

Examining Visitor Motivations and Travel Intentions at Kankalitala: A Sacred Heritage Destination in West Bengal

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Abstract: Sacred pilgrimage tourism at smaller functioning shrines remains inadequately theorized despite significance for heritage preservation and community sustainability. This study examines Kankalitala, a Sati Peetham in West Bengal, investigating how personal motivations (religious conviction, experiential desire) and locational characteristics (cultural and architectural dimensions) influence travel intentions. Employing mixed-methods design with qualitative interviews and quantitative structural equation modeling on 400 visitor surveys, findings reveal spiritual commitment as the primary behavioral driver ($\beta = 0.51$). Destination perception functions as a critical mediating mechanism linking cultural and experiential appeal to behavioral intent, with indirect effects of 0.18 and 0.13 respectively. Social influence demonstrates measurable but moderate effect ($\beta = 0.29$). The integrated model explains 62% of travel intention variance. Actionable recommendations emphasize heritage narration infrastructure, distributed ceremonial programming, and capability-building interventions as perception-enhancing strategies. The study establishes measurement frameworks adaptable across comparable sacred shrine contexts.

Keywords: Sacred Pilgrimage, Visitor Motivation, Destination Perception, Behavioral Intention, Heritage Development

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