



## Fostering Authentic Beliefs in selected Spiritual Attributes: Insights from Temple Devotees

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### ABSTRACT

The primary aim of our research is to highlight the importance of transparently and consciously fostering authentic beliefs about spiritual services, products, or brands to benefit end-users. Spiritual marketing is still in its infancy. This research identified key variables through a literature review and in-depth interviews with priests, temple administrators, subject experts, and selected devotees. A questionnaire was subsequently developed, and an initial study with 35 samples was conducted to ensure reliability and validity, measured using Cronbach's alpha. Data was collected from devotees visiting Lord Venkateshwara Temple, Durga Mata Temple, and Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple, utilizing random sampling to achieve a final sample size of 138. The gathered data was examined employing diverse statistical techniques, such as sample-independent t-tests, correlation analysis, ANOVA, and MANCOVA. Data were evaluated via Structural Equation Modeling. The program employed for structured analysis is AMOS version 23, whereas SPSS version 25 is utilized for descriptive research. Regression analysis determined that these authentic beliefs have a significant impact on selected spiritual attributes. The results indicated that genuine belief and chosen spiritual infrastructure, services, and motivation significantly influence the total spiritual experiences of followers, implying that additional elements may play a more crucial role in shaping their religious engagement.

**Keywords:** Religious, Spiritual services, Spiritual motivation, Spiritual infrastructure and Authentic beliefs.

### Introduction

India has a rich cultural heritage and an unparalleled diversity of traditions, with temples playing a central role in the nation's cultural and spiritual landscape. The country is home to approximately 600,000 temples, reflecting its deep-rooted religious practices and architectural grandeur, showcasing the region's profound devotion and its contributions to India's temple architecture and cultural legacy. The meaning of life is positively impacted by religious beliefs, including attending religious services, going on pilgrimages, fasting, praying and engaging in related spiritual practices like faith in God and feeling supported by or connected to a higher mystical entity (Iwona Grzegorzewska et al. 2021). Beyond serving the needs of the faithful, religious sites have also emerged as prominent attractions for tourists, transforming into popular destinations within the realm of religious tourism (Dan Wang et.al 2024).

Religious travel, the oldest form of non-economic travel, has been a significant motive for journeys throughout history. Annually, around 240 million people embark on pilgrimages to major destinations worldwide, with Christians, Muslims, and Hindus being the most prominent participants. In recent decades, religiously motivated travel has gained widespread popularity, becoming a crucial segment of international tourism. It has witnessed substantial growth and continued expansion in the future. This trend underscores the enduring importance of spiritual and religious experiences in global travel. The rise of spiritually motivated travel parallels the modern expansion of tourism (Akbulut 2024). Despite its pervasive interaction with religious life and institutions worldwide (Bremer 2005), religious tourism remains one of the least explored areas in tourism

research (Vukonic 1998). This underscores the need for greater academic focus on this significant yet understudied segment of the tourism industry.

In Hinduism, pilgrimage serves as a profound means to deepen spiritual connections and experience the transcendent. Pilgrims seek blessings, cleansing, and inner peace through darshan—the sacred vision of holy sites, deities, temples, or revered individuals—thereby cultivating a sense of fulfillment. These sacred places form a hierophantic system, intertwining faith and the natural landscape to create a bond between the human psyche and the spiritual realms (Salomon 1979). Pilgrimage is both a sacramental act and a social duty in Hindu traditions. It symbolizes the pilgrim's connection to the divine, establishing a reciprocal relationship while offering opportunities for spiritual, social, and material blessings, including healing of the soul, mind, and body (Knut A. Jacobsen 2013, Stoddard Robert 1997).

Beyond its spiritual dimensions, Hindu pilgrimage also fulfils social and cultural functions. It is regarded as a rite for passage and a method of obtaining divine favor. Pilgrims are drawn not only to experience the spiritual essence of these sacred places but also to learn that such physical locations ultimately exist outside the true, mystical reality. Thus, pilgrimage in Hinduism serves as a multifaceted practice intertwining spiritual growth, personal transformation, and cultural obligation.

The structure of the temple's architecture and other factors induces the emotions that enders an attitude to visit the temple within the devotees. People's belief, infrastructure and overall spiritual experience plays a predominant role in visiting the temples. Various factors like spiritual service, belief of a particular spiritual place, infrastructure etc. contribute to the devotees' journey to visiting a temple. The present study examines the reasons behind devotees visiting temples emphasized that the standard of accommodation and the quality of food at a destination significantly influence the impression and overall experience of devotees. This becomes particularly relevant for devotees visiting temples where they may have to wait for over 24 hours to have darshan in Hindu temples. In such cases, well-maintained accommodation is essential to ensure a peaceful and comfortable stay, enhancing the spiritual journey.

Authentic belief is deeply rooted and structures like **Gopuram**, the **Artha Mandapam**, and the **Sthala Vruksha** (sacred trees) all serve as physical symbols of the temple's ancient and spiritual significance. The **Kodimaram** or flagstaff further enhances the sacredness of the space. The presence of **Hundi** system further adds to the spiritual significance, serving as a place where devotees express their devotion through offerings. The researcher elucidates the principal determining variables and anticipated consequences regarding the Hindu pilgrim journey (Jyotsna et al. 2022). They devised a comprehensive methodology known as Interactive Qualitative Analysis, grounded in Systems Theory, to comprehend the various facets of the interconnected system of pilgrimage involving various stakeholders. Religious tourism continues to be a mostly unexamined field in scholarly inquiry. This study seeks to address this gap by enhancing the scholarly literature about religious tourism and providing practical ideas and suggestions for industry stakeholders.

The synergistic tie between spirituality and tourism has significantly expanded the scope of spiritual tourism throughout the decades. The current UNWTO data on spiritual tourism indicates that about 50% of global international tourist arrivals are for spiritual journeys.

Visits of the Holy Land by pilgrims will enhance their emotional bond with religion and evoke a profound sense of spiritual significance and intense feelings. Consequently, the land of God has stimulated the pilgrims' reflections and evoked their emotions (Moufahim Mona 2019). The authenticity in space and environment constitutes a distinct aspect of tourism, and this experiential dimension might alter tourists' behaviors and perceptions. The pilgrimage site evokes feelings of sanctity, reverence, and enigma in believers. Pilgrimage to sacred sites can alleviate distress and various concerns, facilitate introspection and confession, enable prayer for wish fulfillment, and purify both body and mind. This research defines the authenticity of a location as a pilgrimage site that evokes a sense of mystery and awe in travelers, stimulating their emotional resonance and cognitive transformation. Visitors assert that they can eradicate distractions and engage in meditation at pilgrimage sites.

Spiritual marketing is defined as the intentional communication of genuine beliefs linked to products, services, or brands, aimed at enhancing consumer well-being (Baker D, Crompton J.2000). Unlike traditional marketing, which primarily focuses on material benefits, spiritual marketing seeks to forge deeper emotional and spiritual connections with consumers. This approach is especially resonant in environments where spirituality intertwines with cultural heritage, such as temple tourism.

Authenticity stands as a cornerstone of spiritual marketing. Researcher highlight that consumers increasingly seek authentic experiences that align with their values and beliefs (Gilmore J.H, Pine B.J.2007). In the realm of spiritual marketing, authenticity builds trust and loyalty, making it imperative for organizations to transparently express their genuine beliefs and practices. Temple devotees, in their quest for not only religious experiences but also authentic services, significantly influence their overall satisfaction and engagement (Chhabra D. 2010).

According to pilgrims often pursue deeper connections to sacred spaces, motivated by a desire for personal transformation and meaning. This pursuit shapes their perceptions of authenticity and impacts their responses to marketing efforts. Thus, temple devotees are pivotal in shaping spiritual marketing strategies. Their experiences, preferences, and expectations yield valuable insights into what constitutes an authentic spiritual experience (David Scott.2014).

The social capital derived from community engagement within temple settings enhances the perceived value of spiritual experiences. Effective spiritual marketing must recognize the community aspects of temple life and the significance of social networks in fostering genuine connections (Bourdieu Pierre. 1984). The cultural context of temple tourism significantly shapes the perception of spiritual marketing. In cultures where spirituality is interwoven into daily life, marketing strategies must reflect local beliefs and practices to resonate with devotees. For example, in Hindu temples in India, marketing initiatives that emphasize traditional rituals, community involvement, and ethical values are more likely to be embraced by devotees.

Researcher (Pandya Niyati et al 2023) underscores the critical need for sustainable funding models and consistent maintenance to ensure the relevance of cultural and religious sites. Their study identifies management challenges, including inadequate funding and staff shortages, suggesting holistic funding strategies and the training of competent personnel to overcome these issues.

Additionally, this work offers insights into the factors influencing Hindu pilgrimage experiences. Their model highlights critical drivers, including destination popularity, safety, and local culture, which collectively contribute to a fulfilling pilgrimage environment. Such experiences enhance pilgrim satisfaction, encourage return visits, and promote positive word-of-mouth (Jyotsna J H 2022). The importance of understanding factors that contribute to pilgrim satisfaction, essential for effectively implementing welfare programs. Their findings illustrate how practical needs such as food, accommodation, and security converge with spiritual motivations, shaping the overall pilgrimage experience (Joice k Joseph et al 2020). The Navagraha Temples assess Religious Tourism Service Quality (RTSQ) and highlights the significance of logistical and hygienic standards in enhancing spiritual fulfillment. Their findings indicate that high-quality services can bolster pilgrim satisfaction and promote revisitation. These studies suggest that both material and spiritual elements shape pilgrim satisfaction and consumer behavior within religious tourism. As emphasized by various scholars, amenities are vital in delivering a fulfilling tourist experience, with motivation recognized as a key influence on tourist behavior (Balaji V, Venkatesan S.2015).

By grasping the intricate dynamics of spiritual fulfillment, community engagement, and cultural context, spiritual marketing can effectively connect with consumers. As the field evolve /es, it is essential for practitioners to stay attuned to the genuine needs and experiences of temple devotees, thereby enriching the spiritual tourism landscape. This understanding has been shaped through literature reviews, focused discussions, and interviews with priests, experts, officials from the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department, and several devotees and the following variables were selected in the present study for the investigation.

## Methodology

**Research Objectives:** The study has special objectives to comprehensively comprehend spiritual tourism. To identify the relationship between selected spiritual services and Authentic belief of pilgrims who visit spiritual places; To analyse the infrastructural facilities of temples that provide enriching spiritual experiences to devotees; To analyse the correlation between Overall spiritual experience and devotees' motivation service, infrastructure and authentic belief.

The present investigation centres on the demographics of attributes of devotees, which encompass age-groups, genders, economic status, profession, and educational level. Additionally, it examines devotee behaviour, such as visiting as members of groups, prior experience, duration of visit, duration of decision-making for spiritual travel, and the information sources on the destinations.

Hypotheses, proposed in the study, are aimed at examining the correlation between overall spiritual experience and devotees' selected attributes with their pilgrimage experiences. Additionally, it seeks to comprehend variations in derived factors concerning devotees' demographic and behavioural characteristics and to pinpoint disparities in overall spiritual experience among devotees based on these demographic and behavioural traits.

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Authentic belief has positive impact on spiritual experiences

Ho<sub>2</sub>: "There is no relationship between the selected spiritual attributes and the overall spiritual experience of the pilgrim"

Ho<sub>3</sub>: "There is no substantial association between Structural relation between spiritual attributes, authentic belief, and overall spiritual experience with intention of pilgrims."

Ho<sub>4</sub>: "There is a difference in the overall spiritual experience of pilgrims in terms of the pilgrims' demographic characteristics and behavioural characteristics."

## Sample determination

The sample population during this research study comprised all temple visitors, regarded as the main sampling unit for a three-week duration in March 2024. The sample size was estimated to estimate the overall population of pilgrims.

The formula applied is: 
$$S = \frac{Z^2 p(1-p)}{d^2} \text{ -----}[1]$$

Where S = the Sample size,

$z$  = a number relating to the degree of confidence to have in the result. Since 95% confidence level is most frequently used and accepted, this has been taken as confidence level. The value of ' $z$ ' is 1.96 for 95% confidence level ;  $d$  = desired level of precision;

$$S = \frac{1.96^2 \cdot 0.9(1-0.9)}{0.05^2} \text{-----}[2]$$

$$S = \frac{3.842 (0.09)}{0.0025} \text{-----}[3]$$

$$S = \frac{0.346}{0.0025} = 138 \text{-----}[4]$$

To make it a round figure the researcher has surveyed 140 questionnaires but researcher finally found only 124 were usable. 16 questionnaires were unusable. So the researcher excluded these 16 questionnaires. Therefore, the data from 124 pilgrim respondents were analysed in the study. Primary data were collected from pilgrims participating in spiritual events regularly through convenience sampling, suitable for an infinite population.

To test its dependability, 35 local people completed a pilot study of the questionnaire. The main data were collected from followers of the Hindu religion who had darshan at various temples in Andhra Pradesh. To ascertain the authenticity of the satisfaction metrics in the survey, Cronbach's alpha (dependability coefficient) was computed. Validity refers to how accurately the instrument measures the intended constructs. The data was analysed using SPSS.

### Sample Area

The present research was focused on major pilgrimage sites in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India. The selected areas for this research included Tirupati, Srikalahasti, and Vijayawada (Kanaka Durga Temple), all of which are renowned destinations for tourists visiting the state. The sampling unit for this study consisted of pilgrims from Andhra Pradesh. A convenience sampling method was employed to select participants among these tourists.

The researcher commenced the conversation with a structured questionnaire built from an initial literature study and personal observations.

The prevailing consensus from the conversation was recorded, reflecting the overall tendency. Subsequently, with main concerned personnel of the three sites, informal discussions were held with the officers of the Temple authority to attain a comprehensive grasp of the phenomenon.

### Questionnaire design

A questionnaire (Table 1) was constructed based on previous research studies on spiritual tourism to analyze experiences and their motives.

**Table 1 : Various Study variables**

Variable	Label	Items	Reference
Spiritual Service	Darshan	Temple authorities has arranged good darshan to pilgrims	Harinarayan, T 2014
	Meals	Temple authorities has very good free meals provide to pilgrims	Debasis Sahoo, 2020
	Prasadams	Counters where food items, which were offered to the deities at the sanctum sanctorum, are either distributed free of cost or sold for a price.	Debasis Sahoo 2020
	Hundi	An enclosed collection box where devotees offer money or valuables as an expression of one's devoutness or to commemorate the temple's festivals.	Eswaran B, et al. 2019
Spiritual Place Infrastructure	Accommodations	Temple authorities arranged Free accommodation to pilgrims	Vidhya et al. 2019
	Transport	Access to bus facilities to temple and nearest local areas	Vidhya et al. 2019
	Free tonsure	Temple authorities maintain hygienic in tonsure area	Vamsi G. 2012.
	Kalyana Mandapams	A place to perform marriages in Temple Premises.	Uday Dokras 2017.
	Hygiene inside Temple	Temple authorities maintain very clean and Hygienic inside	Madhukumar Reddy A 2020.
Authentic Belief	Temple Tower	A Gopuram and Gopura is an elaborate tower, typically decorative, located at the entrance to a temple, particularly in Southern India.	Uday Patil 2017.

	Artha Mandapam	In Hindu temple architecture, Ardhamandapa is a prominent element of the entrance Group.	Eswaran B, et al. 2019.
	“Sthala Vruksha” and other trees	“ <i>Sthala Vriksha</i> or <i>Sthala Vruksham</i> ” are prominent trees unique to ancient Hindu temples.	Eswaran B, et al. 2019.
	Kodimaram	“Dwajasthambam also known as Kodimaram is a flagstaff that is commonly seen in Hindu temples across South India”.	Eswaran B, et al. 2019.
Spiritual Motivation	Optimistic	Spirituality requires good thinking.	Manel, et al. 2023.
	Spiritual Atmosphere	Good vibes for visiting this temple	
	Self-control	Self-control their emotions to achieve their goals	Manel, et al. 2023.
Overall spiritual experience	Future intention	revisit this place in future	Manel, et al. 2023.
	Recommended to friends and Family	Recommend friends and family to visit this temple	Manel, et al. 2023.

## Results and Discussion

Table 2 indicates that the distribution of the sample is according to their demographic profile i.e., Gender, age, education, income and occupation.

**Table 2:** Distribution of sample respondents of Demographic Profile (N= 124)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	88	71.0
Female	36	29.0
<b>Age</b>		
< 30 years	12	9.7
31 – 40 Years	19	15.3
41 – 50 Years	24	19.4
51 – 60 Years	27	21.8
> 60 Years	42	33.9
<b>Devotees State</b>		
Within State	95	76.6
With outside State	18	14.5
Abroad	11	8.9
<b>Educational Levels</b>		
Secondary Schools	64	51.6
Intermediate	34	27.4
Graduate / PG	26	21.0
<b>Devotees Income</b>		
< Rs.15000	42	33.9
Rs.15001 – 25000	34	27.4
Rs. 25001 – 35000	27	21.8
> Rs. 35000	21	16.9
<b>Occupation</b>		
Professional	16	12.9
Private Service	31	25.0
Business / Industrialist	23	18.5
Govt. Servant	17	13.7
Formers/ Landlords	37	29.8

The majority of the respondents were males (71.0%) and females (29.0%). Regarding the age of the respondents nearly one-fourth (33.3%) of the respondents were > 60 years old, followed by between 51 and 60 years old (21.8%), and very few < 30 years old (9.7%). Regarding the family income of the sample nearly one-third of the (33.9%) sample have an income of > Rs 15000/- per month followed by 27.4% having income in the range of Rs 15001-25000/- and a small percent 16.9 % who have an income of >Rs 35000/- among the sample respondents.

Additionally, the findings reveal that nearly one-fourth of the respondents were farmers or landlords, while approximately one-third were employed in the private sector. Only 18.5% identified as business owners or industrialists, and less than 13.7% were engaged in government jobs. A small percentage, 12.9%, were professionals.

Overall, the sample consisted predominantly of male respondents and individuals aged over 60. A significant portion of devotees came from within the state, with secondary school education being the most common educational level. The majority reported incomes below Rs. 15,000, and the occupational distribution showed a variety of professions, with a notable representation of farmers and landlords.

**Table 3 :** Distribution of sample respondents in terms of Devotee behavioral Characteristics (N=124)

S. No	Variable	Freq.	Per cent
<b>1</b>	<b>Visit Frequency (Number)</b>		
a	< 4	42	33.9
b	Between 5 to 8	38	30.6
c	More than 9 times	44	35.5
<b>2</b>	<b>Duration of Stay</b>		
a	Day Patron	61	49.2
d	Below 2 Days	38	30.6
c	3-4 Days	15	12.1
d	5 days and above	10	8.1
<b>3.</b>	<b>Origin of Information</b>		
a	Self-awareness resulting from previous visits	37	29.8
b	Friends & Relative	28	22.6
c	Travel Consultants	19	15.3
d	Tourism Dept	11	8.9
f	Tour Operators	10	8.1
g	Others	19	15.3
<b>4</b>	<b>Travel Pattern</b>		
a	Alone	8	6.5
b	A couple	19	15.3
c	Family members	46	37.1
d	Friends /relatives	37	29.8
e	Organized Groups	14	11.3

Table 3 delineates the distribution among sample respondents according to their behavioral traits as devotees. It shows that nearly one-fourth (35.5%) of the respondents visited temples nine times or more, while 33% visited fewer than four times. A small percentage of participants reported visiting temples 5-8 times.

Regarding the length of stay, approximately half of the respondents made day trips, and nearly one-third (30.6%) stayed for less than two days. Few individuals visited for five days or more. In terms of information sources, about one-third relied on their prior experiences from earlier visits, followed by 22.6% who received recommendations from friends and relatives, and 15.3% from travel agencies. A smaller percentage obtained information from tour operators and other sources.

The travel patterns revealed that approximately one-third (37.1%) traveled with family members, followed by 29.8% who journeyed with friends or relatives. Organized groups accounted for 11.3% of the travel patterns, while only a small percentage traveled alone.

Table 4 highlights the overall spiritual familiarity experience, indicating that approximately one-third of the sample respondents, or 35.5%, expressed a neutral sentiment. Around 25.5% reported being satisfied, while nearly 22.6% expressed dissatisfaction. From the present study, it is clear that very few devotees were very dissatisfied.

**Table 4:** Overall Spiritual Experience (N= 124)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very dissatisfied	8	6.5
dissatisfied	13	10.5
Neutral	44	35.5
Satisfied	31	25.0
Very satisfied	28	22.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.44 ± 0.541</b>	



### Exploratory Factor Analysis

Principle components factoring produced the initial answer. The eigenvalues showed that the four components explained 65.225% of variation before rotation. Elements with eigenvalues over 1.0 and characteristics having factor loadings over 0.4 were recorded. The correlation matrix had 0.000 significance and an 862.948 Bartlett test for sphericity. The statistical evaluation and the test showed a substantial relationship between variables, supporting factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin aggregation measure of the quality of the sample was 0.829, suggesting good performance (Joseph F Hair 2014). The varimax-rotated factor matrix found four factors from the sixteen variables with the highest the loadings (loading >0.4). No characteristics were missing due to loading failures at 0.40 or higher factors.

Variable communalities ranged from 0.408 to 0.774. Cronbach's alpha was determined for each element to assess dependability & internal consistency. Alpha coefficients ranged from 0.635 to 0.807 for the four components. Since 0.50 passes the reliability test, the results were reliable. For Composite Reliability (CR) & Average Variance Extracted (AVE), 0.70 and 0.50 are acceptable, as well. A higher value for CR and AVE indicates more reliability and validity of the construct under examination. In this investigation, all components adequately met the criteria as the readings of CR & AVE exceeded the specified thresholds. The range for CR was among 0.774 and 0.863, while the AVE for each build ranged from 0.464 to 0.614 [ Table 5].

**Table 5:** Measurement evaluation model of Exploratory factor analysis  
(N= 124)

Study Variables	Attributes	Factor Loading	Communality	AVE	CR	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Mean	SD
Spiritual Service	Darshan	.770	.682	0.464	0.774	0.784	3.510	0.946
	Meals	.556	.689					
	Prasadams	.724	.735					
	Hundi	.657	.731					
Spiritual Place Infrastructure	Accommodations	.574	.665	0.560	0.863	0.807	3.750	0.940
	Transport	.796	.673					
	Free tonsure	.786	.652					
	Kalyana Mandapams	.781	.661					
	Hygiene inside Temple	.780	.654					
Spiritual Needs	Temple Tower	.696	.500	0.541	0.824	0.715	3.232	1.047
	Artha Mandapam	.815	.675					
	Sthala Vruksha and other trees	.783	.654					
	Kodimaram	.635	.408					
Spiritual Motivation	Optimistic	.790	.681	0.614	0.826	0.635	3.457	0.853
	Spiritual Atmosphere	.861	.774					
	Self-control	.691	.602					

CR – Composite reliability ; AVE – Average variance extracted ; Cumulative variance (%): 65.225 ;

Note1: Extraction Method – Principal Component Analysis; Rotation Method – Varimax with Kaiser Normalization;

Note 2: The study variables which contribute different attributes are taken by the researcher from various citations which is also formed as conceptual framework

KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy) = 0.829; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity:  $p = 0.000$  ( $\chi^2 = 862.948$ ,  $df = 120$ )

**Table 6:** Regression results of Respondents' Authentic Belief based on the dimensions

Dependent Variable : Pilgrim's authentic belief;

Independent variables : Spiritual Infrastructure, Spiritual Motivation, Spiritual Service ;

### H<sub>1</sub>: Authentic belief has positive impact on spiritual experiences

Multiple-regressions analysis was done to identify the significance of the four critical factors, in influencing the process of Pilgrim's authentic belief. The four critical factors were taken as independent variables and the effective implementation of Authentic belief was taken as dependent variable. The result of the multiple regressions performed has been presented in table 6.

**Table 6a :** Output of simultaneous multiple regression- Model summary

<b>Model Summary</b>										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin Watson
					R Square Change	F-Change	df1	df2	Sig. F-Change	
1	.804 <sup>a</sup>	.647	.638	.449	.647	73.284	3	120	<.001	2.191

To assess the influence of independent variables upon Authentic belief as the dependent variable, the entry approach to multiple regression was utilized. The model summary indicates a R value of 0.804, a R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.647, and an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.449, suggesting that this regression model accounts for approximately 65% variance in authentic faith due to independent variables (religious services, spiritual infrastructure, religious motivation). The Durbin-Watson statistic is 2.191, exceeding 1.5; hence, multicollinearity among the variables is absent table 6a.

**Table 6b:** Analysis of variance

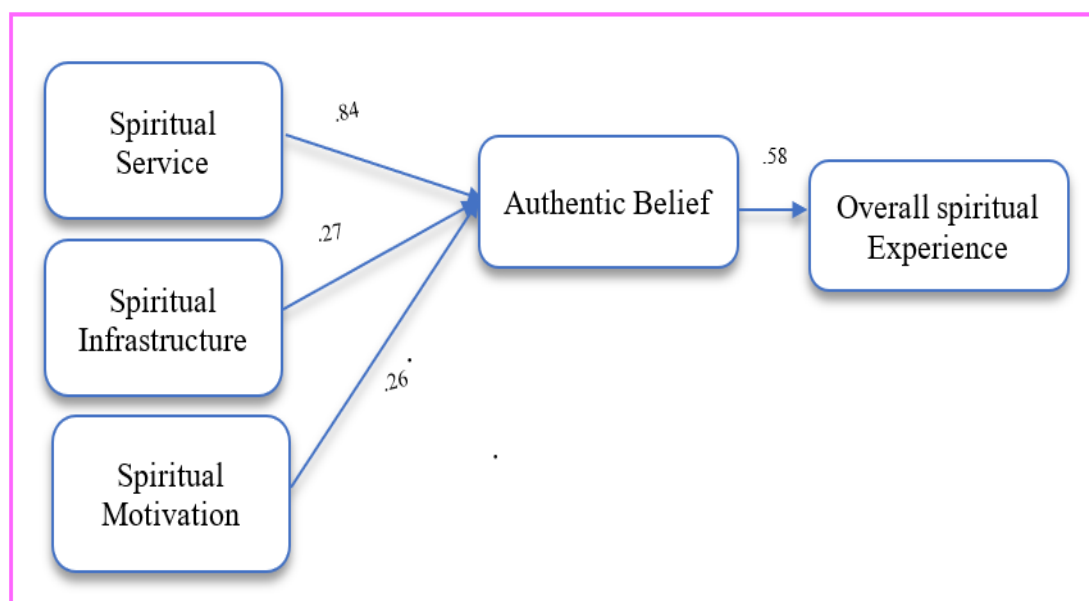
<b>ANOVA<sup>a</sup></b>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	44.264	3	14.755	73.284**	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	24.160	120	.201		
	Total	68.425	123			

ANOVA results, p-value is less than 0.05 and equal to 0.000 and F-value (73.284) is less than 0.01 (99% confidential Level) table 6b, which indicates the model applied is significantly good enough in predicting the outcome.

**Table 6c:** Output of simultaneous multiple regression coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	1.216	.290		6.746	<.001
	Spiritual Infra	.891	.072	.841	12.427	<.001
	Motivation	.282	.077	.272	4.066	<.001
	Spiritual Service	.274	.053	.266	3.395	<.001

The regression output reproduced in regression coefficients that Spiritual infrastructure, Motivation and spiritual services have significance level less than 0.01 which reflects this variable has a significant impact on authentic belief of pilgrims table 6c. Standardized Coefficient are positive and statistically significant at  $p < 0.001$  Figure 1. Hence H<sub>1</sub> that there is significant relationship between selected spiritual experiences has positive impact on authentic belief.

**Figure 1:** Hypotheses path model- spiritual experience



The correlation coefficient quantifies the strength of a linear relationship between two variables. The current study employed a correlation coefficient to assess the strength of the linear relationship between the total spiritual experience of pilgrims and four variables. The relationship between overall religious experience and four components was favorable and significant at the level of 0.01 (2-tailed) Table 7.

**H<sub>2</sub>: There is no relationship between the selected spiritual attributes and the overall spiritual experience of the pilgrim”**

**Table 7:** Correlation analysis with Overall spiritual experience

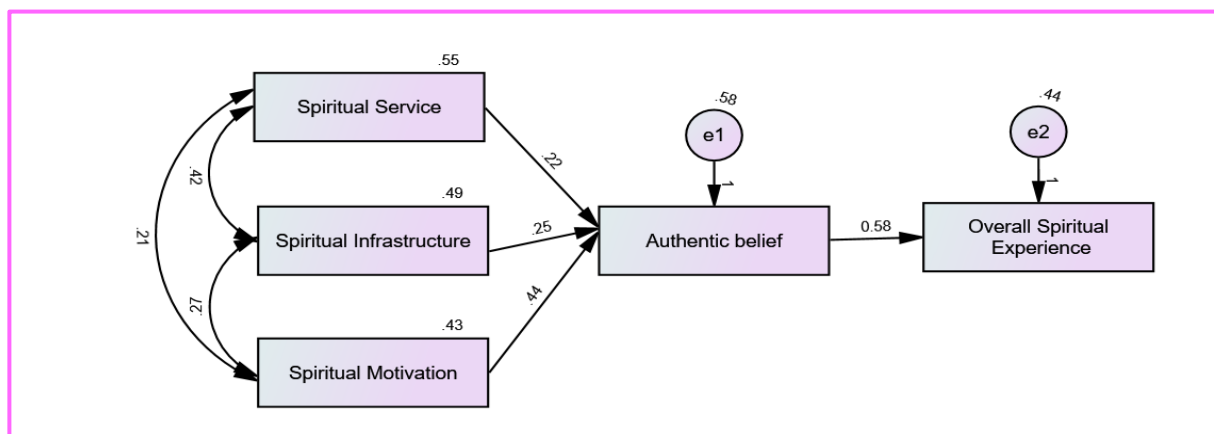
Particulars		Spiritual Service (factor 1)	Spiritual Infrastructure (factor 2)	Authentic Belief (factor 3)	Spiritual Motivation (factor 4)
Overall Spiritual experience	Pearson correlation coefficient	0.537**	0.380**	0.316**	0.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed )	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00
	N	124	124	124	124

The study revealed that the association between overall spiritual encounter with spiritual motivation or service was stronger than that between total spiritual experience with spiritual infrastructure or true belief. The results indicated support for hypothesis 2, demonstrating a moderate association between overall spiritual encounter and the chosen spiritual qualities.

**Structural relation between spiritual attributes, Authentic belief and overall spiritual experience intention of pilgrims:** A model of structural equations (SEM) is constructed to examine the structural relationship among spiritual qualities, genuine belief, and the overall purpose of pilgrims regarding their spiritual experiences at temples, with the results presented in Table 8. A model of structural equations was constructed in SPSS AMOS.

**Table 8:** Standardized Structural Path Coefficients

Path	Standardized co-efficient	CR	P-value
AB ← Sp service	0.217	4.234	***
AB ← Sp Infra.	0.249	4.069	***
AB ← Sp Motivation	0.441	4.750	***
Overall ← Authentic	0.579	6.318	***



**Figure 2.** Path Diagram for Overall Spiritual Experience intention of Pilgrim for selected destination attributes.

The standardized coefficient for authentic belief (AB) against spiritual service is 0.217, the standardized coefficient for authentic belief against spiritual infrastructure is 0.249 and the standardized coefficient for spiritual motivation is 0.441 and these values are significant. Spiritual service, spiritual infrastructure and spiritual motivation are directly and positively influencing authentic belief towards selected destination attributes. Hypothetical model of the study results as showed in Figure 2.

The standardized coefficient for overall spiritual experience against authentic belief is 0.579 which is significant. Authentic belief of pilgrim towards spiritual experience is directly and positively influencing overall spiritual experience. The model fit parameters are presented in table 9.

**Table 9:** Model Fit Parameters

Chi-square value	P-value	GFI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA
3.927	0.269	0.988	0.995	0.015	0.050

The chi-square value of 3.927 is not statistically significant and it exhibits the model has an excellent fit. GFI is 0.988 and CFI is 0.995 and these values are revealing that model has perfect fit. RMR is 0.015 and RMSEA is 0.05 that measure are illustrating that model has best fit.

**Table 10:** Results of the Two-tailed Independent t-test with One-way ANOVA on the Mean Difference in Overall Spiritual Awareness by Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Freq	Mean	SD	t / F-value (p-value)
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	88	3.78	0.639	2.0148* (0.046)
Female	36	3.49	0.911	
<b>Age</b>				
< 30 Years	12	3.08	1.04	2.696* (0.034)
31- 40 Years	19	3.41	0.78	
41 – 50 Years	24	3.59	0.77	
51 – 60 Years	27	3.83	0.85	
> 60 Years	42	3.88	0.92	
<b>Devotees State</b>				
Within State	95	3.76	0.736	3.260* (0.042)
With outside State	18	3.53	0.511	
Abroad	11	3.24	0.544	
<b>Educational Levels</b>				
Secondary Schools	64	3.51	0.612	1.029 (0.360)
Intermediate	34	3.45	0.732	
Graduate / PG	26	3.68	0.544	
<b>Devotees Income</b>				
< Rs.15000	42	3.78	0.78	2.712* (0.048)
Rs.15001 – 25000	34	3.20	1.11	
Rs. 25001 – 35000	27	3.45	0.95	
> Rs. 35000	21	3.68	0.83	
<b>Occupation</b>				
Professional	16	3.38	0.73	0.489 (0.744)
Private Service	31	3.29	0.67	
Business / Industrialist	23	3.45	0.74	
Govt. Servant	17	3.55	0.62	
Formers/ Landlords	37	3.31	0.80	

Table 10 displays the findings from the two-tailed independent t-test with one-way ANOVA concerning the mean variance in overall spiritual acquaintance based on the respondents' demographic variables. The results reveal no significant variations between the respondents' general spiritual familiarity and their career or education. A notable disparity in the total spiritual familiarity based on the respondents' gender was identified ( $t=2.0148$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), age ( $F=2.696$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), devotees' state ( $F=3.260$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and devotees' income ( $F=2.712$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The findings indicate that male respondents exhibit more pleasure with Devotees' destinations compared to their female counterparts. Middle-aged individuals exhibited a greater interest in spiritual places, particularly within the state of Andhra Pradesh. The low-income group exhibited greater satisfaction than other income groups.

**Table 11:** Two-tailed independent t-test and One-way ANOVA Results of the Mean Difference of Overall Spiritual familiarity by Pilgrim behavioral Characteristics of the Respondents

S. No	Variable	Freq.	Mean	SD	F-value (p-value)
<b>1</b>	<b>Frequency of Visit (Nos.)</b>				
a	Below 4	42	3.38	0.73	0.510 (0.602)
b	5 – 8	38	3.29	0.67	
c	9 times and above	44	3.45	0.74	

<b>2</b>	<b>Length of Stay</b>				
a	Day Visitor	61	3.42	0.70	2.774* (0.044)
d	Below 2 Days	38	3.81	0.75	
c	3-4 Days	15	3.63	0.67	
d	5 days and above	10	3.28	0.90	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Source of Information</b>				
a	Self-knowledge due to prior Visits	37	3.86	0.67	3.260** (0.009)
b	Friends and Relative	28	3.78	0.66	
c	Travel Agents	19	3.84	0.63	
d	Tourism Dept	11	3.78	0.79	
f	Tour Operators	10	3.67	0.72	
g	Others	19	3.13	0.75	
<b>4</b>	<b>Travel Pattern</b>				
a	Single	8	3.15	0.84	3.018* (0.021)
b	Couples	19	3.71	0.72	
c	Families	46	3.89	0.64	
d	Friends /relatives	37	3.96	0.75	
e	Organized Groups	14	3.52	0.66	

To compute mean variations in overall **Spiritual familiarity** by the **Pilgrimage** respondents' behavioral attributes, Two-tailed independent Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used. Table 11 details the results. The findings, represented in Table 11, show no considerable differences in the respondents' overall spiritual familiarity and the frequentness of their visits. Significant disparities exist among overall spiritual familiarity including period of stay, sources of knowledge, especially pilgrim travel patterns (one-way). The Robust test the Equality or means indicates significant variations in the duration of residence ( $F = 2.774$ ) & source data ( $F = 3.260$ ). The study indicates that respondents who had a comprehensive spiritual experience at pilgrimage locations reported more satisfaction than those who had not encountered any meaningful experiences during their visits to spiritual places (Familiarity). Moreover, the study elucidates that the respondents' earlier travels to specific spiritual sites informed their knowledge, resulting in high levels of satisfaction with those destinations.

### Conclusion

The current study unveiled critical insights regarding the factors that influence the overall spiritual experience of authentic belief. Among various service domains, higher satisfaction levels with the good darshan, positive vibes in temple premises as well as the spiritual motivation like good atmosphere, were found to be independently related to higher level of authentic belief.

The present investigation indicates that the temple Devasthanam authorities must prioritize the implementation of robust planning strategies aimed at enhancing local infrastructure, particularly facilitating the pilgrimage experience to ensure adequacy. Simultaneously, they should proactively address potential emerging issues during Darshan, such as crowd management during peak times and minimizing long waiting periods. Moreover, considering the multitude of rituals involved in managing devotional sites, adherence to specific rules and profound knowledge is crucial. Therefore, religious guidance provided by travel operators before and during pilgrims' devotional activities becomes imperative, especially for those lacking religious wisdom. The said method not only augments the spiritual experience but also fosters a positive destination image for Hindu Temples, potentially attracting more pilgrims from other countries amidst the COVID-19 control era. Ultimately, academic scholars and travel agencies can identify service gaps and prioritize factors contributing to a seamless, spiritually enriching, and satisfying pilgrimage experience.

### Future Scope of Study

A broader examination of various religious contexts and practices across temples worldwide could enhance our understanding of how spiritual marketing principles apply to different belief systems. Longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into the evolution of authentic beliefs over time and their effects on consumer behavior. As younger generations are increasingly drawn to social media, investigating the role of digital platforms in shaping spiritual marketing could uncover new avenues for engagement and outreach. Additionally, exploring the emotional and psychological factors that influence devotees' experiences would further enrich our understanding of the dynamics within spiritual marketing. Finally, interdisciplinary collaborations with fields such as psychology and sociology could provide a more comprehensive perspective on the intersection of spirituality and marketing, paving the way for innovative strategies that truly resonate with end-users.

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### Author Contributions

Both authors contributed equally

### Ethics Approval

There is no need for ethical approval for this work.

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