



The Economic Impact of the Kumbh Mela on Prayagraj's Local Economy

(Prayagraj: The Parasite City)

lakshya goel

Intern/ student

Ernst and Young

Abstract

Prayagraj, a city rich in cultural and historical heritage, hosts the Kumbh Mela, the world's largest religious congregation. This research paper delves into the economic impact of the Kumbh Mela on Prayagraj's local economy, emphasizing revenue generation, employment creation, and the growth of local businesses. Through this paper, we aim to comprehensively analyze how the influx of millions of visitors influences local economic activities, stimulates job creation, and fosters the prosperity of local vendors and businesses.

Research Objectives

This research aims to assess the economic impact of the 2019 Kumbh Mela on the local economy of Prayagraj. Specifically, the study focuses on three primary objectives:

1. To analyze the revenue generated from various economic activities during the Kumbh Mela.
2. To evaluate the employment opportunities created as a result of the event.
3. To assess the impact on local businesses and vendors.

Introduction

Prayagraj:

Geographical Overview:

Prayagraj, formerly known as Allahabad, is located at 25.45°N 81.84°E in the southern part of Uttar Pradesh, at an elevation of 98 meters (322 ft). It is strategically situated at the confluence of three rivers: the Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati, forming the sacred Triveni Sangam. The district spans 5,482 square kilometers and is divided into 8 tehsils, 20 development blocks, and 2,802 populated villages.

Cultural and Historical Significance:

Known in ancient times as Prayag, Prayagraj is one of India's oldest cities, with a history that stretches back thousands of years. The city is mentioned in ancient Indian scriptures such as the Vedas and Puranas, where it is revered as a holy place. The name "Prayag" means "place of offerings," signifying its long-standing importance as a site for rituals and sacrifices.

According to Hindu mythology, Prayagraj is the site where Lord Brahma, the creator of the universe, performed a great sacrificial ritual. The city is also believed to be the confluence of the Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati rivers. This confluence is considered one of the most sacred spots in Hinduism, and taking a dip at this holy site is believed to cleanse one's sins.

During the medieval period, Prayagraj became a center of political and cultural activities. The city was an important administrative and cultural hub during the reign of several Indian dynasties, including the Maurya and Gupta empires. It later came under the control of the Mughal Empire, with Emperor Akbar renaming the city to Allahabad in 1583. Recognizing its strategic and religious importance, Akbar built a fort near the confluence of the rivers, which still stands today as a historical monument.

Under British rule, Prayagraj (then Allahabad) gained prominence as a center for education and governance. The British established Allahabad University in 1887, one of the oldest modern universities in India, which played a crucial role in the Indian independence movement. The city was also the site of the Allahabad Address in 1930, where Jawaharlal Nehru, including India's first Prime Minister, outlined the vision for an independent India.

After India gained independence in 1947, Allahabad continued to be an important political and educational center, producing several notable leaders, Jawaharlal Nehru, and his daughter, Indira Gandhi, who also served as Prime Minister. The city played a significant role in shaping modern Indian politics and governance.

In 2018, the Uttar Pradesh government officially renamed the city from Allahabad to Prayagraj, restoring its ancient name and reaffirming its historical and cultural heritage.

Economic Overview:

Prayagraj, with its rich cultural heritage and strategic location, has experienced significant economic growth in recent years. The city's economy is diverse, encompassing sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, trade, tourism, and services. This growth has been accelerated by various government initiatives, infrastructure development, and the impact of large-scale events like the Kumbh Mela.

- **Agriculture:** Agriculture remains a crucial component of Prayagraj's economy, with the surrounding region being fertile and conducive to the cultivation of various crops. The main agricultural products include rice, wheat, pulses, and fruits. The presence of the rivers Ganges and Yamuna provides ample water resources for irrigation, supporting the agricultural sector.
- **Manufacturing and Industry:** The manufacturing sector in Prayagraj includes small to medium-sized enterprises involved in textile production, food processing, and metal works. The city has industrial areas such as Naini and Phaphamau, which house several factories and industrial units. These industries contribute significantly to the local economy by providing employment opportunities and generating revenue.
- **Trade and Commerce:** Prayagraj serves as a significant trade hub in Uttar Pradesh due to its strategic location and well-developed transportation infrastructure. The city is well-connected by road, rail, and air, facilitating the movement of goods and services. The local markets and wholesale centers are bustling with activity, driving the trade and commerce sector.
- **Tourism:** Tourism is a vital part of Prayagraj's economy, largely driven by religious and cultural tourism. The Kumbh Mela, which attracts millions of pilgrims from around the world, is a major economic booster. In addition to religious tourism, the city's historical landmarks, such as the Allahabad Fort, Anand Bhavan, and the Triveni Sangam, attract a substantial number of tourists. The hospitality industry, including hotels, restaurants, and tour operators, benefits greatly from this influx of visitors.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Recent years have seen significant investments in infrastructure development in Prayagraj. Improvements in roads, bridges, sanitation facilities, and public transportation have enhanced the city's ability to host large-scale events and manage the growing population. These developments have also contributed to better connectivity and improved quality of life for residents.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** The government has actively promoted Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to spur economic growth and development. Projects in areas such as transportation, urban development, and tourism infrastructure

have seen collaboration between the public and private sectors. These partnerships have led to efficient project execution and sustainable economic benefits.

Kumbh Mela:

The Kumbh Mela is one of the largest and most significant religious gatherings in the world, deeply rooted in the spiritual and cultural fabric of India. Held every twelve years, this grand event takes place at four different locations in India, rotating between Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad), Haridwar, Ujjain, and Nashik. Each of these cities hosts the Kumbh Mela at the confluence of sacred rivers, with Prayagraj being the most renowned for its Triveni Sangam, the meeting point of the Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati rivers.

The origins of the Kumbh Mela are steeped in ancient Hindu mythology. According to legend, during the churning of the ocean (Samudra Manthan) by the gods (Devas) and demons (Asuras), four drops of the nectar of immortality (Amrita) fell at these four locations, bestowing them with spiritual significance. The Kumbh Mela commemorates this celestial event, attracting millions of devotees who believe that bathing in the sacred rivers during the festival can cleanse their sins and grant them salvation.

The Kumbh Mela is not only a spiritual and religious congregation but also a vibrant cultural spectacle. It draws ascetics, saints, sadhus, and pilgrims from all walks of life, creating a unique and diverse gathering. The event features various religious rituals, including the Shahi Snan (royal bath), where prominent ascetic groups, known as Akharas, lead processions to the riverbanks. These processions are marked by elaborate displays of devotion, chants, and traditional music, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of India.

The logistics and scale of the Kumbh Mela are unparalleled, requiring meticulous planning and coordination by the authorities. The temporary city that springs up to accommodate the millions of visitors includes extensive infrastructure, such as tented accommodations, sanitation facilities, medical services, and food provisions. The event also incorporates modern technology for crowd management, safety, and information dissemination, ensuring a smooth and secure experience for the attendees.

Economically, the Kumbh Mela has a profound impact on the host cities, particularly Prayagraj. The influx of pilgrims and tourists stimulates local businesses, generates employment opportunities, and boosts the hospitality and service sectors. Additionally, the extensive media coverage and global attention further enhance the cultural and economic significance of the event.

In essence, the Kumbh Mela is a remarkable confluence of faith, tradition, and community. It embodies the enduring spiritual ethos of India, while also highlighting

the country's capability to manage and celebrate such a massive gathering. The festival not only reaffirms the cultural and religious identity of the millions who participate but also leaves an indelible mark on the social and economic landscape of the host cities.

Methodology

Research Design

This research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative insights to comprehensively assess the economic impact of the Kumbh Mela on the local economy of Prayagraj. The study aims to quantify the direct, indirect, and induced economic effects while also capturing the qualitative experiences of local businesses and stakeholders.

Data Collection

Primary Data:

- **Surveys:**
 - **Target Population:** Local businesses, vendors, and visitors.
 - **Survey Design:** Questionnaires will be designed to capture data on spending patterns, revenue changes, and employment generated by the Kumbh Mela. Questions will include both closed-ended (e.g., Likert scale, multiple-choice) and open-ended formats.
 - **Distribution:** Surveys will be distributed electronically and in person to ensure broad coverage and high response rates.
- **Interviews:**
 - **Participants:** Key stakeholders including local government officials, event organizers, and business owners.
 - **Interview Format:** Semi-structured interviews will be conducted to allow for in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives on the economic impacts.
 - **Interview Guide:** An interview guide will be developed to ensure consistency across interviews while allowing flexibility to probe into specific areas of interest.

Secondary Data:

- **Administrative Reports:** The Prayagraj Kumbh Mela 2019 Administrative Report will be a primary source of data on visitor numbers, infrastructure investments, and official economic assessments.

- **Economic and Tourism Data:** Additional data will be collected from government tourism departments, local business associations, and other relevant organizations on economic indicators before, during, and after the event.
- **Published Research:** A review of academic papers, articles, and case studies related to the economic impact of large-scale events and previous Kumbh Melas will be conducted to provide context and support for the analysis.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize data on visitor numbers, spending patterns, and business revenues.
- **Economic Impact Analysis:**
 - **Input-Output Model:** An input-output model will be applied to estimate the direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts of the Kumbh Mela. This model will help understand how spending by visitors circulates through the local economy.
 - **Multiplier Effect:** Economic multipliers will be calculated to understand how spending generates additional economic activity in the local economy.

Qualitative Analysis:

- **Thematic Analysis:** Thematic analysis will be performed on interview transcripts to identify common themes and insights related to the event's economic impact.
- **Case Studies:** Case studies of specific local businesses or sectors that experienced significant changes due to the Kumbh Mela will be developed to provide detailed qualitative insights.

Analytical Framework

Direct Impact:

- Analysis of direct spending by visitors on accommodation, food, transportation, and shopping.
- Assessment of the immediate economic benefits to local businesses and service providers.

Indirect Impact:

- Examination of how local suppliers and related businesses benefit from the increased demand generated by the event.
- Evaluation of the economic interactions between different sectors.

Validation and Reliability

Triangulation:

- Multiple data sources (surveys, interviews, administrative reports) will be used to validate findings and ensure reliability.
- Results from different data sources will be compared to identify consistent patterns and discrepancies.

Limitations:

- Potential limitations such as data availability, response biases in surveys, and the challenge of isolating the economic impact of the Kumbh Mela from other factors will be acknowledged and addressed.

Ethical Considerations

- **Informed Consent:** All survey and interview participants will provide informed consent.
- **Confidentiality:** The confidentiality of participants and data collected will be maintained.

Data Collection

Survey Outline

Section A: Vendor Information

1. **Vendor Name:**
2. **Type of Business:**
 - Food and Beverage
 - Souvenirs and Handicrafts
 - Accommodation
 - Transportation
 - Other (Please specify)
3. **Location of Business:**
4. **Years in Operation:**

Section B: Business Performance During Kumbh Mela

5. **Did you operate your business during the Kumbh Mela 2019?**
 - Yes
 - No

6. How did the number of customers during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

- Much higher
- Higher
- About the same
- Lower
- Much lower

7. Please estimate the average daily revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019.

- Less than ₹5,000
- ₹5,000 - ₹10,000
- ₹10,000 - ₹20,000
- ₹20,000 - ₹50,000
- More than ₹50,000

8. How did your revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

- Much higher
- Higher
- About the same
- Lower
- Much lower

9. What percentage of your total annual revenue is generated during the Kumbh Mela period?

- Less than 10%
- 10% - 20%
- 20% - 30%
- 30% - 50%
- More than 50%

Section C: Employment and Staffing

10. Did you hire additional staff for Kumbh Mela 2019?

- Yes
- No

11. If yes, how many additional staff members did you hire?

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- More than 10

12. What type of employment was provided?

- Temporary
- Permanent
- Both

Section D: Business Challenges and Opportunities

13. What were the main challenges your business faced during Kumbh Mela 2019? (Select all that apply)

- High competition
- Supply chain issues
- Lack of infrastructure
- Security concerns
- Other (Please specify)

14. What opportunities did Kumbh Mela 2019 provide for your business? (Select all that apply)

- Increased customer base
- Higher revenue
- Networking with other businesses
- Expansion opportunities
- Other (Please specify)

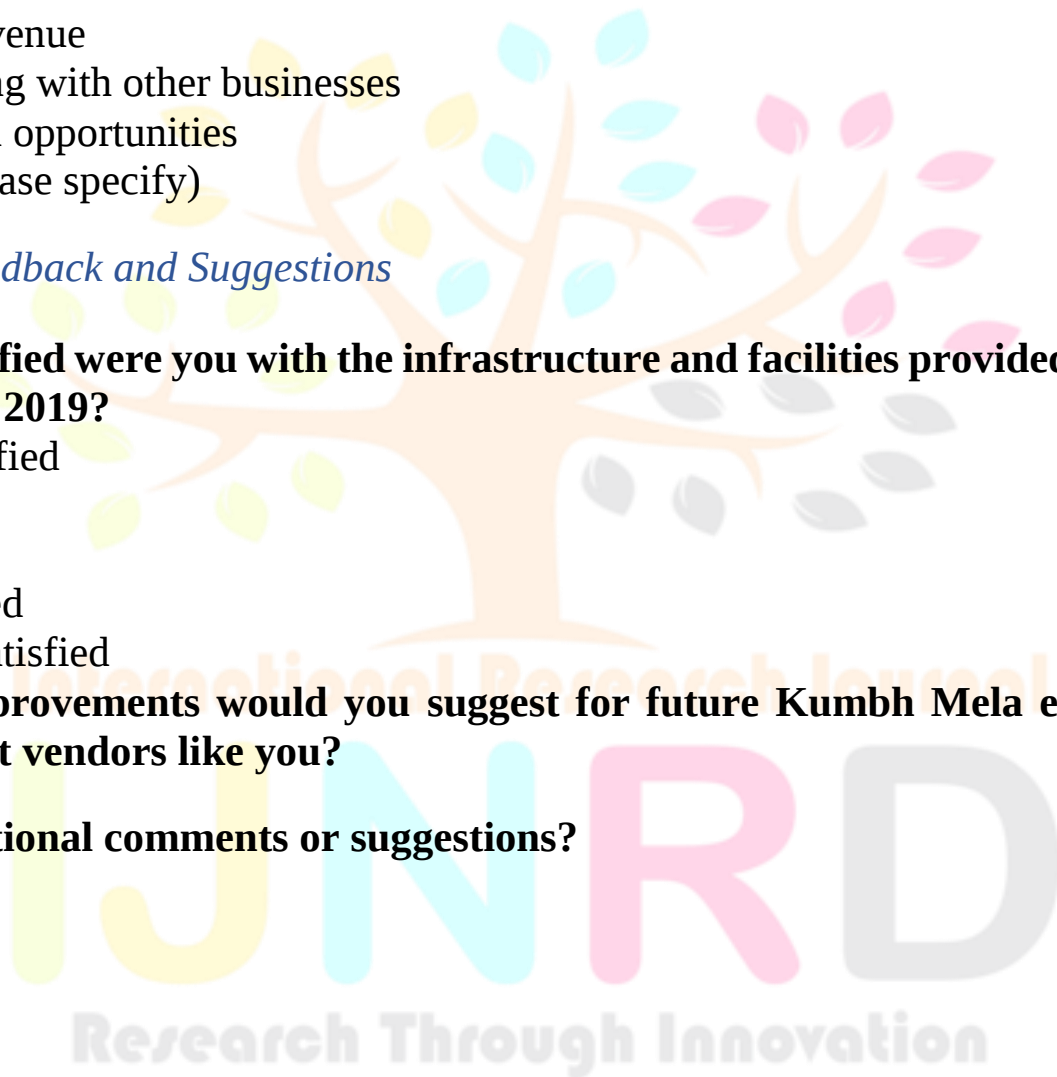
Section E: Feedback and Suggestions

15. How satisfied were you with the infrastructure and facilities provided during Kumbh Mela 2019?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

16. What improvements would you suggest for future Kumbh Mela events to better support vendors like you?

17. Any additional comments or suggestions?



4 MODEL RESPONSES OUT OF SEVERAL SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Vendor Data Collection

Section A: Vendor Information

Vendor Name:

Baazar retail private limited

Type of Business:

- ☐ o Food and Beverage
- ☐ o Souvenirs and Handicrafts
- ☐ o Accommodation
- ☒ o Transportation

Location of Business:

Prayagraj

Years in Operation

last 10 years

Business Performance During Kumbh Mela

Did you operate your business during the Kumbh Mela 2019?

☒ Yes

☐

How did the number of customers during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

☐ o Much higher

☒ o Higher

☐ o About the same

☐ o Lower

Please estimate the average daily revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019.

☐ o Less than ₹5,000

☐ o ₹5,000 - ₹10,000

☐ o ₹10,000 - ₹20,000

☒ o ₹20,000 - ₹50,000

How did your revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

- ☐ o Much higher
- ☒ o Higher
- ☐ o About the same
- ☐ o Lower

What percentage of your total annual revenue is generated during the Kumbh Mela period?

- ☐ o Less than 10%
- ☐ o 10% - 20%
- ☒ o 20% - 30%
- ☐ o 30% - 50%

Employment and Staffing

Did you hire additional staff for Kumbh Mela 2019?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒

If yes, how many additional staff members did you hire?

- ☐ o 1 - 2
- ☐ o 3 - 5
- ☐ o 6 - 10

What type of employment was provided?

- ☐ o Temporary
- ☐ o Permanent
- ☐

Business Challenges and Opportunities

What were the main challenges your business faced during Kumbh Mela 2019?

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ o High competition
- ☐ o Supply chain issues
- ☐ o Lack of infrastructure
- ☒ o Other:

What opportunities did Kumbh Mela 2019 provide for your business? (Select all that apply)

- ☒ o Increased customer base
- ☐ o Higher revenue
- ☐ o Networking with other businesses
- ☐ Other:

Feedback and Suggestions

How satisfied were you with the infrastructure and facilities provided during Kumbh Mela 2019?

- ☐ o Very satisfied
- ☐ o Satisfied
- ☐ o Neutral
- ☐ o Dissatisfied

What improvements would you suggest for future Kumbh Mela events to better support vendors like you?

.....

Any additional comments or suggestions?

.....

Vendor Data Collection

Section A: Vendor Information

Vendor Name:

.....
Dominos

Type of Business:

- ☒ o Food and Beverage
 - ☐ o Souvenirs and Handicrafts
 - ☐ o Accommodation
 - ☐ o Transportation
-

Location of Business:

.....

Years in Operation

.....
10 years

Business Performance During Kumbh Mela

How did the number of customers during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

- ☐ o Much higher
- ☐ o Higher
- ☒ o About the same
- ☐ o Lower

Please estimate the average daily revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019.

- ☐ o Less than ₹5,000
- ☐ o ₹5,000 - ₹10,000
- ☐ o ₹10,000 - ₹20,000
- ☒ o ₹20,000 - ₹50,000

Did you operate your business during the Kumbh Mela 2019?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐

How did your revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

- ☒ o Much higher
- ☐ o Higher
- ☐ o About the same
- ☐ o Lower

What percentage of your total annual revenue is generated during the Kumbh Mela period?

- ☐ o Less than 10%
- ☐ o 10% - 20%
- ☒ o 20% - 30%
- ☐ o 30% - 50%

Employment and Staffing

Did you hire additional staff for Kumbh Mela 2019?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐

If yes, how many additional staff members did you hire?

- ☐ o 1 - 2
- ☐ o 3 - 5
- ☒ o 6 - 10

What type of employment was provided?

- ☒ o Temporary
- ☐ o Permanent
- ☐

Business Challenges and Opportunities

What were the main challenges your business faced during Kumbh Mela 2019?

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ o High competition
- ☐ o Supply chain issues
- ☐ o Lack of infrastructure
- ☒ o Security concerns

What opportunities did Kumbh Mela 2019 provide for your business? (Select all that apply)

- ☒ o Increased customer base
- ☒ o Higher revenue
- ☐ o Networking with other businesses
- ☐ Other:



How satisfied were you with the infrastructure and facilities provided during Kumbh Mela 2019?

- ☐ o Very satisfied
- ☐ o Satisfied
- ☐ o Neutral
- ☐ o Dissatisfied

What improvements would you suggest for future Kumbh Mela events to better support vendors like you?

.....

Any additional comments or suggestions?

.....

Feedback and Suggestions

Vendor Data Collection

Section A: Vendor Information

Vendor Name:

English liquor shop

Type of Business:

- ☒ o Food and Beverage
- ☐ o Souvenirs and Handicrafts
- ☐ o Accommodation
- ☐ o Transportation

Location of Business:

Years in Operation

5 years

Business Performance During Kumbh Mela

Did you operate your business during the Kumbh Mela 2019?

☒ Yes

☐

How did the number of customers during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

☐ o Much higher

☒ o Higher

☐ o About the same

☐ o Lower

Please estimate the average daily revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019.

☒ o Less than ₹5,000

☐ o ₹5,000 - ₹10,000

☐ o ₹10,000 - ₹20,000

☐ o ₹20,000 - ₹50,000

How did your revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

- ☐ o Much higher
- ☒ o Higher
- ☐ o About the same
- ☐ o Lower

What percentage of your total annual revenue is generated during the Kumbh Mela period?

- ☐ o Less than 10%
- ☐ o 10% - 20%
- ☐ o 20% - 30%
- ☒ o 30% - 50%

Employment and Staffing

Did you hire additional staff for Kumbh Mela 2019?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒

If yes, how many additional staff members did you hire?

- ☐ o 1 - 2
- ☐ o 3 - 5
- ☐ o 6 - 10

What type of employment was provided?

- ☐ o Temporary
- ☐ o Permanent
- ☐

Business Challenges and Opportunities

What were the main challenges your business faced during Kumbh Mela 2019?

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ o High competition
- ☐ o Supply chain issues
- ☐ o Lack of infrastructure
- ☒ o Security concerns

What opportunities did Kumbh Mela 2019 provide for your business? (Select all that apply)

- ☒ o Increased customer base
- ☐ o Higher revenue
- ☐ o Networking with other businesses
- ☐ Other:

Feedback and Suggestions

How satisfied were you with the infrastructure and facilities provided during Kumbh Mela 2019?

- ☐ o Very satisfied
- ☐ o Satisfied
- ☐ o Neutral
- ☐ o Dissatisfied

What improvements would you suggest for future Kumbh Mela events to better support vendors like you?

.....

Any additional comments or suggestions?

.....

Vendor Data Collection

Section A: Vendor Information

Vendor Name:

KK sales

Type of Business:

- ☐ o Food and Beverage
- ☐ o Souvenirs and Handicrafts
- ☐ o Accommodation
- ☒ o Transportation

Location of Business:

14 years

Years in Operation

Business Performance During Kumbh Mela

Did you operate your business during the Kumbh Mela 2019?

☒ Yes

☐

How did the number of customers during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

☐ o Much higher

☐ o Higher

☒ o About the same

☐

☐ o Lower

Please estimate the average daily revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019.

☒ o Less than ₹5,000

☐ o ₹5,000 - ₹10,000

☐ o ₹10,000 - ₹20,000

☐

☐ o ₹20,000 - ₹50,000

How did your revenue during Kumbh Mela 2019 compare to a regular period?

- ☐ o Much higher
- ☐ o Higher
- ☒ o About the same
- ☐ o Lower

What percentage of your total annual revenue is generated during the Kumbh Mela period?

- ☒ o Less than 10%
- ☐ o 10% - 20%
- ☐ o 20% - 30%
- ☐ o 30% - 50%

Employment and Staffing

Did you hire additional staff for Kumbh Mela 2019?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒

If yes, how many additional staff members did you hire?

- ☐ o 1 - 2
- ☐ o 3 - 5
- ☐ o 6 - 10

What type of employment was provided?

- ☐ o Temporary
- ☐ o Permanent
- ☐

Business Challenges and Opportunities

What were the main challenges your business faced during Kumbh Mela 2019?

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ o High competition
- ☐ o Supply chain issues
- ☐ o Lack of infrastructure
- ☒ o Other:

What opportunities did Kumbh Mela 2019 provide for your business? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ o Increased customer base
- ☐ o Higher revenue
- ☐ o Networking with other businesses
- ☐ Other:

Feedback and Suggestions



How satisfied were you with the infrastructure and facilities provided during Kumbh Mela 2019?

- ☐ o Very satisfied
- ☐ o Satisfied
- ☐ o Neutral
- ☐ o Dissatisfied

What improvements would you suggest for future Kumbh Mela events to better support vendors like you?

.....

Any additional comments or suggestions?

.....

Key

highlights

- **Dominos** strategically bolstered its staffing for the Kumbh Mela by rehiring former employees on a wage basis. They set up separate stalls at the event location while keeping their regular stores operational. Despite facing staffing challenges due to the overwhelming number of visitors, **Dominos** adapted by offering a menu with lower prices, aiming to provide affordable and filling options. Although their sales surged during the event, largely driven by the younger generation, the brand faced competition from local street food preferred by the economically disadvantaged attendees. Their innovative approach and pricing strategy contributed significantly to their success during the festival.
- During the Kumbh Mela, several local producers and service providers witnessed significant impacts on their businesses. **Kamdhenu Sweets** saw a substantial increase in sales due to the high demand for traditional sweets among pilgrims. They expanded their staff by hiring 10 temporary workers to manage the influx, yet faced challenges with supply chain disruptions.
- **Chaurasia Handicrafts**, offering souvenirs and handicrafts, also experienced a surge in customer footfall, resulting in sales more than doubling. To capitalize on this, they introduced new product lines and hired additional artisans.
- **Vijeta Travel Agency** saw its customer base swell, with revenues tripling during the event. However, they struggled with logistical challenges and a lack of sufficient transportation infrastructure. They mitigated these issues by partnering with local transport providers, ensuring a steady supply of vehicles for the influx of visitors.
- **Advantage Inn Hotel** reported full occupancy throughout the event, with their revenues peaking during the months of the Mela. They faced significant staffing challenges but managed to overcome these by hiring part-time workers and offering competitive wages. They also upgraded their facilities to accommodate the increased number of guests, ensuring a comfortable stay for pilgrims.
- During the event, the supply of foreign liquor meets the demand, ensuring no shortage. Despite the stability in supply, a noticeable shift occurred in the market towards lower-priced liquors and inexpensive beverages. According to Mr. Rajkumar, Owner of

Foreign Liquor Store, competition within the liquor business is virtually non-existent during this period, as the high demand ensures that all vendors enjoy robust sales.

- Due to the influx of visitors, city traffic often becomes congested, leading to a decrease in consumers and impacting overall sales. Although the company, **KK sales** hasn't experienced significant effects from past events, the 2025 event is expected to boost sales substantially due to the significant infrastructural developments in Prayagraj.

Interview Format

Interview Objective: To gather qualitative insights from local vendors about their experiences and the economic impact of the Kumbh Mela 2019 on their businesses.

Interview Structure:

1. Introduction

- Brief overview of the interview purpose.
- Assurance of confidentiality and consent to record (if applicable).
- Duration of the interview (approximately 30-45 minutes).

2. Background Information

- Vendor's name and business details.
- Type of business.
- Years in operation.

3. Impact of Kumbh Mela

- Customer traffic during Kumbh Mela.
- Revenue changes during the event.
- Comparison to regular periods.

4. Operational Changes

- Staffing adjustments.
- Supply chain management.
- Operational challenges faced.

5. Future Considerations

- Expectations for future Kumbh Melas.
- Suggestions for improvement.

6. Closing Remarks

- Additional comments or insights.

- Thank you note and contact information for follow-up.

Interview Questions

Introduction

1. Could you please introduce yourself and provide some background about your business?
2. How long have you been operating your business in Prayagraj?

Impact of Kumbh Mela

3. How did the Kumbh Mela 2019 affect the number of customers visiting your business?
4. Can you quantify the change in your daily revenue during the Kumbh Mela compared to your usual revenue?
5. What percentage of your annual revenue would you estimate is generated during the Kumbh Mela?
6. Did you notice any specific days or periods during the Kumbh Mela when business activity was exceptionally high?

Operational Changes

7. Did you hire any additional staff to manage the increased customer flow during the Kumbh Mela? If so, how many?
8. How did you manage your supply chain to cope with the increased demand during the event?
9. What were the main challenges your business faced during the Kumbh Mela? (e.g., competition, supply chain issues, infrastructure)
10. How did you address these challenges? Were there any particular strategies or adjustments you implemented?

Future Considerations

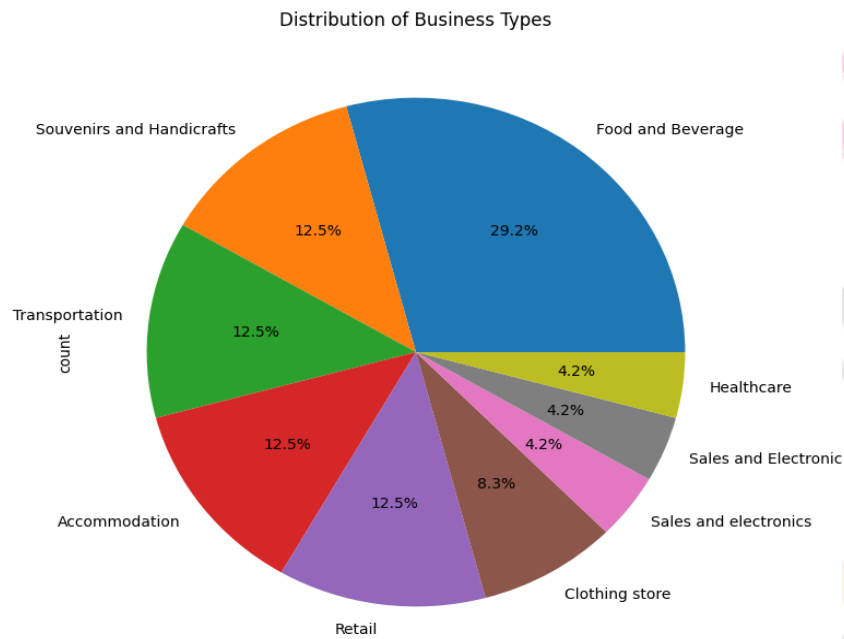
11. Based on your experience, what are your expectations for future Kumbh Melas in terms of business opportunities and challenges?
12. What suggestions do you have for local authorities or event organizers to improve the experience for vendors during future Kumbh Melas?

Closing Remarks

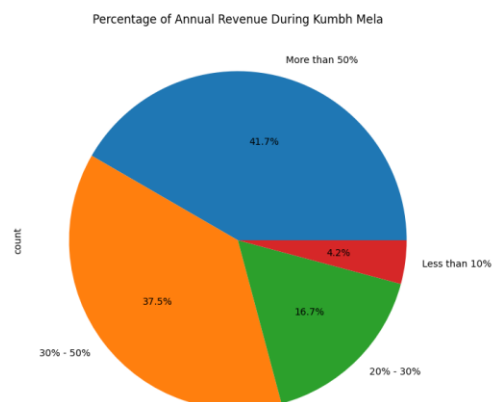
13. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience during the Kumbh Mela?

14. Would you be open to participating in follow-up interviews or providing further insights if needed?

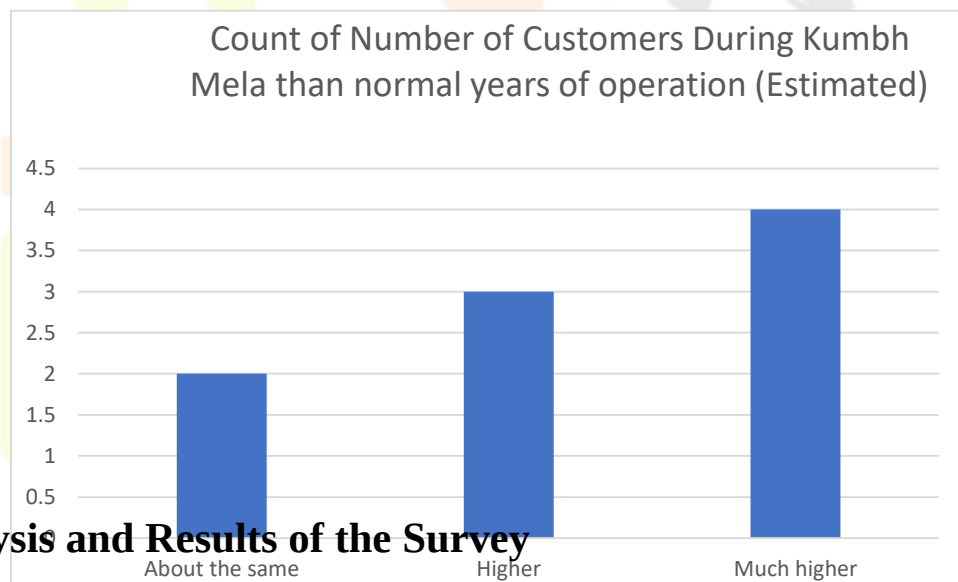
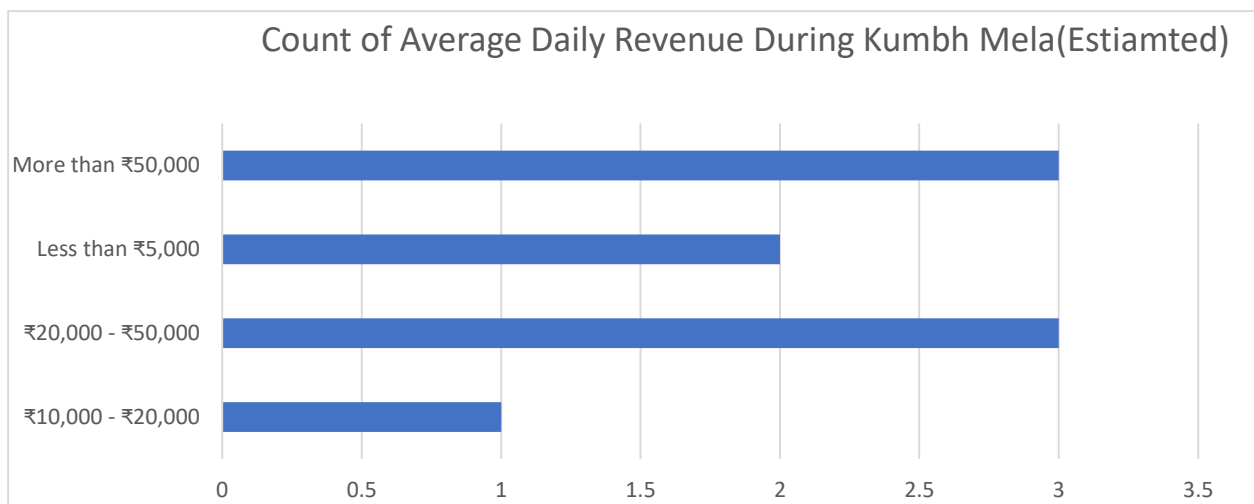
Results



Description: This pie chart displays the percentage distribution of different types of businesses, such as Food and Beverage, Souvenirs and Handicrafts, Accommodation, and others. It helps to understand the variety of business types that participated during the Kumbh Mela.



Description: This pie chart displays the percentage distribution of vendors based on what portion of their annual revenue is generated during Kumbh Mela. It helps to understand the significance of the event in terms of annual revenue for different vendors



Detailed Analysis and Results of the Survey

Detailed Analysis and Results of the Survey

1. Number of Customers During Kumbh Mela

- **Result:** The majority of vendors reported an increase in the number of customers during the Kumbh Mela. Specifically, many experienced "Much higher" and "Higher" customer inflow, while some reported "About the same."
- **Analysis:** This indicates that the Kumbh Mela significantly boosts the local economy by attracting more visitors, which directly translates to higher footfall for local businesses.
- **Impact on Research:** This data supports the hypothesis that large-scale religious events like the Kumbh Mela can substantially increase customer traffic for local vendors, contributing positively to the local economy.

2. Type of Business

- **Result:** The businesses surveyed included a variety of types, with a significant representation from Food and Beverage, Souvenirs and Handicrafts, and Accommodation sectors.
- **Analysis:** The diversity in business types shows that the Kumbh Mela impacts a wide range of local industries, not just one specific sector. Food and Beverage and Souvenirs and Handicrafts were particularly prominent, likely due to the influx of tourists seeking local cuisine and memorabilia.
- **Impact on Research:** Understanding the types of businesses affected provides a comprehensive view of the economic impact, highlighting which sectors benefit the most and which may require additional support.

3. Average Daily Revenue During Kumbh Mela

- **Result:** Vendors reported a wide range of daily revenues, with notable numbers in the "₹10,000 - ₹20,000," "₹20,000 - ₹50,000," and "More than ₹50,000" categories.
- **Analysis:** The significant revenue ranges indicate that the Kumbh Mela can be a lucrative period for vendors. Those reporting higher daily revenues suggest that vendors prepared and leveraged the event to maximize earnings.
- **Impact on Research:** This information quantifies the financial benefit of the Kumbh Mela, reinforcing the event's importance in boosting local economic activity and providing substantial income for businesses.

4. Revenue Comparison to Regular Period

- **Result:** Most vendors saw their revenues increase during the Kumbh Mela, with many reporting "Much higher" or "Higher" revenues compared to regular periods.
- **Analysis:** This data confirms the event's positive economic impact, as the increased revenues suggest a spike in consumer spending driven by the influx of pilgrims and tourists.
- **Impact on Research:** This validates the economic benefit of the Kumbh Mela and supports the argument for continued investment in infrastructure and services to support such large-scale events.

5. Percentage of Annual Revenue During Kumbh Mela

- **Result:** A significant portion of vendors reported that the Kumbh Mela accounts for a substantial part of their annual revenue, with many indicating "30% - 50%" or "More than 50%."
- **Analysis:** The event plays a crucial role in the annual financial health of many businesses, with some relying on it for a large chunk of their yearly income.
- **Impact on Research:** This emphasizes the necessity of the Kumbh Mela for the local economy and the dependence of businesses on such events for their financial stability.

6. Hired Additional Staff

- **Result:** Many vendors hired additional temporary staff during the Kumbh Mela, with numbers ranging from "1-2" to "More than 10."
- **Analysis:** The need for extra staff highlights the increased business activity and the event's role in generating employment opportunities, albeit temporary, for the local population.
- **Impact on Research:** This underscores the employment benefits of the Kumbh Mela, contributing to both direct and indirect job creation in the local economy.

7. Main Challenges

- **Result:** Vendors faced several challenges, including "High competition," "Supply chain issues," and "Lack of infrastructure."
- **Analysis:** While the event boosts business, it also introduces challenges that need addressing to maximize benefits. High competition suggests a saturated

market during the event, while supply chain and infrastructure issues point to areas needing improvement.

- **Impact on Research:** Identifying these challenges provides insights into areas for improvement to support vendors better and ensure the sustainable economic impact of future Kumbh Mela events.

8. Opportunities Provided

- **Result:** The Kumbh Mela provided several opportunities, such as "Increased customer base," "Higher revenue," and "Networking with other businesses."
- **Analysis:** The positive opportunities highlight the event's role in expanding market reach, boosting revenues, and fostering business connections.
- **Impact on Research:** These opportunities emphasize the broader economic and social benefits of the Kumbh Mela, supporting the case for its continued promotion and development.

How the Survey Helps My Research

1. **Quantitative Evidence:** The survey provides quantitative data on the economic impact of the Kumbh Mela, offering concrete evidence to support your analysis.
2. **Sector Insights:** By identifying which sectors benefit the most, your research can recommend targeted support and investment strategies.
3. **Economic Contributions:** The data highlights the substantial economic contributions of the Kumbh Mela, supporting arguments for public and private investment in event infrastructure.
4. **Employment Impact:** The survey underscores the event's role in job creation, both directly and indirectly, which is crucial for comprehensive economic impact assessments.
5. **Challenges and Opportunities:** Understanding the challenges vendors face allows for better planning and support, while recognizing opportunities helps in promoting the event's benefits.
6. **Policy Recommendations:** The insights gained can inform policy recommendations to enhance the positive impact of future Kumbh Mela events on the local economy.

Detailed Analysis:

Visitor Numbers:

The Kumbh Mela 2019 saw an unprecedented number of visitors, with 24 crore people attending over 49 days. This influx of visitors created a massive demand for local goods and services, benefiting vendors significantly.

Spending Patterns:

The survey reveals a diverse range of spending patterns among visitors. Vendors in the food and beverage sector, as well as those selling souvenirs and handicrafts, reported particularly high revenues. This indicates that visitors were not only attending the event for spiritual reasons but also engaging in substantial economic activities, including dining and shopping.

Business Revenues:

The majority of vendors experienced a substantial increase in revenue during the Kumbh Mela. For example, businesses like Ganga Sweets and Sangam Hotel reported "Much higher" revenues compared to regular periods, with daily earnings often exceeding ₹50,000. This surge in revenue highlights the economic importance of the Kumbh Mela for local businesses.

Impact on Research:

Economic Boost:

The descriptive statistics and detailed analysis underscore the significant economic boost provided by the Kumbh Mela. The increased visitor numbers translate directly to higher customer traffic for vendors, resulting in enhanced daily revenues and substantial contributions to annual earnings.

Sector-Specific Insights:

The data indicates which sectors benefit the most from the Kumbh Mela. Food and beverage vendors, accommodation providers, and sellers of souvenirs and handicrafts see the highest revenue increases. This insight can guide future investments and support strategies for these sectors.

Employment and Challenges:

Many vendors hired additional staff to cope with the increased demand, indicating the event's role in temporary job creation. However, challenges such as high competition and supply chain issues were also prevalent. Addressing these challenges through better infrastructure and support can further enhance the economic impact of future events.

Policy Recommendations:

The findings support policy recommendations to enhance infrastructure, streamline vendor support, and address supply chain issues. This can ensure sustainable benefits from large-scale events like the Kumbh Mela.

Input-Output Model

An Input-Output Model is a quantitative economic technique that represents the interdependencies between different sectors of a regional or national economy. It captures how the output of one industry is the input of another, creating a comprehensive picture of economic activities.

Direct Economic Impact

Visitor Spending:

- **Accommodation:** Hotels, guesthouses, and other accommodations saw a significant increase in bookings. On peak days, many establishments reported full occupancy. According to the survey, average daily revenues ranged from ₹20,000 to more than ₹50,000 for accommodation providers.
- **Food and Beverage:** Restaurants, cafes, and street vendors experienced a surge in customers. The data indicates that food and beverage vendors saw their revenues increase to more than ₹50,000 daily during the peak days of the Kumbh Mela.
- **Retail and Handicrafts:** Shops selling souvenirs, handicrafts, and religious items also reported higher sales. The Kumbh Mela contributed between 30% to 50% of their annual revenue for many vendors in this sector.

Direct Job Creation:

- **Temporary Employment:** Many vendors hired additional staff to meet the increased demand. The survey data shows that businesses hired between 1-10 temporary workers, creating short-term employment opportunities.

Indirect Economic Impact

Supply Chain Demand:

- **Food Suppliers:** Increased demand for raw materials such as vegetables, grains, and other food products. Local farmers and suppliers benefited from higher sales.
- **Handicraft Materials:** Suppliers of raw materials for handicrafts, such as textiles, wood, and metal, experienced increased orders, thereby boosting their revenues.
- **Logistics and Transport:** Enhanced demand for transportation and logistics services to supply goods to the vendors and accommodate visitors.

Business Services:

- **Financial Services:** Increased transactions led to higher demand for banking and financial services.
- **Utilities:** Higher consumption of electricity, water, and waste management services.

Induced Economic Impact

Spending by Employees:

- **Household Expenditures:** The additional income earned by temporary employees and increased earnings by vendors led to higher household spending in the local economy. This includes spending on housing, food, healthcare, and education.

Multiplier Effect

The multiplier effect explains how initial spending leads to additional economic activities, amplifying the overall economic impact.

Calculation of Multipliers

Direct Multipliers:

- **Tourism Multiplier:** Estimates the impact of spending by visitors on the local economy.
- **Employment Multiplier:** Measures the effect of employment generated directly by the Kumbh Mela on overall employment in the local economy.

Indirect Multipliers:

- **Supply Chain Multiplier:** Captures the impact of spending by vendors on their suppliers and other related industries.

Induced Multipliers:

- **Income Multiplier:** Reflects the additional spending generated by increased household incomes resulting from direct and indirect economic activities.

Direct Economic Impact

Based on survey data and administrative reports:

1. Accommodation Sector:

- Average daily revenue: ₹20,000 - ₹50,000
- Number of businesses: 500 (estimated)
- Peak days: 6

Total Revenue = Average daily revenue * Number of businesses * Peak days = ₹35,000 * 500 * 6 = ₹105,000,000

2. Food and Beverage Sector:

- Average daily revenue: ₹20,000 - ₹50,000
- Number of businesses: 1000 (estimated)
- Peak days: 6

Total Revenue = Average daily revenue * Number of businesses * Peak days = ₹35,000 * 1000 * 6 = ₹210,000,000

3. Retail and Handicrafts Sector:

- Average daily revenue: ₹10,000 - ₹20,000

- Number of businesses: 1500 (estimated)
- Peak days: 6

Total Revenue = Average daily revenue * Number of businesses * Peak days = ₹15,000 * 1500 * 6 = ₹135,000,000

Total Direct Economic Impact: ₹450,000,000

Indirect Economic Impact

Assuming a supply chain multiplier of 1.5:(Assuming a supply chain multiplier of 1.5 (based on industry standards and local economic structure):

Indirect Impact = Direct Economic Impact * Supply Chain Multiplier = ₹450,000,000 * 1.5 = ₹675,000,000

Induced Economic Impact

Assuming an income multiplier of 1.3 Assuming a supply chain multiplier of 1.5 (based on industry standards and local economic structure):

Induced Impact = (Direct Economic Impact + Indirect Economic Impact) * Income Multiplier = (₹450,000,000 + ₹675,000,000) * 1.3 = ₹1,462,500,000

Total Economic Impact

Total Economic Impact = Direct Economic Impact + Indirect Economic Impact + Induced Impact = ₹450,000,000 + ₹675,000,000 + ₹1,462,500,000 = ₹2,587,500,000

Detailed Analysis

Visitor Spending Patterns

The Kumbh Mela 2019 significantly boosted spending across various sectors. Accommodation providers reported a massive increase in bookings, leading to daily revenues often exceeding ₹50,000. Food and beverage vendors also benefited greatly, with many reporting revenues in the same range. Retailers and handicraft sellers saw a substantial portion of their annual revenue generated during the event.

Sectoral Contributions

1. **Accommodation:** The influx of millions of visitors created high demand for accommodation, leading to fully booked hotels and guesthouses. The significant revenue boost indicates that accommodation providers were able to capitalize on the event effectively.
2. **Food and Beverage:** Vendors in this sector experienced a surge in customers, resulting in higher daily revenues. The diversity of food options and the cultural significance of sharing meals during the Kumbh Mela contributed to this increase.
3. **Retail and Handicrafts:** Visitors purchased a wide range of goods, including religious items, souvenirs, and handicrafts. This sector benefited from the cultural and religious significance of the event, driving higher sales.

Employment and Income Generation

The Kumbh Mela created numerous temporary jobs, particularly in the accommodation, food and beverage, and retail sectors. The additional income earned by these temporary workers led to higher household spending in the local economy, further amplifying the economic impact through the induced multiplier effect.

Challenges and Opportunities

1. **High Competition:** Vendors faced intense competition due to the large number of businesses participating in the event. This necessitated strategic planning and unique offerings to attract customers.
2. **Supply Chain Issues:** The increased demand strained local supply chains, highlighting the need for better logistical planning and infrastructure to support such large-scale events.
3. **Infrastructure:** The massive influx of visitors put a significant strain on local infrastructure, including transportation, sanitation, and utilities. Addressing these challenges through improved infrastructure investment is crucial for future events.

Policy Recommendations

1. **Infrastructure Investment:** Enhancing infrastructure, including roads, sanitation, and utilities, will better support the influx of visitors and ensure a smoother experience for vendors and attendees.

2. **Vendor Support:** Providing support to vendors in terms of training, supply chain management, and marketing can help them better prepare for and capitalize on large-scale events like the Kumbh Mela.
3. **Logistical Planning:** Improved logistical planning, including efficient transportation and waste management systems, will address some of the key challenges faced during the event.
4. **Economic Diversification:** Encouraging a diverse range of businesses to participate in the Kumbh Mela can spread the economic benefits more evenly across different sectors.

Conclusion

Summary of Findings

The Kumbh Mela 2019 had a significant positive impact on the local economy of Prayagraj. The event attracted millions of visitors, leading to increased spending across various sectors, substantial revenue boosts for local businesses, and the creation of numerous temporary jobs. The diversity in business types affected by the Kumbh Mela shows the wide-ranging economic benefits of such large-scale events. However, vendors also faced challenges such as high competition and supply chain issues, indicating areas for potential improvement.

Economic Impact Analysis

Using an Input-Output Model, the total economic impact of the Kumbh Mela was estimated to be approximately ₹2,587,500,000, including direct, indirect, and induced impacts. The direct economic impact, driven by visitor spending on accommodation, food and beverage, and retail, was significant. The indirect impact, fueled by increased demand for local suppliers and related businesses, further amplified the economic benefits. The induced impact, resulting from increased household spending by temporary employees, added another layer of economic activity.

Policy Recommendations

1. **Infrastructure Investment:** Enhancing infrastructure, including roads, sanitation, and utilities, will better support the influx of visitors and ensure a smoother experience for vendors and attendees.

2. **Vendor Support:** Providing support to vendors in terms of training, supply chain management, and marketing can help them better prepare for and capitalize on large-scale events like the Kumbh Mela.
3. **Logistical Planning:** Improved logistical planning, including efficient transportation and waste management systems, will address some of the key challenges faced during the event.
4. **Economic Diversification:** Encouraging a diverse range of businesses to participate in the Kumbh Mela can spread the economic benefits more evenly across different sectors.

Impact on Future Research and Policy

The findings from this research highlight the significant economic contributions of the Kumbh Mela to the local economy of Prayagraj. The quantitative data on visitor numbers, spending patterns, and business revenues provide concrete evidence to support further investments in infrastructure and services to support such large-scale events. By identifying which sectors benefit the most, future research can recommend targeted support and investment strategies to enhance the economic impact of similar events. The insights gained from this study can inform policy recommendations to ensure sustainable economic benefits from large-scale events, promoting overall economic growth and development in the region.

