

# A Study on Destination Loyalty of Tourists at the UNESCO World Heritage Site : A Case Study of Old Goa in India

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## Abstract

This study investigated the factors influencing tourist destination loyalty towards the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Old Goa. This study used a quantitative research approach to collect the information from the tourists at the heritage site. Three hundred ninety respondents participated in the survey. Further, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) revealed three factors, that is, Site Attributes (SA), Accessibility and Transportation Facilities (ATF), and Destination Amenities (DA). Moreover, the findings of this study conducted at the heritage site also showed a high level of overall satisfaction among the visiting tourists. According to the findings of linear regression, there was a strong positive link between the selected destination features and visitors' destination loyalty. An importance-performance analysis (IPA) was performed in the study to assess the destination's significant strengths and shortcomings. Understanding the underlying factors that lead to tourists' loyalty is expected to offer the necessary insights for destination managers to espouse destination management and marketing strategies.

**Keywords :** destination loyalty (DL), site attributes (SA), accessibility and transportation facilities (ATF), destination amenities (DA), importance-performance analysis (IPA), Old Goa heritage site

**JEL Classification Codes :** D12, M20, Z32

**Paper Submission Date :** June 10, 2021 ; **Paper sent back for Revision :** February 13, 2022 ; **Paper Acceptance Date :** March 20, 2022 ; **Paper Published Online :** April 15, 2022

The possibility of experiencing something new, pleasant, and unfamiliar motivates people to travel to heritage destinations. Since cultural heritage has been a solid motive for travel, the tourism industry connects closely. In many countries, cultural heritage sites have created an everlasting destination image. Therefore, with the growing demand for cultural heritage sites in tourism worldwide, a study in this aspect is necessary for the destinations (Hamid et al., 2021). Citing the significance of heritage sites has been the main concern for many disciplines like archaeology, history, geography, tourism, etc. The planning and promotion of heritage sites are usually operationalized, keeping in mind the needs of the management of the heritage site, the community, and the concerned tourism operators. The planning and promotion strategies also need to be implemented regarding the conservation and maintenance of heritage sites. Therefore, proper destination management, planning, and promotion are expected to produce valuable results leading to the development of the destination. Hence, there needs to be a balance between heritage and tourism (Hamid et al., 2021). Heritage sites

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**DOI :** <https://doi.org/10.17010/pijom/2022/v15i4/169248>

provide the tourism industry with remains of the past that have tremendous significance in the current scenario. This satisfies the tourists' desire to experience the past, a nostalgic experience. To fulfill tourists' nostalgia and demands, the heritage sites have been transformed into tourist attractions (Lee, 2015). This has also created the need for souvenirs that serve as an image of the site and reminders of the trip for tourists (Sthapit & Björk, 2017).

Kamat (2011) stated that the state of Goa has seen a rapid increase in tourism, and the state's exclusive and excessive reliance on beach-centric tourism necessitates the need to infuse sustainability through diversification. The significance of heritage sites can be viewed from many different perspectives. According to the social perspective, heritage sites are important as they create a sense of self-identity and inheritance. The political philosophy holds that creating a nation's identity is essential. As per the economic perspective, heritage can be transformed into a tourist product (Hamid et al., 2021). Since heritage sites have exceptional significance, there is an urgent need for them to be preserved and conserved. It must be acknowledged that natural relics and antiques are scarce, non-renewable, and restricted in availability and that once they are gone, they are gone forever. Hamid et al. (2021) also claimed that all components of nature, like civilization, vanish from the world at different rates, but none lasts forever. This statement signifies that conserving and protecting heritage is important (Liburd & Becken, 2017).

Moreover, the site attributes are the assets of the heritage destination, which create a significant tourist product and, therefore, a lasting memorable experience. The revenue generated by a cultural heritage destination is expected to develop the destination as a whole. For the post-modern tourists, heritage tourism is of constant fame because tourists in recent times appear to divert from the usual form of vacation of sun, sand, and sea to more classic types which are differentiated, unique, and exclusive. Therefore, history with its natural and cultural assets is sold as tourist products. WTO and UNESCO stated that cultural heritage tourism is a 'good' form of tourism that could overcome the 'bad' form of mass tourism and its impact on the destination. Significant destination planning and wise promotion are essential for cultural heritage destinations (Sotiriadis, 2017). Also, it can be noted that heritage tourists make up a profile of high-income and educated tourists. Hence, cultural and heritage tourists constitute a particular segment of tourism.

Since heritage destinations could draw high revenues, these tourists are of importance. There is a need to pay closer attention to their behavior (Wang et al., 2020). Cultural and heritage tourists are different segments of tourists with special needs and services (Bowitz & Ibenholt, 2009). Therefore, cultural heritage can be a vital aspect of tourism. These assets of tourism act as major attractions for tourism demand as they combine original features of the destination that portray its history, culture, and environment, creating a rich tapestry that promotes cultural traditions. The transformation of cultural heritage aspects into a tourism product has to be managed cautiously since it is a sensitive matter. The knowledge about the important heritage sites in a particular destination, their carrying capacity, and strategies to promote and market them need to be given serious attention while planning the destination's heritage tourist products (Metaxas, 2009).

The link between heritage and the tourism industry is remarkable. According to WTO, among the international trips taken by tourists, almost 40% engage in cultural and heritage experiences as part of their overall trip (Ramires et al., 2018). In reality, the importance of legacy may be perceived from various perspectives, some of which may be interconnected (Andriotis, 2011). Tourism and recreation, tourist expenditure, and regeneration are critical economic factors. Therefore, against the backdrop of the points mentioned above, it can be stated that the development and promotion of the destination heritage sites are crucial for tourism's growth. Hence, heritage tourists' behavior, preferences, and motivation must be analyzed and studied (Cong et al., 2014). There is a lack of research that analyzes heritage tourism by focusing upon the factors that influence such segments of tourists. These involve visitor behavior, characteristics, and motivations with a particular interest like tourist experiences. As the demand for heritage tourism increases, there is a need for a broader understanding of tourist characteristics (Richards, 2016). Research in these areas is essential because there is a need to identify and prioritize significant

heritage assets to develop cultural heritage tourism. This tourism segment has great demand, therefore, we need to understand the historical and cultural value and enhance the tourist experience. Therefore, these heritage sites should be managed according to the expectations and desires of the visitors (Martins, 2015).

## **Review of Literature**

### ***Heritage and Heritage Tourism***

Natural and cultural assets were distinguished by Triarchi and Karamanis (2017). Further, UNESCO's (1972) definition of heritage comprises monuments, groups of buildings, and historic sites. Heritage assessment is a complicated process that requires expertise from various disciplines, including archaeology, heritage management, history, and others. There are four primary heritage evaluation criteria, according to the NSW Heritage Office (2002): historical importance, significance, scientific relevance, and social significance. When it comes to tourism, heritage tourism is a fast-developing industry that is a significant component of tourism in many nations. According to some academics, heritage tourism is defined as tourism that involves individuals visiting historical sites or examining historical information. Visits by individuals who wish to learn something new or improve their life in some manner are the foundation of heritage tourism (Timothy, 2011). It was proposed by Wu et al. (2015) that heritage tourism is a phenomenon based on visitors' motives and perceptions rather than a phenomenon based on visitors' motivations and perceptions, place, or characteristics (Yankholmes & Akyeampong, 2010). Another historical tourism idea is based on nostalgia and a desire to meet diverse cultural landscapes and forms, depending on the value and perspectives of tourists (Taylor, 2009). However, there is little information available regarding legacy customers. There is little research examining the link between characteristics such as tourist profiles, visitor behavior, motivations, and the experience part of heritage tourism (Ritchie et al., 2010). More in-depth analysis of visitor characteristics is essential as demand for historic items develops.

### ***Importance and Significance of Heritage Sites***

Historic places are visited for three reasons: to experience a different time or location, to study and have an intellectual experience, and share or teach youngsters about the site's history. Tourists' desire to relive the past has grown as they have become more sophisticated. Tourists are visiting cultural/heritage places in more significant numbers (Bowitz & Ibenholt, 2009). Tourists and locals, as well as governments, gain from heritage tourism.

To begin with, cultural/heritage tourism helps villages, towns, and cities maintain their historical, cultural, and natural treasures. When people can relate to their personal, familial, communal, regional, or national heritage, they become more active in their communities. Residents are motivated to protect their shared resources and exercise good stewardship due to this relationship. Second, heritage tourism teaches locals and visitors about the history and customs of their communities and regions. Third, historical tourism brings people together and strengthens communities. Heritage knowledge provides communities with continuity and context, instilling respect in inhabitants, strengthening citizenship ideals, increasing communal pride, and improving quality of life. Fourth, cultural/heritage tourism boosts a community's or region's economic and civic life.

### ***Attributes of Heritage Destinations***

A study conducted in 2012 by Smith and Puczko looked into Danish cultural tourism. They liked many things about old cities, such as historic architecture and museums. When travelers visited Denmark, they highlighted

essential qualities such as castles, gardens, museums, and historical structures. King and Parnwell (2011) investigated the historical relevance of Thailand's legacy attractions as well as the state tourist agency's heritage marketing and the ideological implications of heritage sightseeing for the official historical narrative about foreign and domestic tourism. The investigation identified traditional villages, monuments, museums, and temples. Many additional scholars have investigated legacy destination features in addition to the studies mentioned above. Filipović (2018) emphasized festivals, historic residences, traditional ceremonies, music, dance, craftwork, gastronomy, and other attractions.

### ***Tourist Characteristics***

When researchers examine tourists' happiness with heritage places, tourist characteristics are crucial. To characterize visitors by age, gender, income, marital status, vocations, education, or ethnic origin, socioeconomic, demographic, and behavioral variables are widely utilized in tourism research. These signs are simple to spot and apply to marketing decisions (Chan et al., 2015). Kara and Mkwizu (2020) identified a similar pattern of heritage visitors. A heritage tourist, according to the authors, is someone who earns and spends more money while on vacation, stays longer in a destination while on holiday, is more educated and wealthy than the general public, is more likely to be female than male, and is in the older age group. Tourists are exposed to both the greatest and worst aspects of tourism destinations (Abdulla & Suresh, 2017). As a result, they are likely to share both joy and sorrow. The least stated emotion was anger.

### ***Tourists' Destination Loyalty***

Tourist destination loyalty is essential for efficient destination marketing because it influences destination selection, product and service consumption, and the desire to return and tell others about the location (Gursoy et al., 2014). Rahman and Abdullah (2014) found that tourists' pleasure was influenced by their experience, with service quality acting as a substantial mediating factor. Carreira et al. (2022) used two indicators to measure the concept of future behavioral intention: the want to repurchase and the desire to provide positive suggestions. In tourism research, tourist loyalty is measured by the desire to return to the site and the willingness to promote it to friends and family (Castellanos - Verdugo et al., 2016). As a result, two indicators are being employed as measures of destination loyalty intention: "revisiting intention" and "willingness to suggest." According to De Souza and Pai (2013), hotels reported various benefits as a consequence of implementing CSR activities, including a positive brand image, accolades, and increased customer loyalty. As per Pillai et al. (2017), the price sensitivity of first-time visitors and less loyal visitors was lower, and they spent more.

### ***Relationship Between Tourist Destination Loyalty and Destination Attributes***

The effectiveness of destination attributes has a significant impact on tourist loyalty. In light of this, the significance of attribute performance has led to the conclusion that to please visitors, a destination should supply well-designed characteristics, such as high-quality products or services. That is to say, destination designers will not be able to please visitors unless they understand their expectations and preferences for destination features (Bandaru & Venkateshwarlu, 2020). They revealed that all the identified tourism attributes had a constructive relationship with foreign tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention. As a result, priority should be paid to determining which qualities affect satisfaction. Bhatnagar and Nim (2019) stated that guest satisfaction was discovered to have a favorable correlation with repeat business.

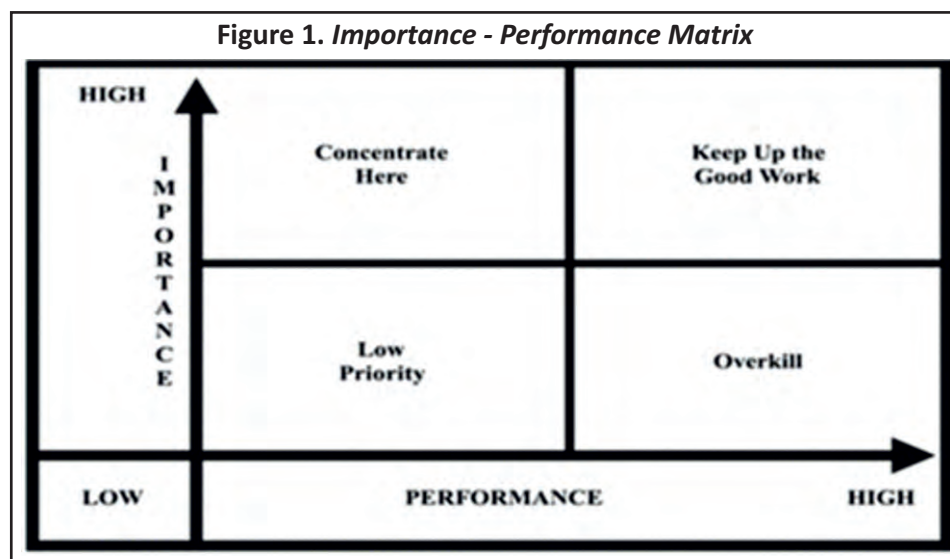
To get a more profound knowledge of tourists' attitudes and behavior after visiting cultural/heritage sites, it is

necessary to examine the link between destination characteristics and visitors' destination loyalty from the tourist's perspective. After purchasing tourism items and services, tourists express happiness or discontent (Hosany & Prayag, 2013). Happy visitors are more inclined to repurchase the product and encourage others to do the same. Verma et al. (2018) suggested that motivations changed within different groups of varying socioeconomic characteristics. Overall, the demographic factors like age, gender, family member, education, income, and psychographic factors like satisfaction with life and life rewards were statistically significant. In contrast, factors like single, unmarried student, government employee, and private employee came out to be statistically insignificant.

Glasson and Therivel (2013) provided an overview of Oxford's visitor characteristics, consequences, and current management efforts. Around 80% of visitors to this cultural/heritage site were satisfied with their experience. More than 80% of those who visited Oxford indicated a desire to return. The tourists were particularly taken with the building, which, along with the university and college traditions, produced an appealing physical setting and mood. The retail facilities were also favorably received, and the locals were thought to be kind. On the other hand, Oxford performed poorly in several categories. These included traffic, congestion, and toilet availability, as well as the city's high cost, inadequate signage, and bad weather.

### ***Importance of Performance Analysis (IPA)***

Martilla and James devised and launched Importance-Performance Analysis in 1977 to assess client satisfaction with a product or service. According to Silva and Fernandes (2010), satisfaction is a consequence of two factors: the significance of a product or service to a customer and a company's performance in providing that service or product. In this approach, IPA considers the performance of an item and its significance as a determining factor in the respondent's pleasure (Silva & Fernandes, 2010). The combined client ratings for these two components offer an overall picture of satisfaction and clear recommendations for management and where agency resources should be focused. Since there are a set of attributes for a product/service, to use the IPA approach, two questions should be asked for each attribute: (a) "How important is this feature?" and (b) "How well did the (product/service) perform?" These questions measure attribute importance and performance on a Likert scale. Each mean of attribute importance and performance is used as a center point for each axis to divide the matrix into four quadrants. Each quadrant has a different interpretation, as shown in Figure 1.





✚ **Quadrant I.** “Concentrate Here,” consists of attributes with high importance and low performance, indicating the weaknesses of the product/service. There is a need for immediate attention to these attributes for improvement to help increase its competitiveness.

✚ **Quadrant II.** “Keep Up the Good Work” contains attributes with both high importance and performance, representing the strengths of the product/service. These attributes should be consistently maintained for the product/service to remain competitive.

✚ **Quadrant III.** “Low Priority” consists of attributes with both low importance and low performance, indicating minor weaknesses of the product/service. However, the product/service manager should not be overly concerned about these attributes because of their low importance.

✚ **Quadrant IV.** “Possible Overkill” contains high performance but low importance. These attributes may have minor competitiveness for the product/service due to its low performance (Junio et al., 2017).

The IPA model has been successfully used in various service environments, including hospitality and tourism. The importance-performance analysis may be a highly effective technique for promoting tourist locations. The IPA approach was utilized by Edward and George (2008) to analyze the destination attractiveness of Kerala as an international tourism destination. The variables considered were beaches, animals, climate, Ayurveda, gastronomy, heritage sites, art and craft forms, hill stations, backwater shopping, nightlife, adventure and fun, relaxed atmosphere, accommodation standards, and local culture. Climate, backwaters, food, peaceful atmosphere, and local culture were determined to be in the first quadrant, indicating high relevance and performance. Beaches, arts, crafts, and heritage attractions were significant, but their performance was lacking.

IPA was used by O'Leary and Deegan (2005) to examine Ireland's image as a tourism destination. They looked at how crucial particular location features were to French visitors, assessed the significance of those attributes, and performed well after their stay.

In tourism and hospitality research, the IPA framework has been frequently employed. IPA has evaluated tour operator service quality, lodgings and experiences, destination image, and specialty markets such as wellness and gourmet tourism in the tourist industry. Researchers have utilized the IPA framework for service quality studies in travel and tourism. In several studies, IPA offered critical information for improving tourism services, developing marketing strategies, and making managerial choices.

## Research Methodology

This study aims to determine the characteristics that influence visitor destination loyalty in Old Goa, a UNESCO world heritage site. Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) is used in this study to assess tourist satisfaction with a product or service. According to the IPA, satisfaction is a consequence of two factors: the significance of a product or service to a visitor and how well it performs at the location. It also aims to determine the destination's significant strengths and shortcomings.

### ***Geographical Profile of the Study Region***

Goa is bordered on the west by the Arabian Sea, on the north by Maharashtra, and on the west and south by the Western Ghats of Karnataka. Old Goa, also known as Velha Goa (Velha means “old” in Portuguese), is located 10 kilometers east of Panaji, the state capital of Goa (Raj, 2015). Goa is India's smallest state by area, with a geographical location of around 3,700 km<sup>2</sup>. The state has two districts, North & South Goa, with 1.4 million

(1,459,000) inhabitants (Census, 2011). Old Goa lies in the North Goa district with 50,002 inhabitants. It is one of the favorite destinations of tourism for its beautiful beaches, natural flora and fauna, and magnificent heritage monuments from the Adil Shah dynasty to the Portuguese era; palaces, forts, churches, convents, temples, mosques, and heritage homes. In the year 2016, around 6 million (6,330, 744) tourists were reported in Goa, out of which 0.6 million were foreign nationals (Department of Tourism, 2016). UNESCO World Heritage Site of Old Goa represents the Portuguese rule.

Along with marvelous historic churches, it has numerous other heritage structures like gates, chapels, vernacular houses, convents, etc. The Old Goa site is characterized by its natural heritage, forming a perfect setting for its architectural heritage. The heritage of Old Goa complements the ecosystem, and the ecosystem supports various cultural and natural resources (Raj, 2015).

## ***Research Design***

SPSS version 21 is used to analyze and interpret the data collected through the surveys.

## ***Sampling and Data Collection***

This quantitative research explores the factors influencing tourist destination loyalty at the UNESCO World Heritage site of Old Goa. A survey method of data collection was used with the help of a self-administrated questionnaire. Data were collected from 390 domestic and international tourists at the heritage site. Using a structured questionnaire, the data were collected from the tourists who were visitors to Old Goa between December 2019 and March 2020. The guests were chosen depending on their convenience. Around 450 questionnaires were issued, out of which 400 were returned by visitors, out of these, 10 were incomplete, resulting in just 390 usable surveys being received. The majority of the respondents were of Indian nationality (60%), and the remaining (40%) were of various other nationalities, but no further analysis was carried out based on the visitors' geographic location. The age of the respondents varied from 20 to above 50 years. Out of 390 respondents, 15% belonged to the age category of 20 – 29 years, the lowest number of respondents. The age group of 30 – 39 years had 20% of the respondents. The age group of 40–49 years had 31% of the respondents. Lastly, 34%, the highest percentage of respondents, belonged to the above 50 years age group. Therefore, we can conclude that majority of the tourists visiting the heritage site were above the age of 40 and 50 years. The majority of the respondents belonged to the “Under Graduate” category, which is 45%. The second highest respondents (28%) belonged to the “Higher Secondary” category. The third highest category was “Post Graduate” (25% of the respondents). The most negligible percentage of respondents belonged to the category of “PhD,” with 2% of the respondents.

For the following reasons, convenience sampling was employed in this investigation. This method allows the researcher to obtain a simple, inexpensive, and timely sample. In this investigation, there was no readily available sample frame to ensure that the odds of getting chosen were equal (Creswell, 2008). Thus, convenience sampling was considered to be the most suitable method. The average annual income of the respondents varied from INR 3 lakhs – INR 9 lakhs per annum. The majority of the respondents, that is, 31%, had an annual income of INR 3 lakhs – INR 6 lakhs. Below INR 3 lakhs was the second-highest group of respondents, with a percentage of 28%. The third highest group of respondents (26%) fell in the income bracket of INR 6 lakhs – INR 9 lakhs. Lastly, 15% belonged to the above INR 9 lakhs category.

The survey questionnaire was divided into four parts regarding the survey instrument. The first part evaluated various attributes of the heritage site, mainly accessibility & guidance, amenities, staff, maintenance, and site attractions. The participants were asked to rate their 'perceived importance' and 'present performance' for each

statement under every attribute on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*low*) to 5 (*high*). The second part assessed tourist satisfaction and loyalty on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*low*) to 5 (*high*). The third part explored the tourist travel behavior characteristics, which included the tourists' primary purpose to visit the heritage site and travel group. The fourth part analyzed the tourist demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education, annual income, and nationality.

## Data Analysis and Results

Frequency distribution values were considered to analyze the respondents' demographic variables (age, gender, education, annual income, and nationality). Further, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to identify destination loyalty factors. Linear regression analysis was used to test the relationship between destination factors and destination loyalty. Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) matrix was used to examine the performance of destination attributes. The IPA analysis identified the main strengths and weaknesses of the heritage site.

### *Tourist Behavioral Characteristics*

“Spiritual fulfillment/pilgrimage” was the primary purpose of the majority of the respondents, with 35%. The second highest was “To see the heritage site/museum” with a percentage of 33%. While 21% of respondents stated that the heritage site was “part of a tour/trip,” 10% of the respondents stated that the primary purpose of their visit was “to accompany family/friends.” Lastly, 1% of the respondents had an “Other” purpose for visiting the heritage site. Further, most respondents visited the heritage site with their “family” (48%). The second-highest travel group was “spouse,” with 25% of the respondents. The third highest was “friends and relatives,” with 16% of the respondents; 6% stated they visited the heritage site “alone.” In comparison, 5% of the respondents stated that they visited the site as part of an organized group (refer to Table 1 and 2).

**Table 1. Respondents' Primary Purpose to Visit This Heritage Site**

S. No.	Purpose of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
1	Spiritual fulfillment/pilgrimage	137	35
2	To see the heritage site/museum	129	33
3	To accompany family/friends	40	10
4	Part of a tour/trip	80	21
5	Other	4	1
	<b>Total</b>	390	100.0

**Table 2. Respondents' Travel Group**

S. No.	Travel Group of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
1	Alone	24	6
2	Family	188	48
3	Friends and Relatives	60	15
4	Spouse	98	25
5	Organized Group	20	5
	<b>Total</b>	390	100.0



**Table 3. Tourists' Overall Satisfaction**

S. No.	Tourists' Overall Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
1	(1) <i>Not at all satisfied</i>	25	6
2	(2) <i>Slightly satisfied</i>	81	21
3	(3) <i>Moderately satisfied</i>	60	15
4	(4) <i>Very Satisfied</i>	129	33
5	(5) <i>Extremely Satisfied</i>	95	24
	<b>Total</b>	390	390

### ***Tourists' Overall Satisfaction at the Heritage Site***

The majority of the tourists were “*very satisfied*” with the UNESCO World Heritage site of Old Goa with a percentage of 33%. About 24% of the tourists were “*extremely satisfied*” with the destination. Further, 21% of the tourists stated that they were “*slightly satisfied*” with the destination. A lesser number of tourists were “*moderately satisfied*” with the UNESCO World Heritage site of Old Goa (15%). Lastly, only 7% of the tourists were “*not at all satisfied*” with the destination (refer to Table 3).

### ***Exploratory Factor Analysis***

The underlying dimensions in this study were identified using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation. Four factors were derived from 22 items. The first factor is named Site Attributes (SA) which included 10 variables. The second factor is named Accessibility and Transportation Facilities (ATF), including six variables. The third factor is named Destination Amenities (DA), with four variables. The last factor is named Staff, which had only two variables. Since the fourth factor has only two variables that are less than the acceptable number in a particular factor, it is not included in further analysis.

Moreover, these two items represent the human dimension of the destination and not the destination's main attributes and thus may not be a significant factor affecting the tourist destination loyalty. Therefore, the study analysis was conducted only using three factors. The items not included from the scale are items 14 (helpfulness of staff) and 15 (responsible staff). The factor loading value ranges from 0.624 – 0.885. The first factor, “SA,” accounted for 65.8% of the variance and thus is the most significant in determining tourists' destination loyalty at the heritage site. The second factor, “ATF,” accounted for 9%, and the third factor, “DA,” accounted for 7% of the variance. Thus, the factor analysis explained 81.9% of the total variance. These three factors are used as independent variables (IVs) in the linear regression analysis (refer to Table 4).

### ***Reliability Test***

Cronbach's alpha is used to determine the reliability of the scale. We can observe a high internal consistency for the scale used in this study. The Cronbach's alpha for the three IV's is tested. “SA” has a Cronbach's value of 0.972, which is the highest among the three IV's. “ATF” has a value of 0.926, and lastly, “DA” has a value of 0.922.

### ***Regression Analysis***

An  $R = 0.82$  indicates a high degree of correlation between the dependent variable (DV) and independent variables (IVs). The  $R^2$  value = 0.67 implies that about 67% of the total variation in DL is due to the SA, ATF, and DA. The

remaining 33% is due to other factors not included in this study. A higher value of  $R^2$  is an indication that there is a good prediction of DL by taking into consideration the three IVs (refer to Table 5 and 6).

**Table 4. Factor Analysis**

Factors	Variables	Mean	SD	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha
Site Attributes	Cleanliness of the area	3.6	1.15	0.88	0.97
	Well promoted site	3.4	1.26	0.85	
	Cultural place of major fame	3.47	1.31	0.82	
	The beauty of scenery and landscape	3.93	1.13	0.82	
	Peaceful and calm place	3.93	1.13	0.82	
	Safety and security on the site	3.93	0.86	0.82	
	Maintenance of the site	3.73	1.06	0.80	
	Shopping facilities / Souvenirs	3.47	1.15	0.75	
	Accessibility to/from the site	3.67	1.14	0.66	
	Eating / Refreshment area	2.93	1.13	0.64	
Accessibility and Transportation Facilities	Availability of transportation services to/from the site	2.93	1.18	0.68	0.93
	Quality of transportation services	2.67	1.25	0.82	
	Signposting to/from the site	2.47	1.21	0.71	
	Information centres	3.33	1.19	<b>0.62</b>	
	Parking facility	3.27	1.13	0.67	
	Quality of roads	3.2	1.17	0.82	
	Drinking water facility	2.6	1.15	<b>0.89</b>	
Site Amenities	Availability of emergency medical facility	2.33	1.01	0.82	0.92
	Public toilets facility	2.33	1.01	0.82	
	Areas for resting on the site	2.73	1.29	0.726	

**Table 5. Model Summary of Factors Affecting Destination Loyalty**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.82 <sup>a</sup>	0.67	0.65	0.49

**Note.** <sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), Site Attributes, Accessibility and Transportation Facilities, Site Amenities.

<sup>b</sup> Dependent Variable : Destination Loyalty.

**Table 6. Model Summary of Factors Affecting Destination Loyalty**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Regression	560.65	3	186.88	752.63	.000*
Residual	95.85	386	.25		
Total	656.50	389			

**Note.** <sup>a</sup> Predictors: (Constant), Site Attributes, Accessibility and Transportation Facilities, Site Amenities.

<sup>b</sup> Dependent Variable: Destination Loyalty.

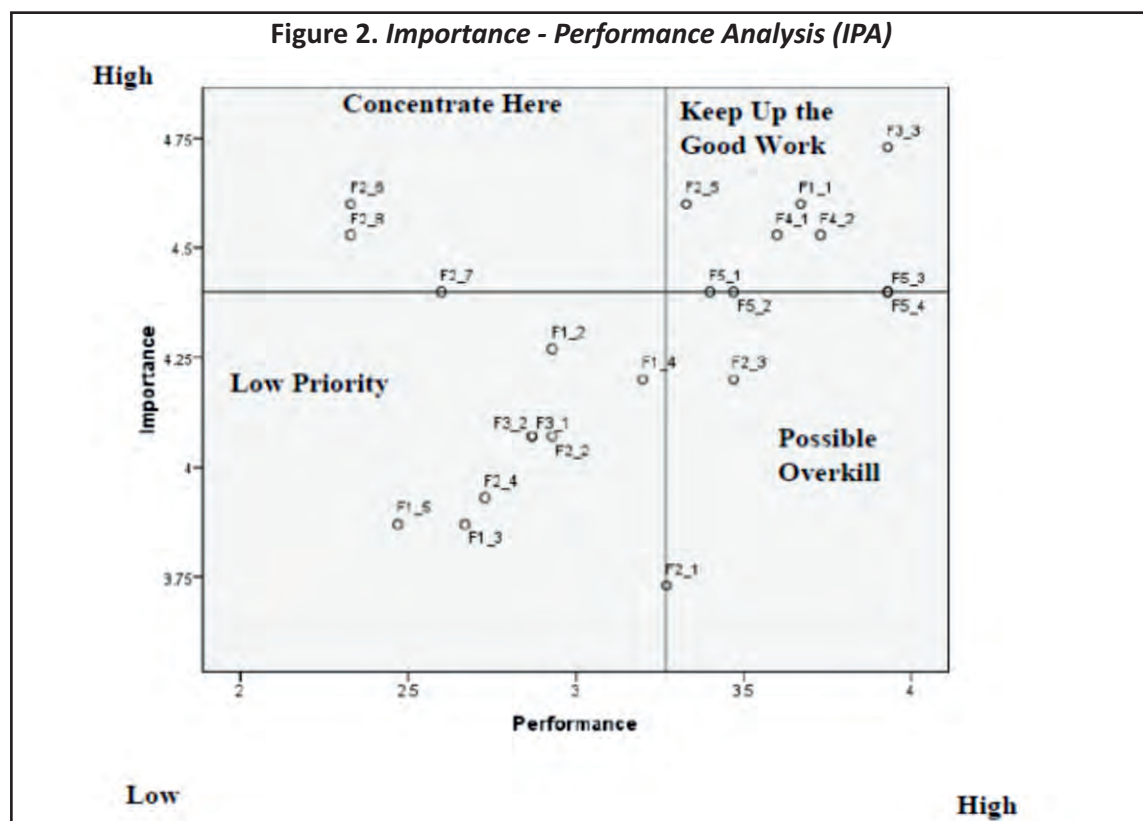
Further, one can observe that the  $p$ -value for the beta coefficient of SA, ATF, and DA is 0.00, that is,  $< 0.05$ . This implies that SA, ATF, and DA are significant at the 5% significance level. Thus, we can claim that the DL of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Old Goa is positively related to all three IVs (Table 7).

After obtaining the mean scores of perceived importance and the present performance of all factors influencing tourists' destination loyalty at the heritage site of Old Goa, the 22 items were plotted on the IPA matrix. Each attribute was then assessed by locating it in the appropriate quadrant. Only 17 articles were plotted in the quadrants, and five items were plotted on the axis, failing to be included in any of the quadrants and, therefore, are also excluded from the following interpretation (refer to Figure 2).

**Table 7. Unstandardized Regression Weights of Independent Variables**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		$t$	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for $B$	
	$B$	Std. Error			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	-1.00	0.09	-10.73	0.01*	-1.19	-0.82
Site Attributes	0.88	0.04	20.99	<b>0.01*</b>	0.79	0.96
Accessibility and Transportation Facilities	0.31	0.04	7.26	<b>0.01*</b>	0.22	0.39
Destination Amenities	0.07	0.04	2.04	<b>0.01*</b>	0.01	0.14

**Note.** <sup>b</sup> Dependent Variable: Destination Loyalty. i. Significance : 0.05\*\* ii. Significance : 0.01\*.



✦ **Quadrant I.** “Concentrate Here,” consists of attributes with high importance and low performance, indicating the weaknesses of the product/service. There is a need for immediate attention to these attributes for improvement to help increase its competitiveness. Out of all 22 items, two items were plotted in this quadrant, including “Availability of emergency medical facility” and “Public toilets facility.” Tourists perceive the importance of these two attributes. However, the performance of these attributes was comparatively less appealing to tourists. The items “Availability of the emergency medical facility” and “Public toilets facility” have a mean score of 2.33. This indicates that the performance of these items is “Fair” on a scale of 1 – 5. Efforts are to improve and provide better emergency medical facilities and public toilet facilities at the heritage site. These two site attributes prove to be the weakness of the heritage site. The site needs to concentrate on these attributes to improve the destination loyalty of the heritage tourists.

✦ **Quadrant II.** “Keep Up the Good Work” comprises both high-importance and high-performance qualities that highlight the product/strengths. These qualities must be continually maintained for the product/service to stay competitive. This quadrant includes five items, “Information centers,” “Cleanliness of the area,” “Accessibility to/from the site,” “Maintenance of the site,” and “Safety and security on the site.” The mean scores of these items are “Information centres” (3.33), “Cleanliness of the area” (3.6), “Accessibility to/from the site” (3.67), “Maintenance of the site” (3.73), and “Safety and security on the site” (3.93). Since the mean score of all these items is between the range of 3.33 – 3.93, we can state that the performance of these items is “Good” on a scale of 1–5. The IPA analysis indicates that the destination's performance in all these aspects is excellent, and tourists were satisfied with the quality of these heritage site attributes. Moreover, these attributes significantly contribute to the destination's strengths and competitiveness.

✦ **Quadrant III.** “Low Priority” comprises qualities that are both low in significance and low in performance, suggesting minor product/service flaws. However, the product/service manager should not be excessively concerned with these qualities due to their low relevance. This quadrant includes the highest number of attributes, that is, eight, which are “Signposting to/from the site,” “Quality of transportation services,” “Availability of transportation services to/from the site,” “Quality of roads,” “Areas for resting in the site,” “Eating / Refreshment area,” “Responsible staff,” and “Helpfulness of staff.” The mean scores of these items are “Signposting to/from the site” (2.47), “Quality of transportation services” (2.67), “Availability of transportation services to/from the site” (2.93), “Quality of roads” (2.3), “Areas for resting in the site” (2.73), “Eating/Refreshment area” (2.93), “Responsible staff” (2.87), and “Helpfulness of staff” (2.87). The mean score of all these items is between 2.3 – 2.93. We can state that the performance of these items is “Fair” on a scale of 1–5. These attributes are considered of low importance by the tourists, and also their performance is not noteworthy by the tourists. Therefore, the site may not prioritize these attributes since they are not significant in tourist destination loyalty of the heritage site.

✦ **Quadrant IV.** “Possible Overkill” contains high performance but low importance attributes. Due to its low performance, these attributes may have minor competitiveness for the product/service. This quadrant includes only one attribute, “Shopping facilities/souvenirs.” The mean score of this item is 3.47, which indicates that it performs “Good” on a scale of 1–5. The tourists stated that this attribute has higher performance but is of lesser importance to the heritage tourists. Therefore, the site need not give much greater attention to this attribute and maintain it only considerably. Moreover, there could be a possible overkill of this attribute in the heritage site.

## Implications for Practitioners

The present study highlights tourists' destination loyalty who visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Old Goa.

The study proposes continuous attention by all associated stakeholders in improving and maintaining the strengths of the heritage site by keeping all the necessary tourism facilities such as – well-functioning information centres, easy access to/from the site, site maintenance and upkeep, refreshment facilities, site safety and security, emergency medical facilities, and public restrooms – to make the destination more loyal and gratifying for the tourists.

This study would benefit the tourism planners, marketers, local communities, and related government agencies to prepare a road map to sustain such heritage sites. It highlights the dire need to maintain the aesthetic upkeep of the destination by keeping it clean, calm, safe, attractive, and well maintained. It directly suggests that all stakeholders conserve and preserve such a significant heritage destination, which is only possible if State and Central government agencies collaborate with international experts and NGOs. The report also recommends creating a framework for promoting a more inclusive and participatory approach to tourist planning. Many different types of planning, such as economic development, land use, infrastructure and social services have socioeconomic, ecological, cultural, and heritage impacts, and destination management involves a wide range of stakeholders, including governments, private investors & developers, and local communities, among others. The present study would undoubtedly facilitate the tourism policy planners to look into all the specified components, such as accommodation, accessibility, amenities, attractions, and activities, to make the destination more loyal to tourists.

## **Conclusion**

At a heritage destination, the site is the main attraction, and apart from this, it holds a series of other site attributes. All these attributes of the heritage site create a favorable heritage destination for tourists. The majority of the tourists were satisfied with the overall heritage site, and therefore, we can imply that this destination is performing well and attracting more loyal tourists. From this study, we can conclude that the three factors: “Site Attributes” (SA), “Accessibility and Transportation Facilities” (ATF), and “Destination Amenities” (DA), have a strong influence on destination loyalty at the heritage site of Old Goa. Through a survey of a statistically significant sample of tourists, the IPA method was applied to the Old Goa heritage site, providing credible evidence of the critical strengths and flaws of the tourism experience given in the location. The strengths of the heritage site are “Information centres,” “Cleanliness of the area,” “Accessibility to/from the site,” “Maintenance of the site,” and “Safety and security on the site.” The site's weaknesses are its poor performance in “Availability of emergency medical facility” and “Public toilets facility.” Thus, these results can be used to address public and private strategies aiming to improve tourist loyalty. Finally, the tourism amenities present in the Old Goa heritage site require care, or else the attractiveness of this tourist destination may suffer irreversible damage in the coming years.

Konwar and Chakraborty (2015) stated that to achieve positive results, efforts need to be made by the local authorities and communities so that visitors' word of mouth recommendations open new doors for prospective visitors. The DMOs should take necessary remedial action to improve and maintain globally acceptable tourism facility standards at the Old Goa historic site. Understanding travel reasons is critical for developing a pleasant tourist offering, and therefore, this study provides a foundation for effective tourism policy. Since such UNESCO world heritage sites can project unique destination characteristics, they can be used as significant attractions in the destination marketing processes at national and international levels.

## **Suggestions and Recommendations for Further Research**

There is an excellent scope for research in the future that focuses on the factors influencing the destination loyalty



of tourists visiting heritage sites. The performance of destination characteristics affects tourists' destination loyalty. These visitors may return to the destination or promote it to others. Hence, heritage tourists' behavior, preferences, and motivations must be analyzed and studied for the future development of heritage sites. This research could act as a guideline for future researchers. Even though the study results have shed light on several significant issues, some limitations need to be considered. Due to the lack of tourist population statistics visiting the heritage site, a convenience sample was used in this study. Thus, the results cannot be generalized. Scholars could use other statistical tools to analyze and validate the results obtained. Another scope for future research on this topic is using other variables and dimensions that have not been used. More studies with better resources, such as more time, updated statistical methodologies, and bigger sample size, are needed to broaden the study's breadth of this problem. The scholars looking forward to researching factors influencing tourists' destination loyalty at heritage sites should try to avoid the drawbacks of this study and examine the various other factors that could impact the destination loyalty of heritage tourists.

## **Authors' Contribution**

Dr. Rajiv Mishra conceived the idea and developed a quantitative design to undertake the empirical study. Namrata Mishra extracted research papers with a high reputation, filtered these based on keywords, and generated concepts and codes relevant to the study design. In support of both the authors, Vikas Singh collected the respondents' data for analysis. Namrata Mishra verified the analytical methods and supervised the study. The numerical computations were done by Vikas Singh using SPSS 21.0. Dr. Rajiv Mishra wrote the manuscript in consultation with both authors.

## **Conflict of Interest**

The authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

## **Funding Acknowledgment**

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or for the publication of this article.

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