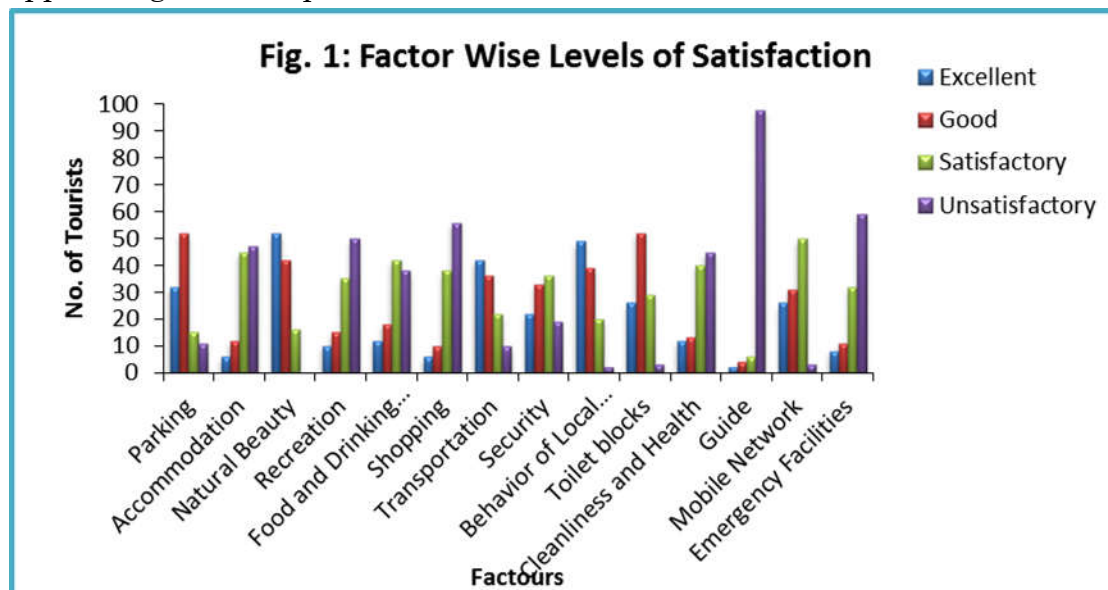


Fig. 1: Factor Wise Levels of Satisfaction

Figure 1 depicts the opinions of 110 tourists and their distribution based on the opinions of tourists who were sampled during the survey. On average, 50% of tourists said parking, natural beauty, transit, security, local people's behaviour, toilet blocks, and mobile network are good in status, while roughly 40% of visitors said natural beauty and local people's behaviour are very good. The average 50 percent tourist were expressed their views as being absolutely unpleasant, with no guide, shopping, or emergency services available at this Malganga sacred site.

Tourists have provided preferences as outstanding, good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory, as shown in Table 2 of factor-wise average degree of satisfaction. Excellent was allocated a numerical value of 8 to 10, good was assigned a numerical value of 6 to 8, satisfactory was assigned a numerical value of 4 to 6, and unsatisfactory was assigned a numerical value of 4 to 6. Natural Beauty (9.40), Mobile Network (9.35), Security (9.32), Transportation (9.21), Food and Drinking Water (9.17), and Local People's Behavior (9.10) were mentioned as the most excellent responses. Toilet blocks (9.00), Parking (8.94), Cleanliness and Health (8.75), Shopping (8.67), Emergency Facilities (8.67), Recreation (8.60), Guide (8.33) Accommodation were mentioned as the least excellent responses (8.33).

Table: 2. Factor wise Average level of Satisfaction

Sr. No.	Factors / Facilities	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
1	Parking	8.94	7.21	5.33	2.18
2	Accommodation	8.33	6.83	5.02	2.13
3	Natural Beauty	9.40	7.33	5.13	0.00
4	Recreation	8.60	7.20	5.14	2.30
5	Food and Drinking water	9.17	7.22	5.14	2.16
6	Shopping	8.67	7.3	5.26	2.25
7	Transportation	9.21	7.22	5.45	2.50
8	Security	9.32	7.09	4.89	2.26
9	Behavior of Local People	9.10	7.18	5.30	2.50
10	Toilet blocks	9.00	7.13	5.10	2.00
11	Cleanliness and Health	8.75	7.08	4.93	2.00
12	Guide	8.33	6.50	5.00	2.35
13	Mobile Network	9.35	7.03	4.90	1.33
14	Emergency Facilities	8.67	7.00	4.97	1.98

Source: Survey by Researcher.

Natural beauty (7.33) received a high response, while Guide (6.50) received a low response. Moderate responses were received for Shopping (7.30), Transportation (7.22), Food and drinking water (7.22), Parking (7.21), Recreation (7.20), Local people's behaviour (7.18), Toilet blocks (7.13), Security (7.09), Cleanliness and health (7.08), Mobile network (7.03), Emergency facilities (7.03), and Accommodation (7.03). (6.83). Maximum satisfaction, on the other hand, has been attributed to Transportation (5.45) and Guide (4.89). Transportation and local people's behaviour were both judged to be in the unsatisfactory category, with maximum lowest values of 2.50 and 2.50, respectively.

Table 3 shows the ordering of criteria as well as a satisfied index. Tourists' natural beauty ranks first with an index of 8.79, followed by the Behavior of Local People facility with an index of 8.37, Transportation with an index of 7.92, Parking with an index of 7.65, Toilet blocks with an index of 7.59, Mobile network water with an index of 7.10, Security with an index of 6.58, and Food and Drinking Water with an index of 5.38, Recreation with an index of 4.89, Cleanliness and Health with an index of 4.89. We can also conclude that satisfaction index ranges found between 3.03 and 8.79 from rank 1st to 14th.

Table: 3. Ranking of Factors and Satisfaction Index

Sr. No.	Factors / Facilities	Satisfaction Index	Personal Rank
1	Parking	7.65	04
2	Accommodation	4.58	11
3	Natural Beauty	8.79	01
4	Recreation	4.89	09
5	Food and Drinking water	5.38	08
6	Shopping	4.51	12
7	Transportation	7.92	03
8	Security	6.58	07
9	Behavior of Local People	8.37	02
10	Toilet blocks	7.59	05
11	Cleanliness and Health	4.84	10
12	Guide	3.03	14
13	Mobile Network	7.10	06
14	Emergency Facilities	4.22	13

Source: Survey by Researcher.



Personal Rank (Figure 2) the association between variables and personal rank was depicted in Figure 2. We use the about location statistic to provide points to each facility based on its ranking. Because there were greeneries, waterfalls, and dams nearby, the top rank received natural beauty, which drew people in early. Because the current location lacks guide facilities for expressing information about the area, such as how it was created, which age produced it, and other significance and potential, the last rank was changed to that of a guide. During our research, we discovered that various facilities require

improvement and long-term growth in order to attract more devotees and tourists. On this graph, you can immediately see which facilities contributed to the overall ranking. During our research, we discovered that some facilities require improvement and long-term growth in order to attract more devotees and tourists from all over the state.

CONCLUSION:

Basic facilities and accessibility are important to the success of any tourism site. Tourists and visitors flock to every tourist spot because of the importance of the amenities and the fact that they are required by law. The study location, which contains a number of tourist attractions, isn't completely safe, organized, or developed. As a result, there is a scarcity of decent amenities, which is linked to the current situation in Malganga. The 14 facilities have been divided into four categories to help understand their current state of development. Table 1 shows the average levels of satisfaction with the Malganga Religious Place, broken down by factor. 34.36 percent of visitors rank the services provided at this site as excellent. The experience was judged as excellent in 12.36 percent of instances, satisfactory in 23.86 percent of cases, and unsatisfactory in 29.43 percent of cases by tourists. The element ordering and satisfaction indexes are shown in Table 3. Tourists' Natural Beauty is ranked top with an 8.40 satisfaction index, while Guide is ranked 14th with a 2.82 satisfaction index. The whole tourism development of Malganga holy tourist location is in a poor state, according to the high potential and opinions recorded by various visitors, experts, ordinary people, and dialogue with local people. As a result, there was a chance to improve the status of vital facilities in order to ensure long-term growth.

SUGGESTIONS:

From the foregoing explanation, it is clear that Malganga religious site has a sufficient scope and large potential for tourist development. Malganga is both a religious and a natural site with great potential. The following recommendations received from a range of tourists during field work and observation, which are listed below.

1. To construct the necessary facilities for guests, the current study guide lacks an emergency facility and a guide.
2. There is a nice parking space, but due to a lack of planning and management, the same facility could not be developed adequately. If the infrastructure is fully developed, a large number of tourists will flock to the same location.
3. Transportation and communication are critical components of any tourism development, but current studies show that roads and other communication facilities are in good condition, necessitating the creation

of an ideal strategy and proper implementation in order to further the development of the area.

4. Cleanliness is one of the issues at the location; there is no waste material management system; therefore, the same facility should be established to preserve good health and a healthy atmosphere in order to attract tourists.
5. To ensure the long-term viability of a tourist destination, basic tourist facilities such as recreation, food, and drinking water, toilet blocks, transportation, and emergency facilities, as well as security, must be developed.
6. The state of basic infrastructural infrastructure is also quite low in tourist destinations, and it should be improved.
7. A guide, a mobile network, and emergency services are all very important at any tourist destination, but they are completely absent at Malganga religious tourist destination, so they should be developed to meet the needs of any tourist or visitor in order for Malganga religious tourist destination to continue to develop in the future.

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