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GRT SAFETY AND SECURITY PERCEPTION OF TOURISTS VISITING KASHMIR VALLEY: A CASE STUDY OF PAHALGAM AND GULMARG

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Abstract:- Safety and security today, has been identified as one of the energetic global forces that run the tourism industry because it is an industry where consumption is based on faith and trust. One of the important approach of assessment of safety and security is to assess the perception of end users of any facility or any opportunity. In this paper, the analysis and interpretation of data is given which was collected through the sample survey of 220 foreign and domestic tourists. This study was undertaken to investigate various aspects of safety and security perception in Pahalgam and Gulmarg as perceived by foreign and domestic tourists who visited Kashmir valley. It reveals that there is positive temporal change in safety and security perception in total number of tourists before and after arriving to Pahalgam and Gulmarg of Kashmir valley.

Keywords: safety, security, tourist arrivals, travel decision, crime .

INTRODUCTION:

Safety and security are vital to providing quality in tourism. More than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide safe and secure environment for visitors (UNWTO, 1996). Tourism is highly vulnerable to external jolts such as natural disasters, political instability and terrorism (Mansfeld and Pizam, 2006) because it is an industry where consumption is based on faith and trust. Events that damage that faith destabilise the tourism system and affect the elements within the structure and the surrounding environments via demand fluctuations (Blake and Sinclair, 2003). The impact of such events is especially high in discretionary forms of tourism where tourists, especially first-time visitors, largely trust on destination images to guide the process of travel decision-making (Fletcher and Morakabati, 2008). Disasters of political instability and terrorism increase tourists' perception of travel risk and influence their travel decision. Perception of travel risk and related behaviour is characterised by complexity and tends to vary depending upon a range of factors such as: type of risk, news media coverage, previous tourist experience, as well as Promotional literature that is produced by a destination as well as accounts from friends or family who traveled to a destination can create certain impressions about the quality and desirability of that destination. Hence, potential travelers who have never been to that destination can be influenced by these accounts in a positive or negative manner.

The explosions in Kashmir valley in which tourist vehicles were targeted have adversely affected the tourist arrivals in Kashmir at a time when the graph had started showing an encouraging trend. At least 36 tourists from West Bengal were injured in two grenade explosions at two buses carrying them at Dalgate on 31 May 2006. In another incident four tourists were killed and six others, all of them from Gujarat, were injured in a similar explosion. However, Foreign Tourist Arrival (FTA) received a major blow after Al-Farhan, a militant organisation, kidnapped a group of western tourists in the early nineties, who were trekking in Pahalgam. Unfortunately, they were never found. As a result of this specific incident negative travel advisories to visit Kashmir were issued by various foreign countries. Ironically, the recent acceleration of protest violence's in Jammu and Kashmir has discouraged most of the tourists from visiting most popular tourist region of India.

In this section of the study, the analysis and interpretation of data is given which was collected during the data

collecting process. This type of technique is therefore followed in this section and it is expected that the outcomes are most successfully going to address the research which is reflected in the objectives and hypotheses of present research work.

Objectives

This paper is carried out with three objectives outlined as below:

- 1.To assess the safety and security conditions at the tourist locations with the help of behavioral analysis using safety perceptions, opinions and attitudes of foreign and domestic tourists.
- 2.To find out difference between pre and post trip perception regarding safety and security.
- 3.To find out Causes for not Visiting Kashmir Valley Earlier

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis has been laid down for verification and confirmation:

- 1.There is a difference in the negative perception to go to Kashmir valley because of terrorism risk between people who have been to Kashmir and who have not been there before.
- 2.There is no difference between foreign and domestic tourist's perceived safety and security perception while travelling to Kashmir valley.

Review of literature

Singh and M., Vij (2006) studied safety and security in tourism referring to the safeguard of life, health and the physical, psychological and economic integrity of travelers, tourism staff and people establishing host communities, being a delicate industry, safety and Security at the destination largely affected the decision-making behavior of tourists. *Tasi and Boylu (2010)* examined tourist's perception of safety and security of a destination in relation to the level of satisfaction with their trip in a case study in Turkey. They used structured questionnaire and step wise regression model, define to examine the relationship between trip satisfactions, safety and security variables, *Fresacher (2012)* tried to identify the degree to which terrorism impacts the choice to travel to the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir as well as to study the general terrorism risk perception of this particular destination by using a new method of contrasting people who live in India, have been to the country before or who have never been there. *Chauhan and Khanna (2009)* admit that terrorism often causes cancellations and withdrawal of travel plans to definite destinations, though indicate the tourism industry as extremely indestructible. Further it is suggested that locals and foreigners are equally probable to be involved in a crime situation which causes the critical variable "fear of the unknown and the risk." *Zhang, et al., (2004)* studied Hong Kong residents' travel destination characteristic inclinations and found that safety was the main factor for Hong Kong residents in choosing the travel destination, and they also preferred to buy a package tour. *George (2003)* studied tourist's perceptions of safety and security and found that tourists were less likely to involve with the activities if they observed a fear of crime at the destination. Tourists who experienced a crime episode during their journey would feel less safe. Tourists perceived more danger during the night than during the day.

Methodology

The present study has made use of primary as well as secondary sources of data. the data compiled by central and state tourism departments, Annual Reports of the Ministry of Home Affairs, tourism enforcement wing (tourist police), besides necessary information has been collected With the help of sample studies, safety perception analysis and opinion survey have been conducted both for safety perception and mitigation opinions of the tourists. A structural questionnaire and a schedule personally developed for 220 tourists with pre-coded, scaled and open-ended questions, for getting comprehensive information about, the tourist profile, their purpose of visit, where they obtained information on related issues, their expectations, satisfaction level regarding safety and security, nature of safe and secure tourism environment, safety perception before and after arriving, types of inconveniences faced and suggestions for the improvement, opinion about the security checks, and allied issues.

The data thus collected has been compiled, tabulated and analysed with the help of, Henry Garrett's Ranking Technique, Likert Scale, and other necessary techniques to find out desired results.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

1.1 Tourist police of Jammu and Kashmir

The tourist police wing in its compact form came into existence in the year 1982 when the replication of Jammu and Kashmir tourist trade act was amended. Since the wing is jointly controlled by the Jammu and Kashmir police and Jammu and Kashmir tourism department. The wing is headed by an officer of the rank of superintendent of police, whose office is functioning as police station for purposes of registration of tourist trade act under SRO 262 dated 16-04-1987. The S.P has also declared prescribed authority under SRO 327 of 2006 by the tourism Department; where under the office of the S.P has the powers of compounding the specified crimes of registration of tourist trade act. The police station is run through SHO of the rank of inspector of police.

Table 1.1 : Disposal of Crime by Tourist Police During 2002-10

Year	Complaints received	Fine collected	Refund made
2002	17	700	0
2003	130	33300	22500
2004	168	40400	73135
2005	208	39600	221230
2006	241	70450	392550
2007	470	80900	179991
2008	12	4600	4800
2009	44	26400	6500
2010	831	384300	291045
Total	2121	680650	1191751

Source: Deputy Director Enforcement cell Srinagar, Kashmir.2011

Table 1.1 reveals that number of complaints against tourists is increased year after year. In 2002 there were just 17 cases after that it reached to 470 in 2007. The number further decreased in 2008 when only 12 cases registered and in 2009, 44 cases come into existence but in 2010 it reached at its highest mark when 831 cases registered. It concludes that tourists police fails to cope up crime against tourists because of less manpower in enforcement wing so there is need of hour to enhance tourist police strength at every tourist spot of Kashmir valley especially at Pahalgam and Gulmarg which are most crowded tourist destinations of Kashmir valley.

Table 1.2: Crime against Tourists in Pahalgam and Gulmarg

Year	Pahalgam		Gulmarg	
	No. of cases registered	No. of Tourist arrival	No. of cases registered	No. of Tourist arrival
1997	15	925	20	5328
1998	12	8705	15	85748
1999	27	58835	9	20657
2000	4	59454	9	85134
2001	11	50394	8	47444
2002	20	11846	19	26989
2003	23	61550	28	166406
2004	17	162264	21	287019
2005	23	277020	14	29687
2006	23	257565	15	33814
2007	26	202824	13	350575
2008	28	133553	15	435747
2009	31	-	20	314139
2010	25	162078	18	326318

Source: (1) Pahalgam and Gulmarg police station, (2) Directorate of tourism, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 2011.

Consistent statistics about crimes against tourists are in short supply. It was practically impossible to analyse the spatial pattern of crime against tourists in Pahalgam and Gulmarg, because crime statistics did not have a spatial or locational reference and the police were hesitant to part with crime data.

As is evident from table 1.2 that number of registered criminal cases is low as compared to tourist arrivals to in Pahalgam and Gulmarg but complete safe and secure tourism atmosphere is pre-request for successful and sustainable tourism development and for destination image. There are critical factors such as political unrest, violence and crime with the resultant risks to personal safety, which could adversely affect the state's tourism potential and thus a major socio-economic lifeline for the years to come. Evidence gathered in many parts of the world demonstrate that safety, tranquility and peace are necessary for the prosperity of the tourism industry (Pizam and Mansfeld, 1995)

The negative perception of personal safety is one of the current threats to the Kashmir valley tourism industry. Personal experience and word of mouth communication are the most important factors influencing a tourist's decision to visits Kashmir valley. This is the reason why it is so important that a tourist should not be a victim of any crime while visiting the state.

The challenge is for the security services to bring down the crime and other types of violence incidents and for marketing organisations to subsequently change the perception of the state as disturbed region.

2.1 Satisfaction Level of the Security Arrangements

To understand the satisfaction level of tourists, question regarding the level of security arrangements in the Kashmir valley especially in Pahalgam and Gulmarg was asked. Table 2.1 gives out the tourist's satisfaction level of the security arrangements in Pahalgam and Gulmarg of Kashmir valley.

Table 2.1: Satisfaction level of security arrangements in Pahalgam and Gulmarg

Response	Pahalgam		Gulmarg		Total (% age)
	Domestic tourists (% age)	Foreign tourists (% age)	Domestic tourists (% age)	Foreign tourists (% age)	
Excellent	10(20)	5(10)	20(28.57)	5(10)	40(18.18)
Good	8(16)	10(20)	18(25.71)	8(16)	44(20)
Adequate	15(30)	15(30)	15(21.42)	17(34)	62(28.18)
Poor	17(34)	20(40)	17(24.28)	20(40)	74(33.63)
Total	50(100)	50(100)	70(100)	50(100)	220(100)

Source: Field Survey conducted by scholar, 2013.

Above Table 2.1 reveals that 20 percent of domestic and just 10 percent of foreign tourists feel that security arrangement in Pahalgam are excellent while 30 percent of domestic and 30 percent of international tourists say that arrangements are adequate. Whereas maximum number of tourists 34 percent of domestic and 40 percent foreign feel that security arrangements are poor, on the other hand the situation of Gulmarg is same as Pahalgamis, where 28.57 percent of domestic and 10 percent of foreign tourists feel excellent security arrangements whereas 24.28 percent and 40 percent of domestic and foreign tourists say that security arrangements are poor. It can also be observed from above table that just 18.18 percent of total respondents feel that arrangements are excellent and 20 percent feel good were as 28.18 percent says adequate but it is heartbreaking that 33.63 feel poor safety management in which maximum number of foreign tourists included.

2.2 Tourists Perceptions on Presence of Security Forces and Impact on Tourists Arrival

Tourism means moving from a familiar environment to an unfamiliar one. Consequently, security factor having of great importance is natural to realize tourism mobility. The situation over the years has improved in Kashmir valley. Though the objective of keeping the security forces fully prepared is important for the safety of the region, from the perspective of terrorism it is felt relevant to ascertain the views of the tourists about the presence of security in the Valley.

2.2.1 Security Check-ups and their Effect on Tourists Movements

Security is the most essential issue among the internal and external factors to form tourism mobility. To find whether the presence of the security force and checks conducted by them has any effect on free movements of tourist within Pahalgam and Gulmarg and towards Kashmir Valley the tourist opinion was asked and the same is presented in the Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Security check-ups and their effect on tourists movements In Pahalgam and Gulmarg of Kashmir valley

Opinion	Pahalgam		Gulmarg		Total
	Domestic tourists (% age)	Foreign tourists (% age)	Domestic tourists (% age)	Foreign tourists (% age)	
Strongly Agree	2(4)	3(6)	3(4.28)	4(8)	12(5.45)
Agree	3(6)	5(10)	4(5.71)	4(8)	16(7.27)
Can't say	8(16)	6(12)	7(14.28)	5(10)	26(11.81)
Disagree	10(20)	13(26)	18(25.71)	11(22)	52(23.63)
Strongly Disagree	27(54)	23(46)	38(54.28)	26(52)	114(51.18)
Total	50(100)	50(100)	70(100)	50(100)	220(100)

Source: Field Survey conducted by scholar, 2013.

It may be observed from Table 2.2, that more than half of the respondents 51.18 percent strongly disagree and 23.63 percent of total respondents disagree the opinion that security check ups affect free movement of tourist within Pahalgam and Gulmarg and towards Kashmir valley. 11.81 percent and 7.2 percent of the respondents replied can't say and agreed respectively to the same question. And just 5.45 percent of total respondents replied strongly agree. The above table also reveals that there is little bit difference in opinions of domestic and foreign tourists visiting Pahalgam and Gulmarg domestic tourists are more disagree than foreign tourists regarding presence of security forces and its effect on tourists movement. Thus, it may be inferred that security check-ups do not hinder the movement of tourists' within Pahalgam and Gulmarg or towards Kashmir Valley.

2.2.2 Presence of Security Forces Contributes for More Tourists Inflow

Tourism at a destination depends upon various factors that are beyond the scope of the present research. However, keeping the present situation in mind, present study was carried out to find the tourists and host community's opinion on how

terrorism affected tourism in Kashmir Valley. As the situation is not completely free from security threats, security force, are engaged still to maintain constant vigil. So it is essential to find the opinion of tourists whether presence of security force is important for more tourist inflow towards Kashmir Valley. The opinions of the tourists are as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Tourists opinion regarding presence of security forces as a vital factor for more tourists’ inflow

Opinion	Pahalgam		Gulmarg		Total
	Domestic tourists (% age)	Foreign tourists (% age)	Domestic tourists (% age)	Foreign tourists (% age)	
Strongly Agree	28(56)	22(44)	43(61.42)	23(46)	116(52.72)
Agree	9(18)	14(28)	15(21.42)	11(22)	49(22.27)
Can't say	7(14)	6(12)	5(7.14)	7(14)	25(11.36)
Disagree	4(8)	5(10)	4(5.71)	5(10)	18(8.18)
Strongly Disagree	2(4)	3(6)	3(4.28)	4(8)	12(5.45)
Total	50(100)	50(100)	70(100)	50(100)	220(100)

Source: Field Survey conducted by scholar, 2013.

It may be inferred from the data presented in Table 2.3, that 52.72 percent of 220 respondents (116) strongly agree and 22.27 percent of 220 respondents (49) agree the opinion that in the present scenario prevailing at Kashmir Valley, presence of security forces has a positive impact and contributes for more tourist inflow towards Kashmir Valley. Out of 220 respondents only 8.18 percent disagreed and just 5.45 percent strongly disagreed. From this, it is quite clear that tourists strongly feel that presence of security forces is a healthy measure and is important for more tourist inflow towards Pahalgam and Gulmarg of Kashmir Valley.

2.2.3 Analysis of Causes for not Visiting Kashmir Valley Earlier

To find out the particular reasons why tourists have not visited earlier, it was decided to ask the respondents to state the reasons for not visiting the Valley earlier. To find out the causes that stopped the tourist from visiting Kashmir Valley earlier, Garret Ranking technique was used. As per this technique, tourists were asked to allocate the rank for several constraining factors and consequences of such rankings were converted into score values with the help of the following formula.

$$\text{Percentage position} = \frac{100 * (R_{ij} - 0.5)}{N_j}$$

Where,

R_{ij} = Rank given for ith item by jth individual.

N_j = Number of items ranked by jth individual.

By Garret’s formula, the current situation expected is converted into scores. Then for each factor the scores of each individual are added and divided by the total number of tourists who had responded and ranks were allocated to them according to the scores achieved.

Table 2.4: Reasons for Domestic Tourists Not Visiting Kashmir Valley Earlier

S. No.	Problems	Total Score	Average Score	Garret Rank
1	Transportation cause	1435	11.95	II
2	Financial cause	1348	11.23	III
3	Lack of interest	1213	10.10	V
4	Fear of terrorism	1509	12.57	I
5	Unfavourable climate	1238	10.31	IV
6	Other	1154	9.61	VI

Source: Field Survey conducted by scholar, 2013.

The Table 2.4 shows Garret’s rankings and scores. Amid all the problems it was found that fear of terrorism tops with a mean score of 12.57 as it is a major cause for not visiting Kashmir Valley. It shows terrorism incidents have an influence on safety perception of tourist’s. Transportation cause with a mean score of 11.95 occupies the second rank which stopped the tourists from visiting Kashmir Valley. Financial cause, unfavourable climate were found as the third and fourth problem with average score of 11.23 and 10.31 which mounted in the way of tourists wish to visit the Valley. Lack of interest scores the least of all factors with average score of 10.10. It fully explains that tourists have a lot of interest to visit the Valley. Thus, in spite of great interested to visit the Valley, they are very much worried to visit this tourist’s heaven mainly due to repeated occurrence of terror incidents.

Table 2.5: Reasons for Foreign Tourists Not Visiting Kashmir Valley Earlier

S. No	Problems	Total score	Average Score	Garret Rank
1	Transportation cause	2345	23.45	I
2	Financial cause	1989	19.89	IV
3	Lack of interest	2145	21.45	V
4	Fear of terrorism	2213	22.13	II
5	Unfavourable climate	1821	18.21	III
6	Other	1789	17.89	VI

Source: Field Survey conducted by scholar, 2013.

Above table 2.5 reveals that transportation cause is primary constraint which prevent foreign tourist to visit Kashmir valley and occupies first rank while fear of terrorism is second factor which mounted in the way of foreign tourists desire to visit the Kashmir valley. Unfavourable climate and financial problem were found as third and fourth factor which hinders foreigners to visit Kashmir. Lack of interest is at fifth and option others are at sixth rank. It concludes that fear of terrorism and transportation problem are the main factors which stood in the way of both domestic and foreign tourists to visit this beautiful tourist destination of Jammu and Kashmir. So, it is a need of hour to provide and maintain safe and secure tourism environment for tourists besides, government should improve road and transport facility and increase number of national and international flights directly from Srinagar international airport to handle such big problem which prevented tourists to visit Kashmir valley. So it clear from above findings that infrastructure is one of the main problem which deters the growth of tourism in Kashmir valley. The existing tourism infrastructure in the Kashmir valley most of which got damaged or degenerated in violence is not sufficient to cater to the needs of the tourists. The available infrastructure requires up gradation and more facilities needs to be developed to cope up with the tourist flow in future. Many steps have been taken in this direction within the limited resources but much need to be done to promote tourism in the state.

2.2.4 Pre-Trip Safety Perception

Visitors to an unknown place have a perception of the geographic space and experience they intend to visit. In an era where violence and terrorism have become the norm, it is not strange that tourists are cautious when travelling to such unknown destinations. Kashmir valley, with its high terrorism perception and violence statistics, and geographical location of Kashmir is adjoining with border of Pakistan, is no exception. Disinformation and the creation of a heightened sense of fear are not uncommon.

Table 2.6: Degree of worry before travelling to Pahalgam and Gulmarg of Kashmir valley

Response	Pahalgam		Gulmarg		Total (% age)
	Domestic tourist (% age)	Foreign tourist (% age)	Domestic tourist (% age)	Foreign tourist (% age)	
Worried	20 (40)	18 (38)	29 (41.42)	20 (40)	87 (39.60)
Neutral	17 (34)	19 (36)	21 (30)	13 (26)	70 (31.81)
Not worried	13 (26)	13 (26)	20 (28.57)	17 (34)	63 (28.63)
Total	50 (100)	50 (100)	70 (100)	50 (100)	220 (100)

Source: Field Survey conducted by scholar, 2013.

Fig. 2.1 Pre Trip Safety Perception to Pahalgam and Gulmarg



In the survey respondents were asked what statement best described their conception or perception about general safety and security in Kashmir valley before they travelled to Pahalgam and Gulmarg (Table 2.6). On a three-point scale most of the tourists (39.60%) stated that they were worried about travelling to Pahalgam and Gulmarg, whereas 31.81% indicated a neutral sentiment. 28.63 percent of total respondents said they were not worried.

2.2.5 Post-Trip Safety Perception

There is positive perception noted from both the respondents of Pahalgam and Gulmarg after arriving at both of these

two destinations, as can be seen from the Table 2.7 and Fig. 2.2 representing their answer on this question. 20 percent of domestic and 28 percent of foreign tourists were worried in Pahalgam, whereas 25.71 percent of domestic and 30 percent of foreign tourists are worried in Gulmarg. 38 percent of domestic tourist in Pahalgam and 31.42 percent in Gulmarg had neutral sentiments while 30 percent of foreign tourists in Pahalgam and 34 percent in Gulmarg had neutral safety perception. It can also be observed from below table that 42 percent of domestic and 42 percent of international tourists were not worried in Pahalgam, whereas 42.90 percent of domestic and 36 percent of foreign tourists were not worried in Gulmarg. It is interesting to note that there is positive temporal change in total number of respondents before and after arriving to Pahalgam and Gulmarg. This is good news for both these two tourist spots. But there is lot which has to be done in this regard, so that tourists can feel fully safe and secure at these two tourist destinations.

Table 2.7: Degree of worry after arriving in Pahalgam and Gulmarg of Kashmir valley

Response	Pahalgam		Gulmarg		Total (% age)
	Domestic tourist (% age)	Foreign tourist (% age)	Domestic tourist(% age)	Foreign tourist(% age)	
Worried	10 (20)	14 (28)	18 (25.71)	15 (30)	57 (25.9)
Neutral	19 (38)	15 (30)	22 (31.42)	17 (34)	73 (33.20)
Not worried	21 (42)	21 (42)	30 (42.90)	18 (36)	90 (40.90)
Total	50 (100)	50 (100)	70 (100)	50 (100)	220 (100)

Source: Field Survey conducted by scholar, 2013.

Fig.2.2 Post-Trip Safety Perception



If the perception about safety and security before the trip is compared with visitors' rating on this aspect at departure (Figure 2.3), it is seen that a perceptual shift has taken place, where now more visitors have a positive/not worried perception. Those who had a neutral stance remained almost same (Table 2.8) and this is a key challenge for marketers and policy-makers to change the perceptions for the positive.

Table 2.8: Comparison of Pre and post trip safety perception

Response	Before the trip		After the trip	
	Pahalgam (%)	Gulmarg (%)	Pahalgam (%)	Gulmarg (%)
Worried	38	49 (40.83)	24	33 (27.5)
Neutral	36	34 (28.33)	34	39 (32.5)
Not worried	26	37 (30.83)	42	48 (40)

Source: Field Survey conducted by scholar, 2013.

Fig. 2.3 Pre and Post-Trip Safety Perception



2.2.6 Biggest Concern of Safety and Security before Travelling to Pahalgam and Gulmarg of Kashmir Valley.

In an open-ended question tourists were asked to recall their greatest fears about safety and security before they travelled to Pahalgam and Gulmarg of Kashmir valley. It is indeed shocking to see that 75% of all visitors feared being victim of terror attack. A comparison between Pahalgam and Gulmarg show no marked difference in fears. The main fear of terrorism of these two destinations is very much the same. This type of fear is common in both domestic and foreign tourists. Which is grave situation for Kashmir tourism and must checked at early. This is most important challenge for Jammu and Kashmir on tourism front, is to inspire the confidence of potential tourists as a safe and secure destination. The security environments (i.e.

geographic places and spaces) are probably the most unpredictable factor in the tourism industry. It has the potential to inflict major damage on the industry, as, Richter and Waugh (1986) explain, "a few terrorists can have a decisive and crippling impact on travel patterns and economies of particular locales".

2.2.7 Recommending Pahalgam and Gulmarg as Safe and Secure Tourism Destinations

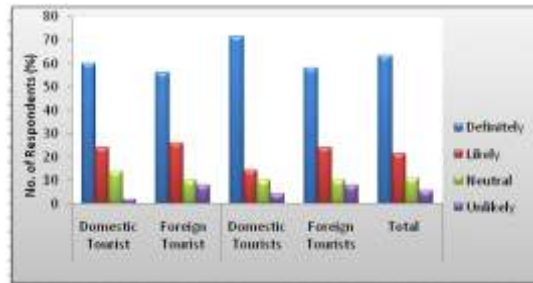
Tourists decide where and how to spend their holidays in a safe place before deciding to set off, so that they make their holidays more determined. Security problem results either from the lived experience or from the image of the ones who experienced it and comparatively plays an important part to determine the correct holiday place. In other words, the image for maintaining and protecting the public order influences the tourists’ choice as a touristic attraction to go on a holiday. All round satisfaction of tourist is essential not only for their revisit but also for those whom they recommend to visit that particular tourist destination.

Table 2.9: Recommending Pahalgam and Gulmarg as Tourism Destination

Response	Pahalgam		Gulmarg		Total (% age)
	Domestic tourists (% age)	Foreign tourists (% age)	Domestic tourists (% age)	Foreign tourists (% age)	
Definitely	30(60)	28(56)	50(71.42)	29(58)	137(62.27)
Likely	12(24)	13(26)	10(14.28)	12(24)	47(21.40)
Neutral	7(14)	5(10)	7(10)	5(10)	24(10.90)
Unlikely	1(2)	4(8)	3(4.28)	4(8)	12(5.45)
Total	50(100)	50(100)	70(100)	50(100)	220(100)

Source: Field Survey conducted by scholar, 2013.

Fig. 2.4 inviting others to visit



From Table 2.9 and figure 2.4, it clearly depicts that majority of tourists (62.27%) would definitely recommend visiting the Pahalgam and Gulmarg to their friends and family. 21.40% indicated that they would likely recommend visiting these two destinations to their friends and family, with very low percentages recorded for a negative referral opinion. This positive attitude is somewhat diluted when compared to the retrospective rating given for safety and security, where almost same respondents indicated that they regard safety and security as poor/very poor. 10.90% of tourists were neutral to recommend their friends and family to Pahalgam and Gulmarg. It can also be observed from above findings that positive attitude towards Gulmarg is more than Pahalgam. The reason for this may overcrowd at Pahalgam because of pilgrim tourism to Holly Amaranth cave via Pahalgam.

Conclusion

The emergent violence and following in security totally demolished the once so prosperous tourism business of the Kashmir valley that had once been one of the most popular tourist destinations in India, but ironically, People sensibly perceived the region as too risky to travel which inevitably caused a significant set-back Kashmir’s economic development. Since 2001, though, the total number of incidences of violence gradually decreased until it reached the historically lowest figure of 340 incidences in 2011 (Ministry of Home Affairs, Gov. of India, 2012). The present paper offers a complete investigation and interpretation of data gathering from the field. In this paper the results of 220 useable questionnaires are analyzed. The purpose was to achieve the objectives that were fixed at the beginning of the study. The hypotheses set to have also been proven qualitative and quantitatively. The analysis was on the findings of what the scholar found on the study area using what the respondents have said. As the fear to go to Kashmir valley because of the risk of terrorism plays the important role in this study, so it was important to conclude whether there is a difference in the perception of tourists before and after their arrival depending on the relationship between their trip satisfaction and security perception in Kashmir valley. Interestingly, significant difference were could be detected between their pre- and post-trip safety satisfaction. Further it was assumed, that people who have been to Kashmir might be less frightened of terrorism, since they have come to the conclusion that the risks are not high enough to prevent them from travelling to Kashmir valley. On understanding the views of the tourists, about tourism, terrorism, safety and security issues, safety perception of tourists and presence of security forces and their effect on tourist’s inflow it becomes necessary to restore tourism particularly in Kashmir Valley. Though all the stakeholders associated with tourism accept that presence of security forces is necessary for more tourists’ arrival to Pahalgam and Gulmarg of Kashmir Valley.

Recommendations

A number of suggestions have been put forth in the light of the findings emerging out of the present study:

1. There is urgent need of enhancement both in man power and modern facilities in tourist police wing. The government has to pay adequate attention to this aspect.
2. Send out survey teams at fixed interval basis to find out who is travelling to Pahalgam and Gulmarg destination, where they come from, what they do feel about tour satisfaction and concerning safety perception, and what they expect more, etc. then feed information back immediately to the promotion section of tourism department.
3. Statistics on crime against tourists can help authorities to find gaps in security services improve the quality of the tourist destination and help avoid crime scale problem in the future. Crime and incidents statistics can also be used as background evidence, providing a situation for crime and incident communication and a reference point for representing a return to normalcy.
4. There should be emergency call Centre's available at Pahalgam and Gulmarg and at every tourist destination of Kashmir valley, with multilingual operators to handle emergencies relating of tourists. Information on how to contact these emergency services needs to be communicated clearly to tourists on arrival.
5. The hotels and house-boats should take steps to enhance the human resource element by training them to serve the tourists effectively and thereby increase the tourist's quality perceptions.

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