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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY TO LINK CRM INITIATIVES WITH SERVICE QUALITY PERCEPTION, TOURIST SATISFACTION AND DESTINATION LOYALTY

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Abstract *The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is one of the most critical business processes being adopted by the hospitality and tourism industry which is believed to augment perceived service quality of the tourists leading to the elevation in satisfaction level and subsequent repatronization of destination. CRM philosophy, an integration of people, process and technology, provides a proactive platform to the service providers to design, develop and deliver the service offers with adequate personalization to fit the specific requirements of the customers. This study was taken up following the identification of dearth of research in the area of linking CRM initiatives with service quality perception, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. The researchers have used a novel approach to index the CRM process on the basis of quantifying the performance of CRM components. Santiniketan in West Bengal has evolved as a tourist destination over the years following the visionary Rabindranath Tagore's initiatives of setting up an educational venture namely Visva Bharati University and by virtue of a number of cultural and ethnic events centering the university. The study revealed a great deal of tourist satisfaction which was positively attributed to CRM initiatives and service quality thereof and suggested destination loyalty*

Keywords: *Customer-Relationship-Management, Tourist, Satisfaction, Destination, Loyalty, Service, Quality.*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has evolved as a prime contributor to nation's growth and prosperity. With the increase in the intensity of tourist influx across the globe, the academic researchers also became involved in identifying its nature, dynamics, dimensions and effects. Tourism has been observed as the aggregate of interactions and relationships between tourists, business houses, host governments and administration and host communities (McIntosh and Goeldner, 1984).

The international tourist arrival to India during the period of 1992-2007 can be segregated into three phases. Phase-I: 1992-1996 – revealed a growth of tourist arrival to the tune of 24.48%, phase-II: 1997-2001 – exhibited a sluggish growth of 6.86%. However, phase-III (2002-2007) registered a phenomenal growth of 108.76%. The reason for this boom can be attributed to a number of factors namely burgeoning Indian middle class, growth of high-spending foreign tourists, augmentation in communication system-both physical and virtual, infrastructure & super structure and the initiatives taken up by the state governments to showcase their individual states as tourist destinations, thereby building up the brands (Gujarat, Odissa, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh etc. are some of the major branded tourism destinations). A study conducted by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in the area of development perspective of eco and rural tourism indicated that it registered highest employment and investment ratio. Study conducted by McKinsey also revealed that medical tourism has the potentiality to generate as much as 100 billion in INR by the end of 2012. India's cultural and natural heritage is truly incredible. The brand title 'Incredible India' not only projects India as a tourist destination but also promotes the nation as a potential export and investment hub.

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Table-1 depicts the evolutionary aspects of CRM.

The evolution of CRM			
Early '90s	CRM Wave – I Call centre/Sales Force Effectiveness	CRM Wave – II Multi-Channel Integration	CRM Wave – III Conversational Marketing Today
CRM Goals	Improving channel efficiency, Increasing Customer satisfaction	Improving customer interactions, Improving customer retention	Predicting customer behaviour, Building brand and lifetime customer value
CRM Strategy	Provide more efficient means of customer interactions	Provide customers with multiple points of contact, gather insights	Integrate communications and brand across channels
Resulting Customer experience	Customers enjoyed more convenient transactions, but channels were not integrated	Customers had more options to interact with the company, but the experiences were fragmented across contact points	Customer is given a seamlessly integrated experience across all channel
Marketing focus	Customer acquisition Product sales	Customer retention Cross-selling	Customer conversation Brand equity

'Yatra Visawam Bhavati Ekanidam' – where the whole world meets in one nest. Rabindranath Tagore, India's first Nobel laureate, wanted Santiniketan to be that spot, where the whole world would settle, forgetting illusory geographical boundaries. Little wonder then that India's nodal authority Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) submitted Santiniketan as its official entry this year for UNESCO's list on World Heritage Sites. ASI has submitted the dossier on Santiniketan to UNESCO's world heritage centre in Paris, and has received a letter from the body, saying the dossier received is as per operational guidelines. Santiniketan has emerged as a tourist destination with updated facilities and amenities with regard to hospitality industry and allied services. The cultural events like Pous Mela, Basantotsav, and Magh Mela draw huge influx of domestic as well as international tourist. With the changing dynamics of quality perception of services related to tourism, the expectation and zone of tolerance have also been modified.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has emerged as a pivotal business process and strategic imperative for firms, particularly operating in the service sector, as its successful harness and implementation can assure customer satisfaction, loyalty and repeat purchase thereby stimulating or inducing profitability (Feinberg and Kadam, 2002; Kotorov, 2002. Anton and Hoeck, 2002). The CRM as a philosophy puts 'Customer' at the core of the business process and the functionalities related to conventional marketing are placed in several orbits around the core. The essence of CRM is to enhance a 'track and profit' process from the retained customers in the business portfolio. The implementation of CRM practice in a wide cross-section of industries, including the service sector, requires the extensive support of technology. Since the practice rotates around 'customer', maintenance of assorted databases and a corresponding data retrieval technique is of prime importance. Therefore, CRM is a customer-focused strategic impetus that integrates people, process and technology which has the potentiality to ensure:

a. One-to-one marketing instead of mass marketing (Peppers & Rogers, 1996)
b. Commitment on long-term relationships (Pearson, 1995)
c. Disintermediation and delayer distribution aspects (Pearson, 1995)
d. Progressive reduction of marketing costs (Cockburn, 2000).

Table 1: Evolution of CRM

CRM philosophy was adopted by the tourism sector as it allowed them to be more proactive in predicting the changing line of customer demands and allowed them to realize the extent to which they can customize their service offer with adequate differentiation. Jain and Jain (2006) delved into CRM practices of hotels in central India to measure the effectiveness against factors like: value proposition, recognition, customer orientation, reliability, relationship orientation, credibility, customization, personalization and gestures. CRM has been proved to be an effective contributor to enhance perception of service quality. Service quality has been recognised as a critical prerequisite and determinant of competitiveness for establishing and sustaining long-term satisfying relationships with customers (Wang & Wang, 2006). A number of studies were targeted towards revealing the global attributes of services that significantly contribute

to quality assessments in conventional service environment (Gronroos, 1982, 1984; Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988). Over the years, exploration to enhancement of service quality has remained as the focal research object (Yavas et.al., 1997, Rust and Zahorik, 1993; Cronin and Taylor, 1992, 1994; Buttle, 1996; Crosby and Stephens, 1987; Parasuraman et.al. 1988; Kearns and Nadler, 1992; Avkiran, 1994; Julian and Ramaseshan, 1994; Lewis, 1989, 1993; Llosa et.al., 1998). Grönroos (1982) described service quality as a customer's perception of difference between the expected service and the perceived service. The study of service quality was pioneered by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (PZB), who developed the gaps framework in 1985 and its related SERVQUAL instrument in 1988 (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry [PZB] 1985, 1988, 1991)**.** Numerous researchers have also highlighted the independent effect of perceptions on service quality evaluations and have questioned the use of disconfirmation paradigm as the basis for the assessment of service quality (Carman, 1990; Bolton & Drew 1991a, Babakus & Boller, 1992; Cronin & Taylor, 1992. A number of scholars were of the opinion that service quality can be represented by a dual-dimension process (Grönroos, 1984; Lehtinen and Lehtinen, 1982)**.** The first dimension deals with what the service actually delivers and is referred to by PZB (1985) as "outcome quality" and by Grönroos (1984) as "technical quality". The second dimension deals with the delivery process of the service. PZB (1985) described it as "process quality" while Grönroos (1984) termed it as "functional quality". Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1991) defined service quality as "the degree and direction of discrepancy between customers' service perceptions and expectations". One of the results of the studies initiated by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) was the identification of ten determinants of service process quality namely responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, knowing the customers and tangibles.

Baker and Crompton (2000) observed that the literature related to quality in the area tourism and allied area dates back to the early 1960's. Over the years researchers have made various attempts to make sense of how tourists evaluate the quality of services they receive while touring to specific destinations having tourist attraction (Atilgan, Akinci, & Aksoy, 2003; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Chadee & Mattsson, 1996; Frochot, 2004; Hudson, Hudson, & Miller,2004; Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1995; Weirmair & Fuchs, 1999), tour operator and travel agency quality (Ryan& Cliff, 1997), hotel and its hospitality quality (Suh, Lee, Park, & Shin, 1997) etc. However, Frochot (2004) pointed out that given the nature of service, the evaluation of its quality is quite complex. Vijayadurai (2008) identified service quality factors in hospitality industry. Tourism service providers strive hard to improve the quality of their services and the level of customer satisfaction in the belief that this effort will create loyal visitors. Loyal visitors will return to the destination and recommend it to others (Tian-Cole & Cromption, 2003). Sparks and Westgate (2002) suggest that service failure can have devastating effects on an organization because customers frequently switch to a different provider when they experience a service failure. However, among customers who experience service problems, those who receive satisfactory resolution are more likely to remain loyal to the service provider. Pawitra and Tan (2003) use SERVQUAL in order to analyze the image of Singapore from the perspective of tourists from Indonesia. The authors note that the use of SERVQUAL in measuring a destination image requires that it be modified in order to ensure that the data reflect the unique attributes provided by the destination. Tourist satisfaction can be obtained by assessing the gap between predicted and perceived service. The destination image can be determined by analyzing tourist perceptions. Atilgan et al. (2003) suggest that cultural characteristics have an effect on perceptions of service quality in tourism. They found that different cultural groups can have different levels of expectations and perceptions in terms of service-quality dimensions. Therefore, many of the items on the SERVQUAL instrument can be salient to different customers for different reasons. Brown and Bond III (1995) attribute the importance of these items as to whether or not the customer is conscious of aspects such as time, quality of work, finances, and so forth.

Destination loyalty has been highlighted as one of the most important subjects in tourism researches. In many studies, revisit intention and positive word of mouth recommendation are noted as indicators of loyalty (e.g. Yoon & Uysal 2005; Chi and Qu, 2008). Several studies have attempted to identify major antecedents of revisit intention including satisfaction (Petrick et al., 2001; Kozak 2001), novelty seeking (Jang & Feng, 2007), image (Chi & QU, 2008), motivation and satisfaction (Yoon & Usal, 2005), safety (Chen & Gursoy, 2001), overall satisfaction (Campo- Martinez et al. 2010), cultural difference (Chen & Gursoy, 2001), perceived value (Petrick et al.,2001), past vacation experience(Kozak ,2001), and the like. In this regard, notably, Jang and Feng (2007) asserted that even though the extent of research finding is well focused on determinants of repeat visit intention, it can be contested that understanding tourists' revisit intention and their behavior remains limited. Revisit intention has also been focused as an important issue from economic perspective in tourism studies (e.g. Darnell & Johnson, 2001). Hsu et al. (2008) observed preserving loyalty of established customer as a crucial contributor to the achievement and profitability of business. Accordingly, the main reason why researchers should consider revisit intention is the fact that "globalization of markets, competitive pressure, brand multiplication and, above all, the ever-changing lifestyles and consumer behavior have forced companies to develop

strategies to keep their clients and create consumer loyalty programs" (Flambard-Ruaud, 2005), particularly in tourism industry.

Tourist destination consists of a number of different attributes such as attraction, image etc. Within each of these elements, there are a number of items that provide tourism products and services at a destination. Oliver (1981) claims that tourist satisfaction can be seen as a tourist's post-purchase evaluation of the destination. In many studies, satisfaction is distinguished as an antecedent of loyalty (Kozak, 2001; Jang & Feng, 2006). Although Oppermann (2000) states that studies on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty have not been thoroughly investigated, Chi and Qu (2008, p. 624) claim that "customer satisfaction has always been considered an essential business goal because it was assumed that satisfied customer would buy more." Although measuring tourist satisfaction is not simple, several studies have been conducted to examine the influence of customer satisfaction on loyalty (Gummesson, 1993; Anderson and Fornell, 1994; Um et al., 2006; Hui et al., 2007). Gotlieb et al. (1994) assert that positive satisfaction has positive influence on tourists' repurchase intention. Similarly, Baker & Crompton (2000); Petrick et al. (2001), and Jang & Feng (2006) have highlighted that satisfaction is the primary antecedent of revisit intention.

Importantly, there is an agreement among several scholars that satisfaction provide a ground for revisit and positive word of mouth recommendations which are the indicators of loyalty (e.g. Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Yoon & Uysal 2005; Chi and Qu, 2008). In another view, Um et al. (2006, p. 1141) state that "revisit intention has been regarded as an extension of satisfaction rather than an initiator of revisit decision making process." Kozak (2001) pointed that level of satisfaction as one of the most dominant variables in explaining revisit intention. Accordingly, in tourism destination's researches, it has been widely underlined that tourist satisfaction, loyalty and revisit intention have strong relationship (eg. Yoon & Usal, 2005; Awadzi & Panda, 2007), while a few studies disapproved the positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention (e.g. Um et al., 2006).

In tourist destination researches (e.g. Oliver, 1997; Yoon & Uysal 2005), tourist satisfaction has been measured by different items such as overall satisfaction, performance, expectation, and positive recommendation. Notably, Chi and Qu (2008, p.624) maintain that "satisfaction measurement has recently been displaced by the concept of customer loyalty, primarily because loyalty is seen as better predictor of actual behavior." In this respect, Chen and Tsai (2007) conclude that a key effect of tourist satisfaction that influences tourism intentions for revisit both in short and long term is loyalty to the destination.

The literature revealed the dearth of academic inputs linking CRM initiatives, perceived service quality, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. In addition to this CRM indexing approach has been introduced in this work.

Constructs development of Customer Relationship Management Index (CRMI)

Based on a novel approach by Baksi and Parida (2012) to develop a Multi-Channel Service Quality Index (MCSQI), a similar approach can be used to develop a Customer Relationship Management Index (CRMI) based on S-shaped logistic model:

$$y = \frac{m}{1 + e^{a+b}}$$

Where y is the benefit of the technology application at time t, m is the upper bound on the benefits of the application, and a and b are constants that determine the shape of the curve. Similar kind of logic can be used in computing Customer Relationship Management Index (CRMI) whereby it is assumed that CRMI will improve with the improved performance of CRM components (CRMCP). The impact of CRMCP performance at time 't' is proportional to the CRMI gained at time t-1 ($CRMI_{t-1}$) relative to maximum possible gains from the CRMCP performance (i.e. 1) and the remaining CRMI is yet to be gained (i.e 1 - $CRMI_{t-1}$). It can be represented as (over time t):

$$\frac{dCRMI}{dt} = -CRMCP(1 - CRMI_{t-1}) \qquad 1$$

where CRMCP is a term denoting efficiency of performance in delivering services for a service provider. Solving equation-1 for CRMI:

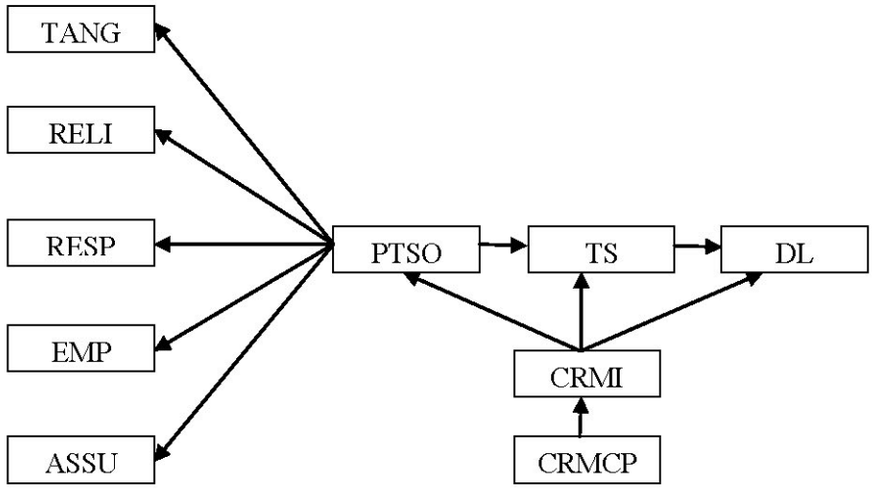
$$CRMI = \frac{1}{1 + e^{a+CRMCP_t}} \qquad 2$$

Equation-2 represents an S-shaped logistic model where 1 is the upper-bound on the CRMI from the CRMCP performance. It is assumed that the constant 'a' is zero because each service provider is supposed to initiate CRM induced services with a negligible CRMI. Therefore equation for CRMI is developed as:

$$CRMI = \frac{1}{1 + e^{CRMCP_t}} \qquad 3$$

The term CRMCP is a function of the relative weight of the eigenvalue (RWE) of each CRM components multiplied by the average factor value (AVF) of the corresponding CRM component.

Fig 1. Research Model



$CRMCP = RWE_{CRMCP1}AVF_{CRMCP1} + RWF_{CRMCP2}AVF_{CRMCP2} + RWF_{CRMCP3}AVF_{CRMCP3}$

Where, CRMCP1 = People dimension

CRMCP2 = Process dimension

CRMCP3 = Technology dimension

RESEARCH MODEL AND FORMULATION OF HYPOTHESES

Based on the review of literature this paper attempts empirically to explore possible linkages between perceived tourism service quality (PTSQ), tourist satisfaction (TS) and destination loyalty (DL) with probable impact of CRM index (CRMI) on PTSQ, TS and DL which, in turn, may share a possible impact-pattern with performance of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) components namely people, process and technology (CRMCP). The proposed research model is depicted in Fig.1 below:

(Legends description: TANG-Tangibles, RELI- Reliability, RESP-Responsiveness, EMP-Empathy, ASSU-Assurance, PTSQ-Perceived tourist service quality, TS-Tourist satisfaction, DL-Destination loyalty, CRMI-CRM index, CRMCP-CRM component performance)

Accordingly it is hypothesized that,

H_1: Tourist satisfaction (TS) is dependent on perceived tourist service quality (PTSQ)

H_{01}: Tourist satisfaction (TS) is independent of perceived tourist service quality (PTSQ)

H_2: Destination loyalty (DL) is influenced by tourist satisfaction (TS)

H_{02}: Destination loyalty (DL) is uninfluenced by tourist satisfaction (TS)

H_3: CRM component performance (CRMCP) has an impact on CRM index (CRMI)

H_{03}: CRM component performance (CRMCP) has no impact on CRM index (CRMI)

H_4: CRM index (CRMI) affects perceived tourist service quality (PTSQ)

H_{04}: CRM index (CRMI) does not affect perceived tourist service quality (PTSQ)

H_5: CRM index (CRMI) influence tourist satisfaction (TS)

H_{05}: CRM index (CRMI) does not influence tourist satisfaction (TS)

H_6: CRM index (CRMI) affects destination loyalty (DL)

H_{06}: CRM index (CRMI) does not affect destination loyalty (DL)

METHODOLOGY

The objectives of this study were: (a) to investigate the dimensionality of tourist service quality, (b) to assess the impact of perceived tourist service quality on tourist satisfaction, (c) to understand the effect of tourist satisfaction on destination loyalty, (d) to evaluate the performance of CRM components and (e) to formulate the CRM index (as a whole taking all the service providers into concern) on the basis of CRM component performance and examine its impact on perceived tourist service quality, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Finally the researcher aims to suggest a model to fit the relationship between variables using SEM approach. The study was conducted in two phases. To carry out this study, Santiniketan, West Bengal was chosen

Table 2. Demographic data of the respondents

Demographic Variables	Factors	Freq.	%
Gender	Male	934	59.95%
	Female	624	40.05%
Age	≤ 21 years	12	0.77%
	22-32 years	579	37.16%
	33-43 years	678	43.52%
	44-54 years	199	12.77%
	≥ 55 years	90	5.78%
Income	≤ Rs. 14999.00	21	1.35%
	Rs. 15000-Rs. 24999.00	641	41.14%
	Rs. 25000-Rs. 44999.00	567	36.39%
	≥ Rs. 45000.00	329	21.12%
Occupation	Service [govt./prv]	829	53.21%
	Self employed	429	27.54%
	Professionals	131	8.41%
	Student	44	2.82%
	Housewives	61	3.92%
	Others [retd., VRS etc]	64	4.11%
Educational qualification	High school	21	1.35%
	Graduate	939	60.27%
	Postgraduate	476	30.55%
	Doctorate & others (CA, fellow etc)	122	7.83%

which has emerged as an international tourist spot with rich cultural and ethnic heritage. A structured questionnaire was developed to obtain the primary data. The questionnaire had four sections. Section-I asked questions about tourists' expectation and perception of service quality offered by the service providers at Santiniketan, section-II dealt with placing questions with regard to behavioural intentions of the customers, section-III targeted customer response in context with CRM components and their performance and section-IV attempted to collect the demographic profile of the customers. The SERVQUAL scale developed by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Malhotra (2005) was used to generate response about tourists' expectation and perception of service quality with adequate modification to suit response with regard to tourist services. A 7 point Likert scale (Alkibisi and Lind, 2011) was used to generate response. The study was carried out in two phases. Phase-I involved a pilot study to refine the test instrument with rectification of question ambiguity, refinement of research protocol and confirmation of scale reliability was given special emphasis (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). 20 respondents representing tourists of assorted demography and academicians were included to conduct the pilot study. FGI was administered. Cronbach's α coefficient (>0.7) established scale reliability (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The second phase of the cross-sectional study was conducted by using a structured questionnaire which was distributed amongst 2000 tourists who visited Santiniketan on the eve of Pous Mela (December 23rd to 26th, 2010), Basantotsav (Feb., 28th and March, 1st, 2010) and on other occasions in the year 2010. Simple random sampling technique was administered. A total number of 1558 usable responses were generated with a response rate of 78.00% (approximately). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was employed using principal axis factoring procedure with orthogonal rotation through VARIMAX process with an objective to understand the factor loadings/cross loadings across components. Cronbach's α was obtained to test the reliability of the data, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was done for sample adequacy and Barlett's sphericity test was conducted. Structural equation modeling approach using Lisrel 8.80 was used to test the research model.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The demographic data obtained were tabulated in Table-2:

Table-3 represents the rotated component matrix following the exploratory factor analysis. The Cronbach's α value for

Table 3. Rotated component matrix and Reliability statistics

Variable	Variable statement	Factors				
		F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
V1	Physical infrastructures of hotels, restaurants, logistic service providers at Santiniketan are updated	.891				
V2	Physical facilities of hotels, restaurants, logistic service providers at Santiniketan are visually appealing	.865				
V3	The service providers (hoteliers, cafetarians etc.) are smart in their appearance	.828				
V4	The hotels, restaurants and logistic service providers at Santiniketan operate at convenient hrs.		.793			
V5	The hotels, restaurants and logistic service providers at Santiniketan are easy to access		.809			
V6	Service providers pay individual attention to tourists		.821			
V7	The hotels, restaurants and logistic service providers at Santiniketan are conveniently located		.798			
V8	Services are provided to the tourists when committed by the providers			.809		
V9	Ambience of the hotels and hospitality provided by the service employees touches heart			.837		
V10	Value proposition of the services are adequate to justify the benefit vs the sacrifices made			.799		
V11	The hotels, restaurants and logistic service providers at Santiniketan are providing the first-time service right			.824		
V12	The ambience of the venues is rich in aesthetics, culture and ethnicity				.902	
V13	The tourist spots are rich with greenery and minimum level of pollution				.876	
V14	A number of well distinguished tour-spots are identifiable				.891	
V15	The cultural and ethnic events provide opportunity to absorb the warmth of destination				.899	
V16	Santiniketan, as a place is free from undesirable disturbance					.818
V17	Local administration takes well care of problems if reported					.821
V18 V21	Local people are quite amicable and are ready to help if required					.791
Cronbach's α		.951	.903	.921	.929	.943

KMO measure for sampling adequacy	0.873					
Initial eigen values	5.179	4.502	3.332	3.001	2.321	2.002
% of variance	19.882	13.891	10.029	9.881	8.021	7.703
Cumulative %	19.882	33.773	43.802	53.683	61.704	69.407

all the measures that exceeded the minimum standard of .7 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994) were accepted suggesting and confirming about the reliability of the measures. The items which were loaded with a lesser value to .7 were subsequently deleted.

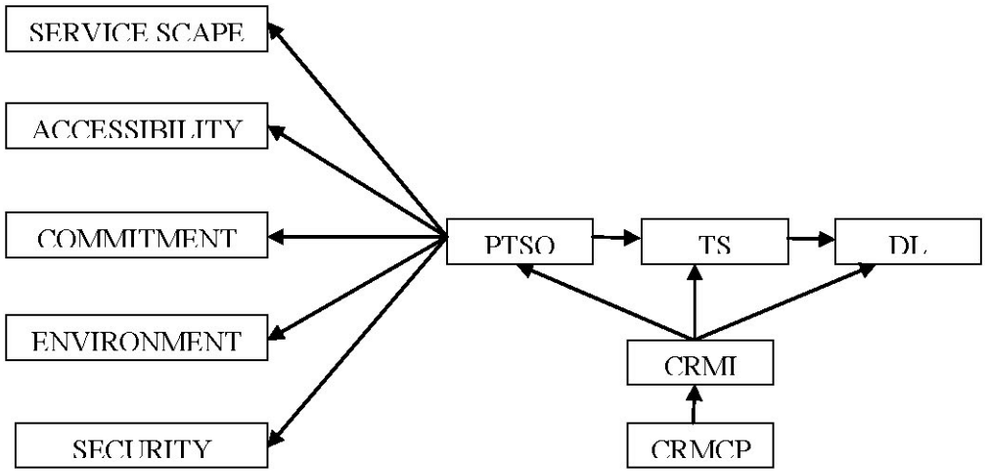
The 22 items of SERVQUAL were reduced to 18 items. Items having factor loading scores of <0.7 were discarded. The items were grouped into five new dimensions according to the factor loading scores and were nomenclated as in Table-4. The SERVQUAL scale has been renamed as T-SERVQUAL.

To test hypothesis 1, the tourist satisfaction score was obtained for an individual by calculating the mean of response over the items (5) namely 'satisfaction with respect

Table 4: Renaming dimensions of SERVQUAL

Variables	Dimension
V1-V3	Servicescape
V4-V7	Accessibility
V8-V11	Commitment
V12-V15	Environment
V16-V18	Security

Fig 2. Modified Research Model



to destination's infrastructural facilities', 'satisfaction with regard to ease of access of destination', 'satisfaction with regard to commitment by the service providers', 'satisfaction with regard to environment of the destination' and 'satisfaction with regard to security'. The degree of satisfaction was generated over a 7 point Likert scale. Correlation (Table-5) results exhibited a strong and positive relationship between perceived automated service quality (PTSQ) and tourist satisfaction (CS): r=.461**, p<.001.

To assess the strength of associationship between the variables and to understand the predictive capability of the independent variable perceived tourist service quality (PTSQ) to predict the dependent variable tourist satisfaction (TS), simple regression analysis was used. The results of the regression analysis have been presented in Table-6. The model summary revealed that the R^2 and adjusted R^2 values are .331 and .330 respectively which indicate that perceived tourist service quality measures 33.10% of the variation in tourist satisfaction (dependent variable). The results of ANOVA established that the variation showed by the service quality was significant at 1% level (f=34.056, p<.001). The standardised regression coefficient results confirmed that the predictive capacity of perceived tourist service quality (PTSQ) to predict the degree of tourist satisfaction has statistical significance and is positively correlated (β=.430, t=10.336, p<.001). Hypothesis-1 was accepted.

Table 5. Bivariate correlation between perceived tourist service quality (PTSQ) and tourist satisfaction (CS)

		TS	PTSQ
TS	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.461**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1558.000	1558
PTSQ	Pearson Correlation	.461**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1558	1558.000

** Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 6. Regression results

Model summary		ANOVA		Regression coefficients		
R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	Sig.	β	t	Sig.
.331	.330	34.056	.000	.430	10.336	.000

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction (TS)
b. Predictor: Perceived automated service quality (PTSQ)

Table 7. Bivariate correlation between perceived automated service quality (PASQ) and customer satisfaction (CS)

		CS	PASQ
CS	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.239**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1558.000	1558
PASQ	Pearson Correlation	.239**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1558	1558.000

** Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

To understand the degree of loyalty (or the opposite) a 7 point Likert scale was used with '1' denoting 'extremely unlikely to come back and positively endorse it to others' and '7' indicating 'extremely likely to come back and positively endorse the destination to others'. Bivariate correlation was applied to understand the relationship between tourist satisfaction (TS) and destination loyalty (DL) and the results displayed (Table-7) suggested a positive and significant relationship between the variables (r=.239**, p<.001).

Table 8. Regression results

Model summary		ANOVA		Regression coefficients		
R^2	Adjusted R^2	f	Sig.	β	t	Sig.
.155	.153	103.031	.000	.516	10.158	.000

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction (CS)
b. Predictor: Perceived automated service quality (PASQ)

Regression analysis confirmed the status of associationship between the variables and established the predictive capacity of tourist satisfaction (TS) level towards predicting the nature of destination loyalty (DL) (Table-8) with R^2 (.155) and adjusted R^2 (.153) justifying the acceptability of the model. The results of ANOVA revealed that the variation showed by the tourist satisfaction was significant at 1% level (f=103.031, p<.001). The standardised regression coefficient results confirmed the predictive capacity of tourist satisfaction (TS) to predict destination loyalty had statistical significance and is positively correlated (β=.516, t=10.158, p<.001). Hypothesis-2 was accepted.

The efficiency of a CRM process requires an integration of people, process and technology to ensure a successful adoption and link-up with the business process. These three components are the basic touch-points of the customer. The response of performance of CRM components were taken on the variables (finalised after a pilot study) and then successively mean response were summated over the identified dimensions and component (Table-9). A 7 point Likert scale was used to obtain the response from the respondents about the performance of the three CRM components.

Factor analysis validated the measures used for Customer Relationship Management Index (CRMI) namely its three components people, process and technology. Exploratory factor analysis was deployed using orthogonal rotation. The reliability index was obtained as >0.70. The convergent validity was found to be >0.60 for all the items. Factor loading <.500 were discarded. Table-10 displayed the results of factor analysis

Table-11 and Table-12 displayed the relative weight of eigenvalue (RWE) and average factor value (AFV) respectively, which were considered for calculating the CRMI.

Calculating for Customer Relationship Management Components' performance (CRMCP) as per the following equation, we get

$$CRMCP = RWE_{CRMCP1}AVF_{CRMCP1} + RWF_{CRMCP2}AVF_{CRMCP2} + RWF_{CRMCP3}AVF_{CRMCP3}$$

CRMCP = (0.31 * 0.76) + (0.30*0.71) + (0.39 * 0.82)

Table 9. CRM components

Component	Dimensions	Variables
People	Empathy	1. Individual attention to tourists
		2. Understands specific need of tourists
		3. Service providers have tourists' best interest at heart
	Responsiveness	4. Service providers instill confidence in tourists
		5. Employees deal with public situations carefully
Process	Integrated Service	6. Ease of in-premise transaction
		7. Assorted service range
	Tourist data warehousing	8. Comprehensive information about tourist
		9. Better segmentation of tourists
		10. Better understanding of tourists' specific need
Technology	Mobility enhancement	11. Mobile computing/Mobile commerce
	Information Communication Technology (ICT)	12. Internet
	Security	13. Digital vigilance system (in-premise)

Table 10: Factor structure of variables (N=712)

Factor	Eigenvalues	Cronbach's α	Items	Factor loadings	Convergent validity
People	3.10	0.89	1. Individual attention to tourists	0.706	0.713
			2. Understands specific needs of tourists	0.722	0.732
			3. Employees have tourists' best interest at heart	0.701	0.712
			4. Employees instill confidence in tourists	0.727	0.744
Process	4.02	0.87	6. Ease of in-premise transactions	0.703	0.709
			7. Assorted service range	0.759	0.775
			8. Comprehensive information about tourists	0.711	0.717
			9. Better segmentation of tourists	0.719	0.729
			10. Better understanding of tourists' specific needs	0.721	0.731
Technology	4.15	0.91	11. Mobile-technology/mobile commerce applications	0.855	0.876
			12. Internet enabled tourism service	0.809	0.821
			17. Digital surveillance (in-premise) facility available	0.818	0.824

$$= 0.2356 + 0.2130 + 0.3198$$
$$= 0.7684$$

Therefore, calculating for CRMI as per equation-3:

$$CRMI = \frac{1}{1 + e^{0.7684}}$$

$$\text{CRMI} = 2.156$$

The CRM component performance was obtained for each component by calculating the mean value of response for each individual against the 13 variables and the composite value of the same was calculated by successive summation of means over the dimensions of CRM and lastly, the components of CRM. Bivariate correlation was applied to understand the relationship between the CRM component performance (CRMCP) and the CRM index (CRMI). The results were displayed in Table-13. The correlation was found to be significant (r=.392**, p<.001)

Simple regression analysis was performed to understand the predictive capacity of CRM component performance (CRMCP) towards predicting CRM index (CRMI). The results of regression analysis were displayed in Table-14. The R^2 and adjusted R^2 were found to be .484 and .483 respectively confirming that CRM component performance (CRMCP) measures 48.40% of the variation in CRM index (dependent variable). ANOVA established that the variation showed by the CRMCP was significant at 1% level (f=17.634, p<.001). The standardised regression coefficient results

Table 11. Relative weight of eigenvalue (RWE)

Factor	Eigenvalue	RWE
People	3.10	0.31
Process	4.02	0.30
Technology	4.15	0.39
Total	**11.27**	**1.00**

Table-12: Average factor value (AVF)

Organization	People (CRMCP1)	Process (CRMCP2)	Technology (CRMCP3)
Service Providers (Hoteliers, Logistic providers, Tour arrangers, Restauranters etc.)	0.76	.71	.82

Table 13. Bivariate correlation between CRM component performance (CRMCP) and CRM index (CRMI)

		CRMI	CRMCP
CRMI	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.392**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1558.000	1558
CRMCP	Pearson Correlation	.267**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1558.000	1558

** Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

confirmed that the predictive capacity of CRM component performance (CRMCP) to predict the enhancement of CRM index (CRMI) has statistical significance and is positively correlated (β=.513, t=6.763, p<.001).

The regression equation can be formed as:

Y= ax + b, where Y stands for the dependent variable (CRMI), 'a' stands for the slope, 'x' stands for the predictor (CRMCP) and 'b', the constant. Replacing 'a' for slope value (.139) and 'b' for constant value (2.566) from the regression results, the predictive equation takes the following shape:

Y (CRMI) = .139*x (CRMCP) +b (2.566). Hypothesis-3 has been accepted.

To explore the linkage between performance of CRM components and aggregate perceived tourist service quality (∑PTSQ) correlation analysis was performed between CRM –index (CRMI) and (∑PTSQ). Table-15 revealed that aggregate perceived tourist service quality is significantly and positively correlated with CRM-index (r=.452**, p<.001) suggesting that an improvement in CRM-components' efficiency performance will enhance the perceived service quality of tourists.

Regression analysis (Table-16) was performed to examine the predictability and strength of associationship between CRMI (independent variable) and ∑PTSQ (dependent variable). The model summary showed R^2 and adjusted R^2 to be as .675 and .673 indicating that CRM index (CRMI) measures 67.50% of the variation in aggregate perceived tourist service quality (∑PTSQ-dependent variable) which is considered to be significant enough for predictability of the model. ANOVA established that the variation showed by the perceived automated service quality was significant at 1% level (f=49.209, p<.001). Regression coefficients confirmed a strong associationship between CRMI and ∑PTSQ (β=.432, t=21.621, p<.001) and that CRMI could be an effective predictor to ∑PTSQ thereby suggesting dependency of ∑PTSQ on CRMI. Hypothesis-4 was accepted.

Hypothesis-5 was tested by applying bivariate correlation to assess the probable influencing effect of CRM index (CRMI-independent variable) on tourist satisfaction (CS-dependent variable). The Pearson coefficient (r) was obtained and displayed in Table-17. The result (r=.117*, p<.005) revealed a moderate and positive correlation between tourist satisfaction (TS) and CRM-index (CRMI) suggesting that a higher value CRMI on behalf of the service provider will ensure a higher degree of tourist satisfaction. Hypothesis-5 was accepted.

Regression to confirm the relationship between tourist satisfaction (TS) and CRMI was performed and the results

Table-14: Regression results

Model summary		ANOVA		Unstandardized regression coeff.		Standardised regression coeff.		
R^2	Adj. R^2	f	Sig.	B	Std. error	β	t	Sig.
.484	.483	17.634	.000	2.566	.176	.513	6.763	.000

a. Dependent variable: CRM index (CRMI)
b. Predictor: CRM component performance (CRMCP)

Table 15. Correlation between ∑PTSQ and CRMI

		∑PTSQ	CRMI
∑PTSQ	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.452**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1558	1558
CRMI	Pearson Correlation	.452**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1558	1558

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 16. Summary of regression results

Model Summary			ANOVA		Regression coefficients		
R	R^2	adjusted R^2	F	sig	β	t	sig.
.822	.675	.673	49.209	.000	.432	21.621	.000

a. Dependent variable: Aggregate perceived service quality (∑PTSQ)
b. Predictor: CRM index (CRMI)

(R^2=.499, adjusted R^2=.498, f=17.089, β=.692. t=22.98) obtained (Table-18) satisfied the predictive capability of CRMI to predict tourist satisfaction (TS). Hypothesis-5 was accepted.

CRMI was found to be an effective indicator of destination loyalty as was established by bivariate correlation analysis (Table-19) (r=.358**, p<.001) and regression analysis (Table-20)

Table 17. Correlation between Customer satisfaction (TS) and CRM index (CRMI)

		TS	CRMI
TS	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.117*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	1558	1558
CRMI	Pearson Correlation	.117*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	1558	1558

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 18. Regression results for CRM index vs Tourist Satisfaction

Model			ANOVA		Unstandardized regression coeff.		Standardized coeff.		
R	R^2	adjusted R^2	F	Sig.	B (constant)	Std. error	β	t	sig.
.540	.499	.498	17.089	.000	3.697	.164	.692	22.98	.000

a. Dependent variable: Tourist satisfaction (TS)
b. Predictor: CRM index (CRMI)

Table 19. Correlation between CRM index (CRMI) and Destination Loyalty (DL)

		DL	CRMI
DL	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.358**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1558	1558
CRMI	Pearson Correlation	.358**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1558	1558

**Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 20. Regression results for CRM index vs Destination Loyalty

Model			ANOVA		Unstandardized regression coeff.		Standardized coeff.		
R	R^2	adjusted R^2	F	Sig.	B (constant)	Std. error	β	t	sig.
.599	.358	.356	11.021	.000	2.421	.124	.312	12.62	.000

a. Dependent variable: Destination loyalty
b. Predictor: CRM index (CRMI)

To construct the nomological network structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the nomological validity of the proposed model. T-SERVQUAL, tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty and CRM computation (CRMI and CRMCP) scores for the individual dimensions were done by summating the ratings on their individual scale items which were used as indicators of the latent T-SERVQUAL, tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty and CRM items (CRMI and CRMCP). Confirmatory factor analysis was used to understand the dimensionality, convergence and discriminant validity for each construct to determine whether all the 28 latent variables measure the construct adequately as they had been assigned for. LISREL 8.80 programme was used to conduct the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) was applied to estimate the CFA models. A number of fit-statistics (Table-21) were obtained. The GFI, AGFI and NFI scores for all the constructs were found to be consistently >.900 indicating that a significant proportion of the variance in the sample variance-covariance matrix is accounted for by the model and a good fit has been achieved (Baumgartner and Homburg, 1996; Hair et al, 1998; Hulland, Chow and Lam, 1996; Kline, 1998; Holmes-Smith, 2002, Byrne, 2001). The CFI value for all the constructs were obtained as > .900 which indicated an acceptable fit to the data (Bentler, 1992). The RMSEA values obtained are < 0.08 for an adequate model fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999). The probability value of Chi-square is more than the conventional 0.05 level (P=0.20) indicating an absolute fit of the models to the data. The Cronbach's α values were consistently >.7 and hence the scale is reliable (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The factor loadings for the items were also significant (>.500).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the relationship among the constructs. A number of fit-indices namely Chi-square/df = 1138/61, GFI = 0.990, AGFI = 0.988, CFI = 0.984, NFI=0.979, RMSEA=0.052, expected cross validation index (ECVI)=0.943 were found to be significant. All the 28 paths drawn were found to be significant at $p<0.05$. The research model holds well (Fig.2) as the fit-indices supported adequately the model fit to the data. The double-curved arrows indicate co-variability of the latent variables. The residual variables (error variances) are indicated by $\epsilon_1, \epsilon_2, \epsilon_3$, etc. The regression weights are represented by λ. The co-variances are represented by β. To provide the latent factors an interpretable scale; one factor loading is fixed to 1 (Hox & Bechger).

CONCLUSION

The tourism phenomenon in Santiniketan is not new, but it has changed its dynamics with the rapid change in demographic, psychographic, cultural and ethnic factors. With the communication system to the destination improving by leaps and bounds the influx of tourist has also increased. The increased flow of assorted tourist from both domestic and foreign origin forced a complete metamorphosis of the hospitality and tourism map of Santiniketan. The hotels, restaurants, tour-arrangers and other down-the-line service providers underwent a serious make-over as they updated themselves to meet the specific demand and quality perception of both domestic and foreign tourist. Technology has played a pivotal role towards allowing the tourists to avail services on virtual platform. The results ensured that the tourism services provided by the hoteliers, restauranters, logistic-service providers, tour-arrangers etc. at Santiniketan

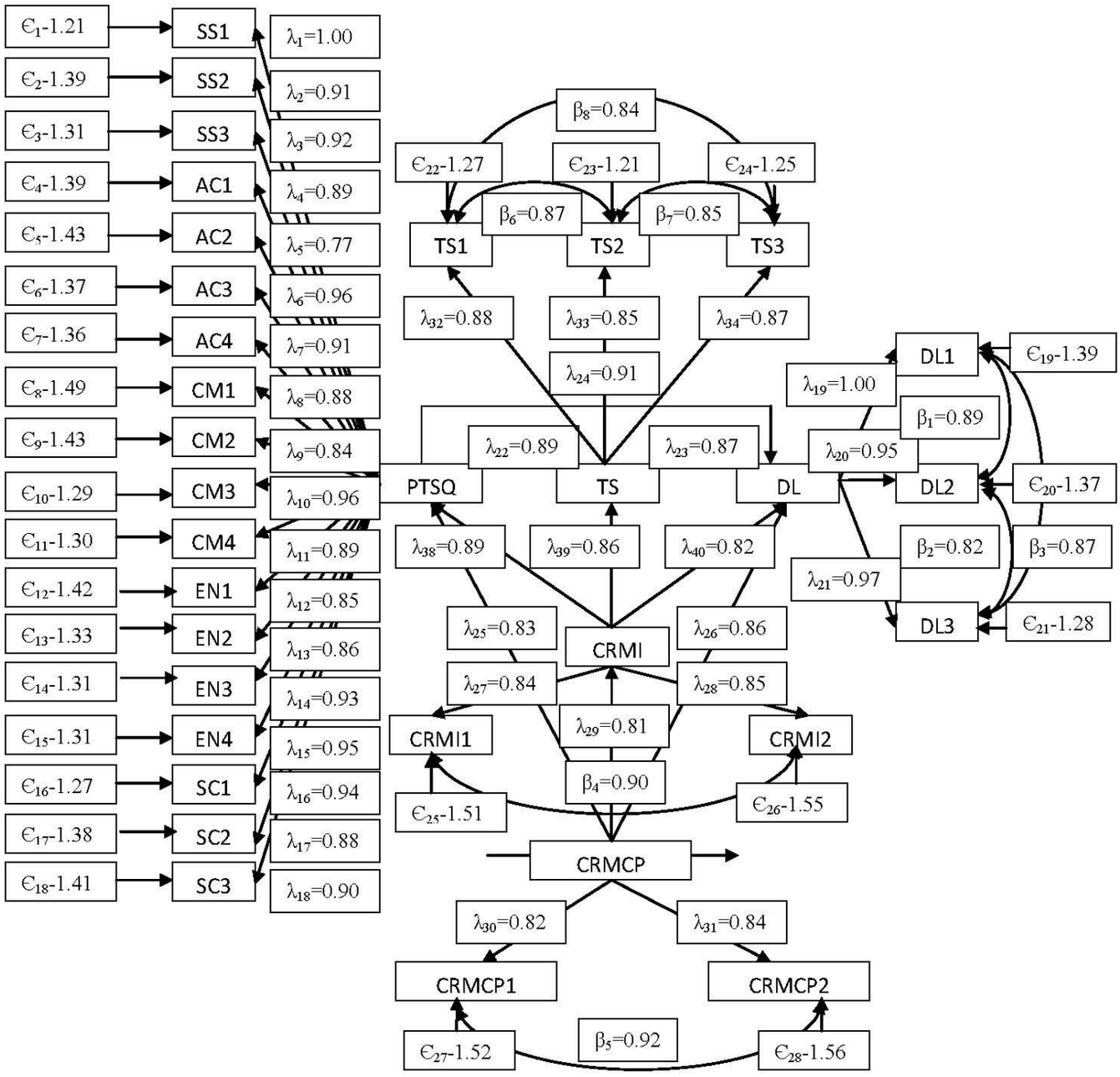
Table 21. Summary representation of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Factor indicators	x^2	df	P-value	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	RMSEA	Factor loadings	α – value
Servicescape	7.705	2	0.081	0.941	0.948	0.991	0.979	0.065		0.981
SS1									0.841	
SS2									0.861	
SS3									0.813	
Accessibility	7.981	3	0.052	0.919	0.929	0.996	0.981	0.061		0.979
AC1									0.865	
AC2									0.851	
AC3									0.833	
AC4									0.845	
Commitment	5.001	3	0.173	0.976	0.982	0.974	0.991	0.087		0.966
CM1									0.821	
CM2									0.826	
CM3									0.819	
CM4									0.851	
Environment	3.617	3	0.049	0.941	0.937	0.949	0.966	0.059		0.941
EN1									0.828	
EN2									0.801	
EN3									0.879	
EN4										
Security	8.197	3	0.116	0.980	0.974	0.951	0.952	0.020		0.891
SC1									0.848	
SC2									0.868	
SC3									0.817	
Destination loyalty	7.219	3	0.031	0.919	0.917	0.921	0.923	0.073		0.9431
DL1									0.881	
DL2									0.841	
DL3									0.809	
TS	8.651	3	0.091	0.967	0.981	0.991	0.987	0.051		0.941
TS1									0.873	
TS2									0.823	
TS3									0.811	
CRMI	8.165	2	0.087	0.912	0.919	0.941	0.933	0.032		0.981
CRMI1									0.821	
CRMI2									0.810	
CRMCP	4.221	2	0.0912	0.966	0.987	0.965	0.942	0.079		0.919
CRMCP1									0.810	
CRMCP2									0.871	

were well absorbed by the tourist and they were satisfied.

The study revealed that the service quality dimensions which proved to be significant in perceiving tourist service quality are servicescape, access, commitment, environment and security. It was revealed that the perceived tourist service quality was instrumental in assuring tourist satisfaction which subsequently was found to have a positive effect on destination loyalty. The hospitality industry as a whole in Santiniketan was found acceptable by the tourists who were visiting on the occasion of cultural and ethnic events like Pous Mela, Basantotsav etc. in terms of service quality

Fig 3. The model constructs using structural equation modeling



and they have expressed their intention of revisiting the destination and promoting the destination to other tourists. The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practice initiated by the hoteliers, restauranters, logistic service providers and tour arrangers were found to be proactive as a proper integration of people, process and technology was made to deliver personalized service with human touch. The CRM indexing approach did reveal that CRM index had a positive influence on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty thereby proving to be an effective indicator of the same. The proposed research model also holds good as the model constructs fit the data thereby establishing a cause and effect relationship between the variables. The study had managerial implication as the changing rural demography of Santiniketan may pose certain problems to the tourism industry over here in preserving the cultural and ethnic heritage. The service-providers must reassess the opportunity to safeguard Santiniketan's rich heritage and at the same time offer updated technology based hassle-free service to the tourist. The CRM index may provide the service providers

with adequate clue with regard to their current status of service delivery and tourist interaction mechanism which they can use as a scale to improve the status.

The study had geographical limitations as it has been restricted to Santiniketan in West Bengal, which in future, can be widened to obtain a more generalized conclusion. In future the comparative studies can be initiated by including variables namely service differentiation and customization, zone of tolerance etc.

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