

Academic Weekly Digest

School of Hospitality & Tourism Management



Determinants of Visitors' Loyalty to Religious Sacred Event Places

This study in the field of religious tourism intertwines motivation, shared beliefs, emotional solidarity, and memorable religious experience as antecedents of visitors' loyalty behaviour to sacred religious events places. [Dr Alector Ribeiro](#) and colleagues conducted a study during a mega religious event in India (Kumbh Mela) to examine the relationship of all these factors from both domestic and international event attendees' perspective.

Determinants of Visitors' Loyalty to Religious Sacred Event Places: A Multigroup Measurement Invariance Model

Dr Alector Ribeiro

Places hosting religious sacred events provide opportunities for visitors to find spiritual growth and also provide glimpses into the local culture, community, and hosting religious groups. This study looks at tourists' intended behavioural loyalty to a religious sacred event place as determined through motivations, shared beliefs and emotional solidarity with other visitors, and memorable religious experiences. Data was collected from both domestic and international visitors during the 2019 Kumbh Mela festival, held in Prayagraj, India. Findings indicated that the effects of shared beliefs, motivations, emotional solidarity and memorable religious experiences differed among domestic and international visitors.



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Domestic and international
visitors differ on their loyalty
to religious sacred events
places

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These findings provide practical implications for festival and destinations managers. For example, efforts made by festival organizers to further reinforce shared beliefs while on-site (i.e., through manifestations of dress, performances, rituals, teachings, and food preparations) will ultimately serve to foster memorable religious experiences, emotional solidarity with residents, and ultimately, greater festival loyalty. Festival visitors' emotional solidarity, an intangible antecedent of memorable experience, can be perceived as a more sustainable way to enhance the festival visitors' overall experience and thereby encourage greater repeat visitation and word-of-mouth shared with other potential visitors after COVID-19 pandemic when attending crowded religious events is permitted.

Further Reading:

WKamath, V., Ribeiro, M. A., Woosnam, K. M., Mallya, J., & Kamath, G. (2021). Determinants of Visitors' Loyalty to Religious Sacred Event Places: A Multigroup Measurement Invariance Model.

Journal of Travel Research.

Link: bit.ly/3s0Gk2d