

Tourist Typologies in Ayodhya: Mapping Visitor Profiles for Religious Tourism Development

Shreeparna Ghosh¹, Sajal Ghosh²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Geography, Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India

² Department of Geography, Ranchi University, Ranchi, Jharkhand, India

ABSTRACT

Ayodhya, one of India's most significant religious and cultural destinations, has witnessed a growing influx of tourists, particularly in the wake of recent developments enhancing its visibility and infrastructure. This study aims to analyse the typologies of tourists visiting Ayodhya, with a focus on understanding their demographic profiles, motivations, travel behaviour, and patterns of engagement with the city's religious and cultural sites. By categorizing tourists into distinct types—such as pilgrims, heritage tourists, casual visitors, and spiritual seekers—this research provides valuable insights into the diverse spectrum of visitors shaping Ayodhya's tourism landscape. Primary data collected through surveys and interviews, complemented by secondary sources, form the basis for the typological mapping. The findings highlight how different tourist segments interact with the destination and suggest strategic considerations for tailored tourism development that aligns with the city's religious significance and visitor expectations. This typological approach offers a foundation for destination planners and stakeholders to enhance visitor experience, infrastructure planning, and heritage management in Ayodhya.

KEYWORDS: Tourist Typology, Religious Tourism Development, Tourist Profile And Tourism Landscape.

1.INTRODUCTION:

Religious tourism is one of the oldest and most significant forms of travel, where people visit sacred places primarily for spiritual fulfilment, pilgrimage, and cultural experience. In recent years, religious destinations have increasingly attracted diverse categories of visitors, including pilgrims, spiritual seekers, cultural tourists, and leisure travellers. Understanding these different visitor types has become an important area of tourism research, as tourist behaviour, motivations, and expectations vary significantly across groups. Scholars such as Erik Cohen emphasized that tourists cannot be treated as a homogeneous group; instead, typologies must be developed to understand the different forms of tourist experiences and motivations (Cohen, 1972). Such typological approaches help researchers and planners analyse travel motivations, patterns of participation, and the socio-cultural impact of tourism.

*Corresponding Author Email: shreeparna2021@gmail.com

Published: 13 May 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70558/IJMRS.2026.v2.i2.301046>

Copyright © 2026 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).

Ayodhya, one of the most sacred cities in India and traditionally believed to be the birthplace of Lord Rama, has emerged as a major centre of religious tourism in recent years. The construction and consecration of the Ram Mandir in 2024 have dramatically increased tourist inflow, transforming the city into a global pilgrimage destination. Reports indicate that Ayodhya received more than 135 million domestic visitors and thousands of international tourists in 2024, reflecting an unprecedented surge in religious tourism. This rapid growth has strengthened the city's position as a key spiritual tourism hub and has significantly contributed to the local economy, infrastructure development, and hospitality sector expansion.

With the growing diversity of visitors—including traditional pilgrims, first-time religious tourists, heritage tourists, and experiential travellers—it becomes essential to classify and analyse these groups systematically. Mapping tourist typologies allows policymakers and tourism planners to better understand visitor motivations, travel behaviour, spending patterns, and service expectations. Such insights are crucial for developing effective tourism strategies, improving visitor management, and ensuring sustainable religious tourism development in Ayodhya.

Therefore, the study aims to identify and categorize the various types of tourists visiting Ayodhya. By analysing visitor characteristics, motivations, and travel patterns, the research seeks to contribute to more informed tourism planning, enhance pilgrimage experiences, and support the sustainable development of Ayodhya as a leading religious tourism destination. This study aims to analyse the typologies of tourists visiting Ayodhya, with a focus on understanding their demographic profiles, motivations, travel behaviour, and patterns of engagement with the city's religious and cultural sites. By categorizing tourists into distinct types—such as pilgrims, heritage tourists, casual visitors, and spiritual seekers—this research provides valuable insights into the diverse spectrum of visitors shaping Ayodhya's tourism landscape.

The concept of tourist typology has been widely discussed in tourism studies as a way to classify tourists according to their motivations, behaviour, and travel experiences. Early tourism literature often treated tourists as a homogeneous group; however, later researchers recognized that tourists differ significantly in their motivations, expectations, and patterns of travel. Therefore, developing typologies became essential to understand the diversity of tourist experiences and to assist in effective tourism planning and management.

One of the earliest and most influential contributions to tourist typology was made by Cohen (1972). Cohen proposed a fourfold classification of tourists based on the degree of institutionalization and the balance between novelty and familiarity experienced during travel. These categories include organized mass tourists, individual mass tourists, explorers, and drifters. Organized mass tourists generally travel through package tours and prefer familiar environments, whereas individual mass tourists have slightly more freedom in their travel choices. Another important contribution was made by Plog (1977), who developed a personality-based typology of tourists. Plog classified tourists into allocentric, psychocentric, and mid-centric groups based on their personality characteristics and preferences for travel destinations. Allocentric tourists are adventurous and prefer unexplored destinations, while psychocentric tourists prefer familiar, well-developed tourist locations. Mid-centric tourists fall

between these two extremes. This typology highlights how psychological traits influence tourist decision-making and destination choice. Smith (1989) further expanded the concept of tourist classification by identifying different types of tourists based on their interaction with host communities and cultural environments. Smith categorized tourists into explorers, elite tourists, off-beat tourists, unusual tourists, incipient mass tourists, and mass tourists. This classification helps explain the varying degrees of contact between tourists and local communities, which in turn affects cultural exchange and the impact of tourism on host societies. Research on religious tourism has also highlighted the diversity of visitors to sacred destinations. Nolan and Nolan (1992) examined pilgrimage sites and identified different categories of visitors, including devout pilgrims, religious tourists, and secular visitors. Their study demonstrated that pilgrimage destinations often attract visitors with varying degrees of religious motivation, ranging from deeply spiritual pilgrims to tourists interested primarily in cultural and historical aspects.

Another significant contribution was made by Sharpley and Sundaram (2005), who explored the relationship between pilgrimage and tourism. Their research suggested that many visitors to religious sites combine spiritual motivations with leisure activities, leading to the emergence of hybrid tourist identities. This indicates that the boundaries between pilgrims and tourists are often blurred. Similarly, Timothy and Olsen (2006) emphasized the importance of understanding visitor motivations in religious tourism. They argued that religious destinations attract a wide spectrum of tourists including pilgrims, spiritual seekers, heritage tourists, and cultural tourists. Their work highlights the need for proper visitor segmentation to ensure effective tourism planning and management at sacred sites.

More recent studies have focused on the changing nature of religious tourism. Collins-Kreiner (2010) proposed a typology that distinguishes between pilgrims, religious tourists, and secular tourists based on the level of religious motivation and participation in sacred activities. The study emphasized that many visitors may shift between these categories depending on their personal motivations and travel experiences. Furthermore, Olsen (2013) emphasized that religious tourism has evolved into a complex phenomenon that includes spiritual, cultural, and experiential dimensions. The author argued that modern religious tourists often seek both spiritual fulfilment and cultural exploration, which creates new opportunities and challenges for destination management. Another important perspective was provided by Raj and Griffin (2015), who highlighted the role of religious tourism in regional development. Their research suggested that understanding visitor typologies helps policymakers and tourism planners develop better infrastructure, services, and marketing strategies tailored to different tourist groups. Recent studies have expanded the understanding of tourist typologies by examining the changing nature of religious tourism in the contemporary world. Collins-Kreiner (2016) discussed the evolving concept of pilgrimage tourism and argued that the boundaries between pilgrimage and tourism are increasingly blurred due to globalization, commercialization, and modern travel patterns. The study highlighted that modern visitors to religious sites often combine spiritual motives with cultural, educational, and leisure interests, making traditional classifications of pilgrims and tourists more complex.

Further research by Collins-Kreiner (2020) emphasized that the field of religion and tourism has become diverse and multidisciplinary, involving perspectives from geography, sociology, anthropology, and tourism studies. The study suggested that religious tourism research should adopt a holistic approach because the motivations of visitors often range from devotion and pilgrimage to cultural curiosity and personal spiritual exploration. In a conceptual study on religious tourism development, Marin et al. (2020) examined the typological distinctions between pilgrimage tourism, spiritual tourism, and religious heritage tourism. Their research highlighted that religious tourism includes multiple forms of travel motivated by faith, spirituality, and cultural exploration, and these categories frequently coexist within the same destination. A motivation-based approach to tourist typologies was explored in a study published in the *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management* (2021), which identified four main categories of religious tourists: sacred pilgrims, believers, experience companions, and secular tourists. The research demonstrated that visitors differ in their degree of religious commitment, participation in rituals, and perception of authenticity at sacred destinations. Recent conceptual discussions have also emphasized the transformation of pilgrimage in contemporary tourism. Polus et al. (2022) suggested that modern pilgrimage experiences are no longer limited to traditional religious journeys but have expanded to include spiritual exploration, volunteer tourism, and experiential travel. This shift reflects changing tourist motivations and the evolving nature of sacred travel in the 21st century. Similarly, Polus and Carr (2023) examined the relationship between pilgrimage and volunteer tourism, highlighting that modern spiritual travellers often seek meaningful experiences that combine service, cultural learning, and spiritual reflection. Their work indicates that religious tourism is increasingly shaped by experiential and transformative travel motivations.

Despite the extensive research on tourist typologies and religious tourism, there remains a limited number of studies focusing specifically on emerging pilgrimage destinations. Ayodhya, as one of the most important religious centres in India, has experienced a significant increase in tourist arrivals in recent years. The development of major religious infrastructure has attracted a wide variety of visitors including pilgrims, heritage tourists, cultural travellers, and leisure tourists. Therefore, identifying and mapping tourist typologies in Ayodhya is essential for understanding visitor behaviour and for supporting sustainable religious tourism development.

2. OBJECTIVES

In the present study consists two objectives

1. To explore the visitor's profile on the basis of Socio-demographic attributes
2. To analyze the relationship between satisfaction and Socio-demographic profile and travel behavior.

3. METERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Description of the Study area

Ayodhya, historically referred to as Saket, is located on the banks of the Saryu River in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh and is regarded as one of the most sacred cities in Hinduism. The

city holds immense religious and cultural importance in the historical and spiritual landscape of India. It serves as a prominent pilgrimage centre for Hindus and draws millions of visitors annually from different parts of the world. According to Hindu mythological traditions, particularly the epic *Ramayana*, Ayodhya is believed to be the birthplace of Lord Rama, which further enhances its religious significance. Geographically, the city lies within the North Gangetic Plain and administratively falls in the south-central part of Uttar Pradesh. It is situated between latitudes $26^{\circ}27'N$ and $26^{\circ}52'N$ and longitudes $81^{\circ}44'E$ and $82^{\circ}30'E$. The drainage system of the region is mainly influenced by the Ghaghra and Gomti rivers, with the Ghaghra—locally known as the Saryu River—serving as the primary river system. The climate of Ayodhya is characterized by tropical to sub-tropical conditions, with recorded temperatures ranging from about $45^{\circ}C$ during summer to around $3.5^{\circ}C$ in winter. The geographical location of the study area is illustrated in Figure 1.

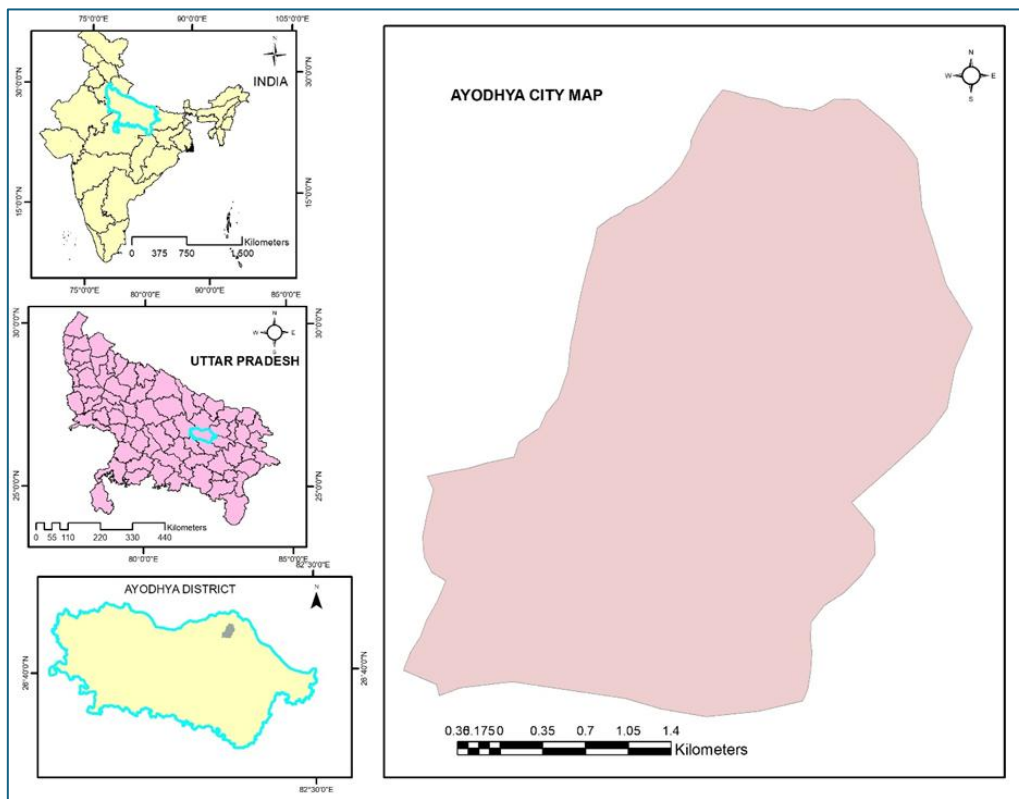


Figure: 1 Location Map of the Study Area

Ayodhya is home to numerous temples, ghats, and sacred places that hold great religious importance for devotees. Among these, the Ram Janmabhoomi Temple is the most prominent and historically debated religious site. It is widely believed to mark the exact birthplace of Lord Rama. Historical accounts suggest that an ancient temple once stood at this location and was destroyed during the reign of the Mughal emperor Babur in the 16th century. Subsequently, the Babri Masjid was constructed at the same site and remained there until it was demolished in 1992. In a landmark decision in 2019, the Supreme Court of India ruled in favour of constructing a Ram temple at the disputed location. Besides the Ram Janmabhoomi Temple, Ayodhya contains several other important religious sites. Hanuman Garhi, dedicated to Lord Hanuman, is one of the most revered temples in the city and attracts thousands of pilgrims

annually. Another notable temple is Kanak Bhawan, also known as the “Golden House,” which is dedicated to Lord Rama and Goddess Sita. According to tradition, this temple was presented to Sita by her mother after her marriage to Lord Rama. Other sacred places in Ayodhya include Swarg Dwar (Gateway to Heaven), Tulsi Smarak Bhawan, and numerous ghats along the Saryu River such as Janki Ghat, Sita Ghat, Ram Ghat, and Hanuman Ghat.

The city is also renowned for its vibrant cultural heritage and religious celebrations. Various festivals and fairs are celebrated throughout the year, including Ram Navami, Diwali, and Ram Lila, which depict the life and deeds of Lord Rama through rituals and dramatic performances. In recent years, Ayodhya has experienced a significant rise in tourism, attracting visitors from across India and abroad who come to explore its religious and historical heritage. This growth has largely been supported by government initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting the city’s cultural legacy. As a result, tourism has contributed significantly to the local economy by generating business opportunities, employment, and infrastructural development. Improvements in transportation, accommodation, and tourist facilities have made it easier for visitors to access and explore Ayodhya, thereby increasing revenue for both the government and local communities.

3.2 Description of the Data Set

The study is based on primary survey. Primary data collected from tourists using structured scheduled consists several parameters such as gender, education qualification, age, marital status and also asks about the different factors influencing the satisfaction of the tourists, such as catering, lodging, transport facilities and overall infrastructure in Ayodhya. Each question and statement in the schedule was rated on a Five-point Likert Scale.

3.3 Methodology

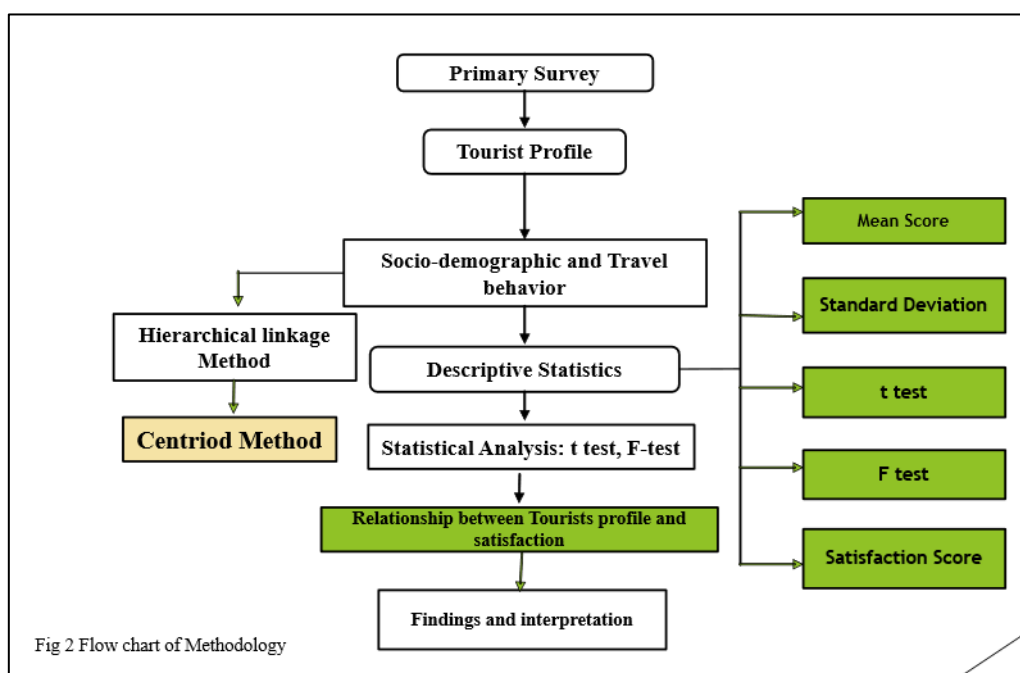


Figure 2 showing the detail methodology of the present study. After the data collection descriptive statistics have been calculated. Based upon t-test and F-test have been used to

measured Hierarchical linkage and centroid method which is showing the relationship between tourist profile and satisfaction.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Tourist Scenario in Ayodhya

Table 1 Tourist Inflow in Ayodhya Since 2017 to 2023

Year	Tourist Arrival (in Number)	Growth Rate (in %)	Domestic Tourist Arrival (in Number)	Growth Rate (in %)	Foreign Tourists Arrival (in Number)	Growth Rate (in %)
2017	24776761	-	24597335	-	179426	-
2018	28503743	15.04	28296517	15.03	207226	15.49
2019	30465946	6.88	30263819	6.95	202127	-2.46
2020	8788908	-71.15	8778855	-70.99	10053	-95.02
2021	2699721	-69.28	19497185	122.10	31	-99.64
2022	23910479	785	23909014	22.62	1465	4625.80
2023	63010176	163	63001612	163	8564	484.57

Source: UP Tourism Statistics, Uttar Pradesh

The table 1 presents the trend of tourist arrivals in Ayodhya from 2017 to 2023, including domestic and foreign visitors along with their respective growth rates. The data reveals significant fluctuations in tourist inflow during this period, mainly influenced by external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the revival of tourism in the post-pandemic period. In 2017, Ayodhya recorded 24,776,761 total tourist arrivals, of which 24,597,335 were domestic tourists and 179,426 were foreign visitors. The following year, 2018, showed a notable increase in tourism, with total tourist arrivals rising to 28,503,743, representing a 15.04% growth rate. Both domestic and foreign tourist arrivals also increased during this year, indicating the growing popularity of Ayodhya as a religious tourism destination. The upward trend continued in 2019, when the total number of tourists increased to 30,465,946, although the growth rate slowed to 6.88%. Domestic tourist arrivals increased slightly, while foreign tourist arrivals declined marginally by 2.46%, suggesting a slight decrease in international visitation despite overall growth in tourism.

However, a dramatic decline occurred in 2020, when tourist arrivals dropped sharply to 8,788,908, reflecting a 71.15% decrease compared to the previous year. This drastic fall can largely be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to travel restrictions, lockdowns, and the temporary closure of religious and tourism sites. Foreign tourist arrivals were particularly affected, falling by 95.02%, highlighting the severe impact of the pandemic on international travel. The situation remained challenging in 2021, when tourism continued to experience disruptions. Although the data shows some inconsistencies, the overall trend indicates a continued decline in foreign tourist arrivals, which dropped to only 31 visitors, reflecting a 99.64% decrease compared to earlier years. This indicates that international tourism had almost completely halted during the pandemic period.

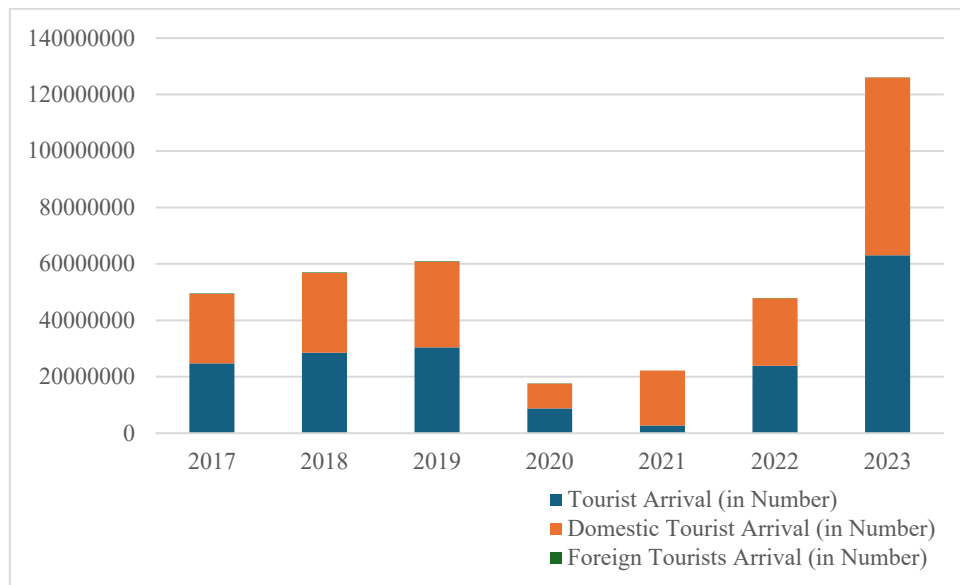


Figure 3 Domestic and Foreign Tourist Arrival in Ayodhya (2017-2023)

Source: UP Tourism Statistics, Uttar Pradesh

Figure 3 shows that tourism began to recover significantly in 2022, when the total number of tourists increased to 23,910,479. This remarkable rise represents a strong rebound from the previous pandemic-affected years. Domestic tourism played a major role in this recovery, while foreign tourist arrivals also increased, although their share remained relatively small compared to domestic visitors. The recovery became even more evident in 2023, when Ayodhya recorded 63,010,176 tourist arrivals, representing an impressive 163% growth rate compared to the previous year. Domestic tourists accounted for the majority of visitors, while foreign tourist arrivals also increased to 8,564. This surge reflects the renewed interest in Ayodhya as a major religious tourism destination, supported by improved infrastructure, government initiatives, and growing national attention toward the city. Overall, the data indicates that domestic tourists constitute the overwhelming majority of visitors to Ayodhya, while foreign tourist arrivals remain comparatively limited. The sharp decline during 2020–2021 highlights the impact of global crises on tourism, whereas the strong growth after 2022 demonstrates the resilience and rapid recovery of religious tourism in Ayodhya.

4.2 Analysis of Socio-Economic and Travel Characteristics of Tourists

The table 2 presents the socio-economic profile and travel behaviour of tourists visiting Ayodhya. The data highlights various aspects such as gender distribution, age structure, educational background, occupation, income level, travel organization, accommodation preference, travel partners, and duration of stay. In terms of gender composition, male tourists constitute the majority with 57.70%, while 42.30% are female visitors. This indicates that although male participation is slightly higher, female participation in religious tourism is also significant, suggesting that Ayodhya attracts a balanced mix of visitors. The age distribution shows that the largest proportion of tourists falls within the 36–45 years age group (30.60%), followed by 26–34 years (28.40%) and 18–25 years (21.20%). Tourists above 45 years account for 14.40%, while those below 18 years represent only 5.40%. This indicates that the majority of visitors are young and middle-aged adults, who are more likely to travel for pilgrimage as well as cultural experiences. Regarding educational attainment, the majority of tourists are undergraduates (52.0%), followed by those with secondary education (27.1%). A smaller proportion has primary education (3.7%), while 17.30% fall under other educational categories. This suggests that most visitors have a moderate to high level of education, which may influence their awareness of religious heritage and tourism opportunities.

The table 2 also shows occupational structure reveals that government officials (31.3%) and business owners (30.7%) form the largest groups of tourists. Students account for 17.0%, while smaller proportions include retired individuals (3.2%) and unemployed persons (2.9%). This indicates that economically active individuals constitute the majority of visitors to Ayodhya. The income distribution shows that nearly half of the tourists (49.50%) earn between ₹10,000 and ₹25,000 per month, while 22.10% earn below ₹10,000. About 17.0% earn between ₹25,000 and ₹50,000, and a smaller proportion earns ₹50,000–₹75,000 (6.4%) and above ₹75,000 (6.0%). This pattern suggests that Ayodhya primarily attracts middle-income visitors, reflecting the affordability and accessibility of religious tourism.

As shown in table 2 With respect to the mode of travel organization, the majority of tourists (84.9%) travel individually, while only 15.1% participate in package tours. This indicates that most visitors prefer independent travel arrangements rather than organized tour packages. In terms of accommodation preference, nearly half of the tourists (49.52%) stay in dharamshalas, ashrams, or budget hotels, followed by average hotels (24.67%) and guest houses or lodges (17.57%). Only 8.29% prefer A-category hotels. This pattern reflects the religious nature of tourism in Ayodhya, where many pilgrims opt for affordable and traditional accommodation options. The travelling partner data shows that most tourists (60.11%) visit Ayodhya with family members, while 27.86% travel alone and 12.03% travel with friends. This highlights the importance of family-based pilgrimage in religious tourism.

Finally, the duration of stay indicates that the largest proportion of tourists (46.62%) stay for 1–2 days, followed by 31.20% staying for 2–3 days. A smaller group (17.68%) makes same-day visits. This suggests that most tourists prefer short stays, typical of pilgrimage destinations where visitors complete religious activities within a limited period. Overall, the analysis reveals that Ayodhya mainly attracts middle-aged, educated, and middle-income domestic tourists who travel independently, often with family members, prefer budget accommodations, and usually stay for one to two days. These characteristics highlight the pilgrimage-oriented nature of

tourism in the city and provide useful insights for tourism planning and infrastructure development.

Table 2 Socio-demographic characteristics and travel behavior information of respondents

Item/ variable	Group	Percentage
GENDER	Male	57.70%
	Female	42.30%
AGE	Below 18	5.40%
	18-25	21.20%
	26-34	28.40%
	36-45	30.60%
	Above 45	14.40%
EDUCATION	Primary	3.7%
	Secondary	27.1%
	Unde Graduate	52.0%
	Others	17.30%
OCCUPATION	Government officials	31.3%
	Own Business	30.7%
	Students	17.0%
	Retired	3.2%
	Unemployed	2.9%
INCOME LEVEL	Below 10000	22.10%
	10000-25000	49.50%
	25000-50000	17.00%
	50000-75000	6.4%
	More than 75000	6.0%
ORGANIZATION MODE	Individually	84.9%
	Package tour	15.1%
ACCOMMODATION	A category Hotel	8.29%
	Average Hotel	24.67%

	Guest House/Lodge	17.57%
	Dharamshala/Ashram/Budget Hotel	49.52%
TRAVELLING PARTNER	Travel Alone	27.86
	Family	60.11%
	Friends	12.03%
DURATION OF STAY	1 -2 day	46.62%
	2-3 days	31.20%
	Same day	17.68%

Source: Primary Survey,2025

Table 3 The relationship between socio-demographic profile, travel behavior and satisfaction

Gender	t value	Significance
	7.403	0.000
Female (100.78), Male (97.15)		
Marital Status	t value	significance
	-7.383	0.000
Married (97.59), Single (101.16)		
Age	F value	Significance
	14.607	0.000
Below 18 (85.6),18-25 (97.0) 26-34(99.6),35-45(100.1) Above 45(105.3)		
Education	F value	Significance
	9.105	0.000
Primary (98.5). Secondary (99.3) Undergraduate (95.1), Others (101.0)		

Occupation	F value	Significance
	14.667	0.000
Government officials (100.7), Worker (98.2) Business Owner (95.9) Student (96.5), Retired (107.1) Unemployed (100.3)		
Annual Income	F Value	Significance
	70.296	0.000
Below 10000, 10000-25000, 25000-50000, 50000-75000 Above 75000		
Holiday organization Mode	t value	Significance
	- 2.743	0.006
Individually (97.64), Package Tour (99.55)		
Travel Partner	F value	Significance
	16.2.4	0.000
Travel Alone (100.6), family (101.1). Friends (96.1)		
Accommodation	F value	Significance
	22.143	0.000
Hotel (90.8), Ashrams (95.9), Homestay (100.1)		
Length of stay	F value	Significance
	1.921	0.104
Same day (96.7), 1-2 days (96.7), 2 -3 days (100.2)		

Table 3 shows the satisfaction levels of participating tourists were significantly differences across socio-demographic profile and travel behavior. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the satisfaction scores of males and females (t value=7.403; $p=0.000$). It is observed that female tourists had a higher satisfaction level than their male counterparts. There was a statistically significant difference between satisfaction mean scores of married and single tourists (t value=7.383; $p=.000$) and single tourists had a higher satisfaction level than the married ones. There was significant difference among satisfaction levels of tourists in different age groups (F value=14.607; $p=0.000$). Generally, the younger age group had significantly lower satisfaction mean scores than the 45 or above age group. The table also shows that F value of education and occupation level are 9.105 and 14.667 respectively. It's indicating that primary and secondary education level student are less satisfy than the graduate level student and on the other hand retired person had higher satisfaction levels than the other persons. Table 3 shows the influence of travel behavior variables on tourist satisfaction was also investigated. The statistically significant results of t test (-2.743) on the relationship between holiday organization mode and satisfaction indicated that satisfaction levels of tourists travelling independently was higher than those travelling with package tours. The Results of (F value = 16.204 and 22.143) for travel companion and Accommodation respectively. The results revealed that tourist are more satisfied to visits with their family than the friends and alone. On the other hand, tourist is more satisfy with homestay facilities than the other accommodation facilities. There was no significant relationship between length of stay and satisfaction levels of tourists. It might be deduced that long or short length stays had no effect in increasing or decreasing the satisfaction levels of tourists.

5. CONCLUSION

The major purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships among tourist profile and travel behavior. From a practical perspective, the study also revealed a number of interesting findings that would be of help for decision makers. The analysis has given some very important insight into role of tourists' profile on tourists' satisfaction. The findings of the study established that socio-demographic and travel behavior variables did affect tourists' satisfaction with destination and loyalty to destination. Marketers could predict the level of satisfaction of prospective tourists if their socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics are known. The results revealed that availability and quality of accommodation, facilities of washroom/toilets and management of SRJTK staff were high satisfactory attributes. Conversely, Quality of food, information and communication facilities and emergency facilities and safety security were low satisfactory attributes. In addition, it is strongly recommended that periodic assessments of visitors' profile and their level of satisfaction with destinations should be made by destination managers and promoters

REFERENCES

- Hvenegaard, G. T. (2002). Using tourist typologies for ecotourism research. *Journal of ecotourism*, 1(1), 7-18.
- Raj, R., & Griffin, K. A. (Eds.). (2015). *Religious tourism and pilgrimage management: An international perspective*. Cabi.

- Olsen, D. H. (2018). Religion, pilgrimage and tourism in the Middle East. In *Routledge handbook on tourism in the Middle East and North Africa* (pp. 109-124). Routledge.
- Collins-Kreiner, N. (2020). A review of research into religion and tourism Launching the Annals of Tourism Research Curated Collection on religion and tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 82, 102892.
- Timothy, D. J., & Olsen, D. H. (Eds.). (2006). *Tourism, religion and spiritual journeys* (Vol. 4). London: Routledge.
- Sharpley, R., & Sundaram, P. (2005). Tourism: A sacred journey? The case of ashram tourism, India. *International journal of tourism research*, 7(3), 161-171.
- Nolan, M. L., & Nolan, S. (1992). Religious sites as tourism attractions in Europe. *Annals of tourism research*, 19(1), 68-78.
- Collins-Kreiner, N. (2020). A review of research into religion and tourism Launching the Annals of Tourism Research Curated Collection on religion and tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 82, 102892.
- Sánchez-Pérez, M., Terán-Yépez, E., Marín-Carrillo, M. B., Marín-Carrillo, G. M., & Illescas-Manzano, M. D. (2021). The impact of the COVID-19 health crisis on tourist evaluation and behavioural intentions in Spain: Implications for market segmentation analysis. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(7), 919-933.
- Polus, R., Carr, N., & Walters, T. (2022). Conceptualizing the changing faces of pilgrimage through contemporary tourism. *International Journal of the Sociology of Leisure*, 5(3), 321-335.
- Polus, R., & Carr, N. (2024). From pilgrimage to volunteer tourism: A spiritual journey in the contemporary world. *Anatolia*, 35(3), 607-620.
- Fan, D. X., Zhang, H. Q., Jenkins, C. L., & Tavitiyaman, P. (2017). Tourist typology in social contact: An addition to existing theories. *Tourism management*, 60, 357-366.
- Tsai, H. Y. M. (2021). Exploring the motivation-based typology of religious tourists: A study of Welcome Royal Lord Festival. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 21, 100623.
- Iliev, D. (2020). The evolution of religious tourism: Concept, segmentation and development of new identities. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 45, 131-140.
- Wickens, E. (2002). The sacred and the profane: A tourist typology. *Annals of tourism research*, 29(3), 834-851.
- Hvenegaard, G. T. (2002). Using tourist typologies for ecotourism research. *Journal of ecotourism*, 1(1), 7-18.