



Examining the Structural Relationships among Antecedents of Tourist Satisfaction and its Behavioral Consequences: Case of Puducherry (India)

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Abstract

Tourist satisfaction is an essential tool for increasing destination competitiveness. It is also considered the most vital factor in ensuring visitors revisit the place. Puducherry union territory is one of the best tourist destinations in India, where tourism is one of the service sectors that shows an imperative dimension in the economic growth of the union territory. To get an attempt to gain a better understanding of tourists' satisfaction in Pondicherry destination, this study follows the method of a case study to examine the relationship among antecedents of tourist satisfaction and its outcomes and also to factually test the latent constructs that probably affect tourist satisfaction, which could act on tourist loyalty. The theoretical research model was evolved to support a thorough review of available conceptual and factual research in the emerging tourism-marketing field. The factual data were collected using the survey method using structured questionnaires in the union territory of Puducherry. For the analysis, a total of 271 responses were accepted. Structural Equation Modeling with the statistical tool of Smart PLS was used to analyze the data.

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The findings supported the hypothesized Tourist Satisfaction Model, showing that visitor satisfaction directly affected tourist loyalty. Both the image of the destination and the perceived quality of the destination were direct predictors of total visitor satisfaction. Overall, tourist satisfaction influenced tourist loyalty directly and beneficially. Based on the study results, theoretical and managerial implications were established and suggestions were made for future studies.

Keywords: Destination image, Destination quality, Tourist satisfaction, Tourist loyalty, Perceived value

1. Introduction

The tourism sector is one of the fundamental elements anticipated to significantly contribute to a locale's economic development. Pantouvakis (2013) expressed that the travel industry is an industry that keeps on developing, what is more, creates everywhere, and majorly affects the world economy. The travel industry goal is an item that cannot remain solitary, but is a blended result of different ascribes considered by explorers to settle on the choice to visit or return to (Framke, 2002). The beneficial visitor experience derived from the administrations, items, and different assets provided by the travel and tourism industry's goal may aid tourist maintenance and supportive word of mouth (WOM). Fulfillment, along with the movement experience, could add to the dedication of the goal. Vacationers' dependability is shown in their aim to return to prescribe the goal to other tourists. In this manner, data on tourist dependability is significant for advertisers and administrators all together to keep up the allure of a goal. Fulfillment is a significant component in keeping up long-haul associations with clients (Corte et al., 2005). Dmitrovic et al. (2009) expressed that expanding visitor fulfillment can prompt expanded income and profit for specialist organizations. In like manner, Forozia et al. (2013) demonstrated that consumer loyalty is considered the primary factor that urges the travel industry organizations to find achievement advantage in the opposition. Accordingly, perceiving and understanding satisfaction is subjective and conduct outcomes has significant ramifications for the executive's purposes. The job of consumer loyalty is very significant and is the primary consideration in

deciding the degree of tourist faithfulness. This path urges the research community to explore the components influencing visitor satisfaction. Numerous studies probe the precursors of visitor satisfaction, and its results in the wake of visiting a travel industry goal have been finished. In any case, the components shaping consumer loyalty are still bantered by analysts (Xia et al., 2009). What is more, assessment of tourist satisfaction should be estimated in numerous measurements (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Understanding the significance of consumer loyalty is perceived by specialists to increase profitability and furthermore, seriousness (Forozia et al., 2013).

Meng (2011) utilized two factors as satisfaction indicators: picture and seen esteem. Then again, Mohajerani and Miremadi (2012) utilized four factors as precursors of satisfaction: perceived quality, perceived value, Image, and buyer desires. Every one of these factors straightforwardly influences consumer loyalty. Given some exploration, it is realized that the factors of the antecedents of satisfaction are still discussed and have not discovered concurrence on the factor that decides tourist satisfaction. Parasuraman et al. (1994) discovered the importance of tourists' perceived value as a frontrunner for tourist satisfaction proved by different studies in the travel industry, which confirmed the positive connection between the tourists' perceived value and their satisfaction level (Moliner et al., 2007). A few examinations have likewise discovered that the positive connection existing between quality of tourist place, and their satisfaction level is lightly intervened by the tourists' perceived value (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Murray and Howat, 2002).

Concerning the tourist industry, satisfaction is the most important measurement amidst the recommendations for continuous sustainability of visitor's loyalty that made the tourism industry an economic terminus. In this manner, the principal result of tourist satisfaction is on the visitor loyalty level (Chi and Qu, 2008; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Many prior studies have sought to identify the characteristics that affect the pleasure of travellers. The necessity of understanding and sustaining visitor satisfaction has received much attention across many businesses. This research aims to develop the field of satisfaction research and its implications in the

tourist industry. It argues that a gap analysis should be conducted to determine which areas need improvement to increase visitor satisfaction and ensure long-term tourism sustainability. As a result, comprehending tourist expectations may improve the quality of services provided in locations, increasing visitor happiness. This research is aimed to close a gap in the literature on visitor satisfaction. The current writing shows that tourist loyalty may depend upon a volley of components that have their best place with the moving part of the tourist. This article looks to give an increasingly exhaustive understanding of the variables that essentially make up tourist satisfaction and its outcomes. By studying, the connection between essential components for the travel industry - destination improvement, the directors and executives of the travel industry association would settle on better and increasingly viable choices with more efficient utilization of assets.

2. Statement of the Problem

Puducherry union territory has great potential in the tourism industry having tourist resorts of different cultural backgrounds. The local traditions, residents' lifestyle, economic activities, and French cultural influence provide a striking appeal to tourists worldwide to visit this union territory. The industrial development in the territory is considerably slow despite its high population growth. Growth in per capita income and an improved literacy rate are required, and therefore, more employment opportunities have to be generated at this stage. Hence, better management of the tourism industry and agricultural and industrial development can increase the tourist inflow. Currently, policymakers, researchers, and economists can figure out how to increase the flow of tourists in the union territory.

Moreover, the travel arrival - the growth rate of Puducherry in the last two decades remained less than 5%, and repeat visitor numbers are insignificant. The present scenario of Puducherry tourism reveals two critical issues critical for the sustenance of tourism in Puducherry. They are a low growth rate of tourist arrivals and a declining number of repeat visitors. Hence, there is a need to revamp the tourism strategy to develop a loyal tourist base. In this

regard, the researchers had studied the importance of tourist satisfaction and its relationship with its antecedents and consequences, which may be helpful for the administrators in strategically managing the tourism industry.

3. Purpose of the Research Study

The main reason for this study is to recognize and examine the precursors of visitor satisfaction and its outcomes through a coordinated reasonable structure approach. More precisely, the objectives of the paper are as follows

- To study the relationship between the tourist satisfaction's antecedents and its significant consequences.
- To find out the mediation effect of complaint behavior of tourists between tourist visitor satisfaction and visitor loyalty.
- To study the categorical moderation role of tourist residence in the proposed model.

4. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development

4.1. Antecedents of Tourist Satisfaction

Tourists' perceived destination quality and satisfaction positively exhibit a solid relationship (Le Chi Cong, 2016). San Martín H (2019) found that a robust positive relationship exists between tourist destinations' dimensions and visitors' satisfaction. The influence of tourist Destination Service Quality dimensions on the visitor revisit intention through "visitor satisfaction" as a mediating variable in the United Arab Emirate's tourism sector is positive (Saad Ali Musallam Abdulla, 2019). The most important factors that decide tourist loyalty are experience quality, perceived value, visitor satisfaction, and motivation towards an attractive tourist destination. Suhartanto D. (2020) established the connection between tourists' satisfaction and service quality and concluded that great influencing relationships existed among tourist destination quality of service and tourists' satisfaction. Oriade, A. (2019) provides strong evidence to prove that tourist perceived value influences tourist satisfaction and behavioral intention.

Almost all the previous studies have shown a positive connection between the quality of tourist destination, perceived value, and tourist destination. Thus, the following hypotheses are put forward

H1: The destination quality of tourists positively affects the satisfaction of visitors.

H2: The tourist perceived value significantly influences tourist satisfaction.

Jin N Lee, S. (2015) observed that the critical factor "tourist experience" has significantly influenced the other factors like destination image, perceived value, and tourist satisfaction. In addition, both tourists' perceived value and the image of the destination directly influence visitor satisfaction. Also, it positively influences tourists' behavioral intentions. Tourist experience quality dimensions greatly influence the tourist perceived value components (Suhartanto, D, 2019). Destination's service quality and tourist perceived values positively affect tourist destination image, visitor satisfaction, and tourist attitudes. In addition, visitors' destination image and satisfaction significantly influence tourists' attitudes and loyalty. Hence, the following hypothesis was proposed.

H3: Destination quality directly affects the perceived value of a tourist destination.

Aliman, N. K. (2014) establishes that visitor destination image, perceived quality of visitor, and tourist expectations significantly affect tourist perceived value and visitor satisfaction. In addition to that, destination image is majorly regarded as the critical predictor of tourist perceived value and visitor satisfaction, and tourist perceived value has a significant positive relationship on visitor satisfaction. The tourist destination image was found to have a significant positive relationship on various factors like Novelty, hedonics, and tourist perceived value (Cheng, T. M., 2013). The destination image of a tourist was a significant predictor of tourist perceived value (Ryu, K., Lee, H. R., 2012). Zibin Song, Xin Su & Liaoning Li. (2013) found that tourists' destination image exerts primary influences on perceived value and tourist quality in their

tourism literature significantly. Thus, the following hypotheses are put forward

H4: The destination image of tourists has a direct positive effect on tourist quality.

H5: Destination image of tourist has a direct positive effect on the perceived value of tourist.

5. Behavioral Consequences of Tourist Satisfaction

Wang, X. (2009) demonstrated a tourist satisfaction model, which showed the negative influence of visitor tourist satisfaction on visitor complaints, and additionally has a direct influence on visitor loyalty. The same research article further identified tourist destination image, visitor expectation, and perceived value as major influential factors in tourist satisfaction. Moreover, the study explored that tourist satisfaction decreases tourists' complaints significantly, leading to tourist loyalty (Sadeh, E, 2012). Ardani, W. (2019) has found that the most significant predecessor of tourist satisfaction was service quality. Moreover, the outcomes are majorly described by tourist loyalty. By and by, the significant consequences of tourist satisfaction, tourist loyalty appeared not to be so direct, which means despite the tourist satisfaction, some of the customers do not return to the same place and find a new place as their destination. Jeong, Y. (2019) indicated acute and unique effects of various predictors of visitors' satisfaction and behavioural outcomes and added to that mediation effect of visitors' satisfaction. It fully mediates the interconnection among tourist destination image, tourist destination loyalty, and similar linkages exhibited in tourist perceived value and loyalty. Lin, C. H., (2016) produced results which reveal that a psychological process of tourist experience has a significant direct influence on visitor perceived value. It has a significant direct impact on visitor satisfaction, leading to solid influences on loyalty intentions. Perceived value mediates visitor experience and their satisfaction. The visitor's satisfaction is a dominant antecedent of tourist loyalty intentions. Thus, the following hypotheses are put forward

H6: The satisfaction of tourists has a significant direct effect on tourists' loyalty.

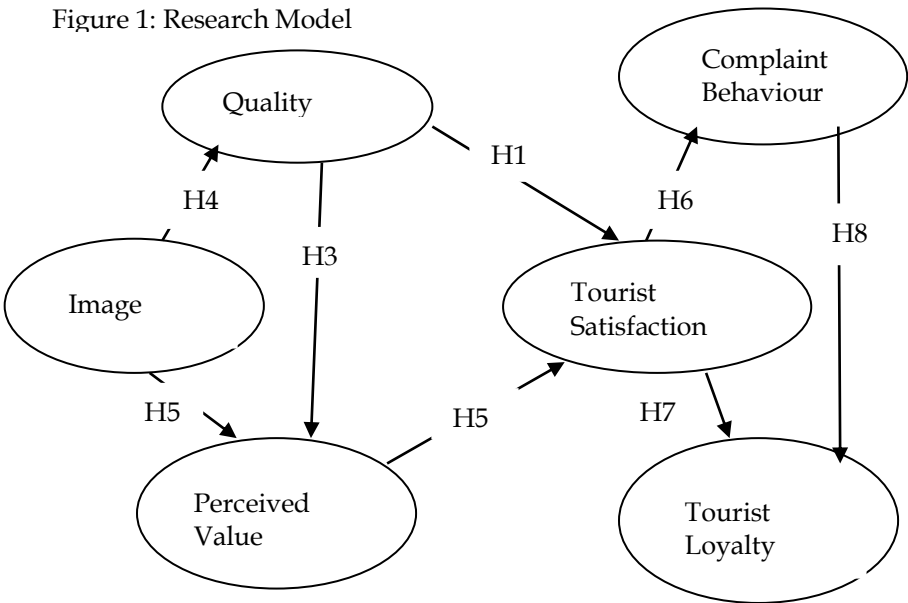
H7: Tourists' satisfaction has an inverse relationship with tourist complaint behaviour.

H8: Proper handling of tourist complaint behaviour significantly affects tourist loyalty.

H9: Complaint behaviour of tourist mediates between visitor satisfaction and visitor loyalty.

From the theoretical background and the developed hypotheses, the following theoretical model had been proposed for conducting the research.

Figure 1: Research Model



6. Methods and Data

6.1. Population, Sample Technique and Sample Size

This research study was conducted in the Puducherry city, and the tourists who visited Puducherry were considered the population of the study. The data was collected for one month from January 2020 to February 2020 using a structured questionnaire from the tourists on the verge of completing the tour since they could have been better positioned to respond, with their views and opinions about several aspects of the tourist destination. The tourists from all parts of the globe above the age of 20 were approached for the survey using a convenient sampling method. About 300 questionnaires were circulated to the respondents, and only 271 fully responded questionnaires were received. The rest had to be rejected due to partial response with a total response rate of 90%.

6.2. Questionnaire Design

A questionnaire consisting of 30 items were framed after going through various previous works of literature to collect the response from the respondents. The construct "Destination image" was measured with a five-items questionnaire (Marino 2008). The construct "Perceived value" was measured with a three-items questionnaire (Bolton & Drew, 1991; Chen & Tsai, 2007), and the "Tourist quality" construct was measured with a four-items questionnaire (Johnson et al. 2001). The construct "tourist satisfaction" was measured with a five-items questionnaire (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Chi & Qu, 2008). "Destination loyalty" was measured using four items (Oh, 2000; Chi & Qu, 2008). Five items were used to measure the complaint behaviour of the tourist (Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002). The researcher used a seven-point Likert-type scale to determine the respondent's degree of agreement for each item (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree). In addition to that, the demographic profile of respondents like age, marital status, gender, occupation, Nationality, and monthly income was also collected, and a categorical scale was used to measure the demographic scale. The survey questionnaire was finalized after being subjected to multiple revisions and on the basis pilot study conducted on 25 international tourists and 15 domestic tourists. In addition to that, Feedback was sought from three academic experts

in the marketing research field and two tourism experts. Thus, the researcher survey-measuring instrument was adequate for content validity.

7. Evaluation of Measurement Model

7.1. Indicator Reliability

Among the many conditions for validity, reliability is the most common condition. Hair et al., (2013). After indicator reliability was checked, the researcher removed the items with outer loadings lesser than the suggested value of 0.4. The model removed two indicators from destination quality, three items from complaint behaviour, two items from perceived value, and two items from tourist loyalty. Only the remaining indicators with outer loadings greater than 0.4 of a threshold value, were retained in the research model.

7.2. Internal consistency Reliability

In this research study using PLS-SEM, Instead of Cronbach's alpha, the composite reliability was adopted to evaluate the internal consistency reliability of the measurement model. According to Nunnally & Bernstein (1994), Composite reliability for the constructs Image, Complaint, Loyalty, Perceived Value, Quality, and Satisfaction is shown as 0.9317, 0.7085, 0.8764, 0.9237, 0.7922, and 0.9325, respectively, which shows a high level of internal consistency reliability.

Previous literature studies show that a threshold value of 0.60 or above, but at the same time not exceeding the threshold value of 0.95 is needed to have excellent composite reliability, especially in the research field of social science (Hair et al., 2013, Bagozzi and Yi, 1988).

7.3. Convergent Validity

Fornell and Larcker (1981) explained the convergent validity as "the research model's aptness to describe the variance of each indicator," and the average variance extracted (AVE) is proved to be a shred of solid evidence for convergent validity. AVE's value of 0.5 and above provides evidence of convergent validity as per Bagozzi and

Yi (1988). Since almost all the constructs either of our models exceeded this level or were not far from the threshold level of 0.5, all the constructs met discriminant validity. At the same time, they met the requirements of all other reliability tests. To establish content validity in this research model, all constructs were retained. All AVE is well above the threshold minimum value of 0.50 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) in the latent constructs. Image, Complaint, Loyalty, Perceived Value of tourist, Quality and Satisfaction level of visitors are shown as 0.7322, 0.5525, 0.7032, 0.8016, 0.5608, and 0.7348, respectively. Thus, all mentioned reflective constructs are proved to have a high level of convergent validity.

Table 1: Convergent validity

	AVE	Composite Reliability	R Square	Cronbach's Alpha	Communality	Redundancy
Image	0.7322	0.9317	0	0.9078	0.7322	0
Complaint	0.5525	0.7085	0.0037	0.1967	0.5525	0.0019
Loyalty	0.7032	0.8764	0.1366	0.7922	0.7032	0.0035
Perceived value	0.8016	0.9237	0.5684	0.8755	0.8016	0.0089
Quality	0.5608	0.7922	0.1994	0.6543	0.5608	0.1211
Satisfaction	0.7348	0.9325	0.0279	0.9101	0.7348	-0.0125

7.4. Discriminant Validity

Fornell-Larcker criterion (1981) and cross loading examination are the standard methods used to evaluate discriminant validity in the PLS-SEM. Between the two methods, the most widely used method is the Fornell-Larcker criterion (1981) method. In this study, the researcher used cross-loading examination, which states that the latent construct indicator loading must be greater than the remaining latent constructs. In addition to that, the square root of each AVE of latent constructs must be higher than the other latent variable correlations (LVC) to establish discriminant validity. Table

3 displays that discriminant validity is established in this study since the square root of AVE for Image, Complaint, Loyalty, Perceived Value, Destination Quality, and Tourist Satisfaction level are more significant than other latent variable correlations.

Table- 2: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Complaint	Image	loyalty	Perc value	Quality	Satisfaction	Discriminant validity established.
Complaint	0.7433						Yes
Image	-0.0103	0.8557					Yes
Loyalty	0.2364	-0.0783	0.8386				Yes
Perc value	0.3496	-0.0123	0.1323	0.8953			Yes
Quality	0.4466	-0.0217	0.0902	0.7538	0.7489		Yes
Satisfaction	0.2125	-0.0887	0.3667	0.0899	0.1604	0.8572	Yes

8. Structural Model Evaluation

The researcher used SPSS to assess collinearity, and the researcher established that there is no collinearity indicator since all VIF values are lesser than 5. Coefficient of determination assessment is the essential part of evaluating the structural model. In this study, tourist satisfaction is the most critical construct of researcher interest. The researcher proved that the overall coefficient of determination R2 is weak. 0.25 as weak, 0.5 as Moderate, and 0.7 as strong R2 according to Hair et al., 2013. Quality and Perceived Value explain only 2.8% of the variance of the endogenous construct Satisfaction. The same research model also estimates that Image and Quality are found to explain 56.8% of Perceived Value jointly, Satisfaction and Complaint combinedly explain 14.2% of the variance of Loyalty and in addition to this, Image explains 19.9% of

Quality variance and Satisfaction explains just 0.4% of Complaint variance.

Table 3 assessment of coefficient of determination (R²)

Constructs	R²
Complaint	0.0079
Loyalty	0.1366
perceived value	0.5684
Quality	0.1994
Satisfaction	0.0279

9. Evaluation of Path Coefficient

Bootstrapping procedure is the most used method in Smart PLS to determine linkage between the constructs by examining their path coefficients with the help of t statistics. From the below table 5, it is inferred that out of the 5 structural model relationships, only three are significant, and the remaining five are proved to be insignificant. From the model, the researcher establishes that quality has the decisive influence on Perceived Value (0.7465), followed by Image on Quality (0.4466), Quality on Satisfaction (0.2145), Satisfaction on Loyalty (0.1282), and Image on Perceived Value (0.0162). The PLS model estimation also reveals that the variable "Perceived Value" negatively influences traveller Satisfaction (-0.0718), Satisfaction effect on Complaint (-0.0887), and Complaint hurts Loyalty (-0.0461).

Table 4: Structural Model Path Coefficients

Hypotheses	Path	p-value	T value	Path coefficients	Hypotheses
P1	quality -> satisfaction	0.2461	1.163	0.2145	Rejected
P2	perceived value -> satisfaction	0.645	0.4614	-0.0718	Rejected
P3	quality -> perceived value	0	11.4616	0.7465	Accepted
P4	image -> quality	0.0008	3.3887	0.4466	Accepted
P5	image -> perceived value	0.8405	0.2015	0.0162	Rejected
P6	satisfaction -> loyalty	0.0014	3.2298	0.1282	Accepted
P7	satisfaction -> complaint	0.3787	0.8821	-0.0887	Rejected
P8	complaint -> loyalty	0.666	0.4322	-0.0461	Rejected

10. Predictive Relevance(Q²)

In Smart PLS, Stone - Geisser's predictive relevance (Q²) is the commonly used method to find out. In this study, a blindfolding procedure was adopted to predict the endogenous construct's reflective indicators accurately. Five endogenous constructs, namely Complaint, Loyalty, Perceived Value, Quality, and Satisfaction, are selected for the blindfolding procedure.

From the below table 5, it is proved that this research model had great predictive relevance since all endogenous variables Q² values are more significant than zero (Chin 1998).

Table 5: Predictive Relevance (Q²)

Constructs	Q ²
complaint	0.0038
Loyalty	0.1004
perc value	0.33
Quality	0.1225
satisfaction	0.0164

11. Tourist Complaint Behaviour as Mediator

Preacher and Hayes (2008) procedure was used to know the mediation effect of complaint behaviour between visitor Satisfaction and tourist Loyalty.

From table 6, the researcher establishes that both direct effect and indirect effect are significant, and it proves the presence of mediation effect of Complaint behaviour between Satisfaction and Loyalty. This result paves the way to know the magnitude of mediation.

Table 6 Mediating effect on the linkage between Satisfaction and Loyalty

Path		T value	p-value	Sig. levels		
satisfaction -> loyalty	mediation direct effect	3.6675	0.0003	Significant		
satisfaction -> complaint -> loyalty	mediation indirect effect	18.6973	0.0000	Significant		

12. Mediation Magnitude

After establishing the presence of the mediation effect of Complaint in between Satisfaction and Loyalty, the researcher is further interested in knowing the magnitude of the mediation effect of Complaint behaviour in the research model using total effect and VAF. The hypothesis 9 total effect is $0.3626 + 0.0041 = 0.3667$. Moreover, Variance Account For = indirect effect/total effect. $VAF = 0.0041/0.3667 = 0.0112$. Results of the mediation analysis are presented in Table 7. From this, only 1.12% of satisfaction's influence on loyalty shall be explained via the mediator "Complaint." If the VAF value exceeds the threshold value of 0.2, it shows partial mediation, and if the VAF value exceeds 0.8, it shows full mediation. From the analysis, the VAF is far behind the threshold value of 0.2, so the researcher concludes that the variable "Complaint" has no mediating effect on Satisfaction and Loyalty. Thus, it leads to rejection of hypothesis H9.

Table 7: Mediation analysis in PLS-SEM

Direct effect	0.3626
Indirect effect	0.0041
Total effect	0.3667
VAN	0.0112

13. Managerial Implications

Tourist Satisfaction is positively influenced by quality but negatively by Perceived value. Destination image influences both quality and perceived value positively, but the quality is more influenced by destination image than by perceived value. In turn, quality positively influences tourist satisfaction, but the perceived value is negatively influenced. Therefore, the tourism authority of Puducherry shall allocate more resources in improving destination image and destination quality to increase tourist satisfaction, which is the prime factor in attracting new and repeat tourists to Puducherry tourism. Tourist satisfaction negatively influences the

complaint behaviour of tourists while it has positive influences on Tourist loyalty. From this result, the tourism authority of Puducherry can understand that satisfaction towards Puducherry tourism reduces the complaint behaviour of tourists. At the same time, it increases loyalty among the tourists towards Puducherry tourism.

From the model, it is believed that Destination Image affects Destination Quality more. In turn, Destination quality positively influences Tourist satisfaction. In addition to that, satisfaction reduces the complaint behaviour of tourists. It increases tourist loyalty, making the tourist spread positive word of mouth (WOM) about Puducherry tourism and ensures they revisit Puducherry in the future. The following specific recommendations may be applied to enhance Puducherry tourism satisfaction. First, it is advantageous for Puducherry tourism operators to improve tourist satisfaction and plan by rationally propagating the scenic area and enhancing the fame of the Puducherry tourism destination to increase people's willingness to revisit and recommend, thereby increasing tourism destinations' competitive advantage. Second, in order to enhance Puducherry tourism, tourist destination operators should take into account the economic experiences of visitors, governments, and non-profit organizations, such as pricing control, more comfortable transportation, and infrastructures to save money and labor. There will be no scenic tickets for places, allowing visitors to spend more money on cultural health and wellness activities or initiatives, as well as long-term lodging. Finally, tourism executives in Puducherry may have a good impact on visitors by allocating more construction resources to ecological and environmental preservation, as well as medical services to treat tourists' bodies. Tourism destination plans should be practical, comprehensive, environmentally friendly, and affordable, with a focus on preventing overdevelopment. Tourists' interest in the experience will be piqued by the contextual environment's ability to fulfill visitors' bodily and psychological demands, ensuring that they are satisfied. This research shows that the Complaint behaviour of tourists has no role in mediating between visitor satisfaction and visitor loyalty. It shows that tourist complaint behaviour is not a major deciding factor in inducing loyalty among tourists. As a result, the tourism authority of Puducherry should

focus on increasing the satisfaction level of tourists by understanding the tourists' needs, being ready to react to the tourist concerns, and making them satisfied to improve tourists' loyalty.

14. Conclusions and Recommendations

The research results have accepted only three hypotheses and rejected the remaining six hypotheses framed by the researchers. It develops a strong belief that the results of this research model shall be helpful for the Puducherry tourism board to develop their tourism destination and make Puducherry the most popular tourist destination in India. Understanding tourists' satisfaction levels will help obtain more meaningful facts to develop the tourist destination further and provide better amenities and services to the incoming tourist. Further findings state that the majority of respondents are satisfied with destination quality. The positive image of a tourist destination has a lasting effect among tourists. Perception of Puducherry as a tourist destination includes offering reliable transportation, beautiful natural scenery, accommodation facilities and other traveling services that are attracting factors for many tourists that kindle the interest to revisit Puducherry shortly. Thus, the researcher proves that Puducherry city has been positioned as one of the best tourist destinations. To enhance tourist satisfaction further, the researcher recommends that the Puducherry tourism authority allocate more resources to improve destination image and quality to increase tourist satisfaction, which is the prime factor in attracting new and existing tourists to Puducherry tourism. In addition to that, tourism operators in the union territory of Puducherry should put continuous effort to improve the facilities like tourist accommodation and the surrounding environment. Since some of the tourists are displeased with public amenities of Puducherry, better public amenities like washroom facilities, cheaper accommodations, and better or clearer signage boards should be made available immediately to improve tourist satisfaction which will further boost tourist loyalty or intention to revisit Puducherry. This research model suggests that the Puducherry tourism authority should concentrate on taking measures to improve the destination image, which boosts

destination quality and enhances tourist satisfaction to increase tourist loyalty towards Puducherry tourism.

15. Limitations and Scope for Future Research

This research study also has some limitations. The data collected at a defined time may not be applicable after a period. This longitudinal research may not be open to evaluation across time and region. Only a limited number of samples were taken for this study.

Thus, future researches may focus on increased sample size, and further, a comparative study can be done on domestic and foreign tourists. An equal number of local and foreign tourists shall be taken for a balanced approach. Moreover, only three predecessors of tourist satisfaction and two consequences were evaluated. Other important determining variables related to tourist satisfaction may be added (risk factors, cost factors, word of mouth, and revisit intentions) shall be included in the future study. In addition, an attempt can be made to measure the risk-taking and risk-aversion characteristics of tourists for the future study to help tourism authorities of Puducherry design exclusive promotion campaigns targeting only those tourist categories.

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