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Study of Consumer Behavior towards Vacation Trips

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Abstract:

This study is the culmination of a number of years of interest in the field of consumer behavior in relation to the demand for vacation trips. The study has provided a backcloth of the subject area with critical discussions on vacation and consumer behavior theory and concepts. Over the years, this has led to the contemplation of the ways in which certain aspects of consumer behavior could be identified, measured and assessed. This study has utilized a methodology based upon the consumer being able to construct their own meanings of what is behind the desire to want to travel in terms of motivations, evoked sets of destinations, tourism, preference criteria, choice sets and decision rules. In specific it focuses on the impact that visitors' satisfaction with different attributes of the trip which exerts on expenditure, leisure activities, spending quality time, different service categories. The expenditure patterns include lodging, meals and restaurants, attractions and festivals, entertainment, shopping, transportation, and total expenditures. From a practical standpoint, this study sheds light by providing information about how the traveler's characteristic effects travel's behavior towards destination marketers. The antithesis and synthesis created from these discussions has led to deeper insight and understanding of the whole area related to tourism and demand functions. Data are presented for accommodation, travel, meals, tours, shopping and entertainment, and reveal strong and consistent patterns of use for market segmentation. In addition, the results of the study also portrayed the differences of selected travel-related characteristics of young travellers in relation to the purpose of travel. Thus, this study may provide information which will help tourism marketers to develop marketing tools to satisfy and fulfil those young tourists' needs and understand certain reasons behind their spending patterns.

Keywords: *Vacation, consumer, expenditure, behavior, attitude, traveler, tourist, destinations, marketers, entertainment, effects*

1. Introduction

Tourism as a domain study provided descriptive analysis based on a concept of tourism by developing a deeper understanding of the consumer as a tourism product. However, it is important to recognize that tourism as a phantasm is based upon a social system which has no considerable property, no absolute form, or ways of changing. The interpretation of what tourism is, emanates from the way it has been, and continues to be constructed within our own individual meaning systems. This study defines tourism expenditure as total expenses of all individuals in travel party that may be incurred during the trip from lodging, meals, attractions (if any), entertainment, shopping (including souvenir), transportation (including gas commuting from residence to destinations), and total expenditures. The dimension of the tourism industry includes the core product components of transport, attractions, accommodation and catering. In addition, there are the peripheral public and private services which are necessary to facilitate the overall operation of the tourism industry. The use of the term tourism has led to a range of complex meanings which have become associated with: the movement of people; a sector of the economy; an identifiable industry; services which need to be provided for travelers and vacation trips. Vacations play out differently for everyone. Some of us might like bumming on the beach; others might like a vacation where they can live it up at nightclubs and bars. And those of us with kids might want a vacation that offers museums and theme parks. Whatever our respective fancies are, different preferences lead to different spending habits. These, in turn, tell us very different things about who is vacationing - whether travelers consider themselves big spenders or value-seekers but they're going to vacation when they want, where they want, and the way they want.

Our study recognizes that vacation is concerned with economic, cultural, feasibility power of consumer and their preference towards destination, social issues which provide an analysis of the conceptual perspectives of the consumer. The study has attempted to

provide some explanation as to what tourism and consumer behavior consists of in terms of essential elements and their relationships. It may be valuable for consumers to develop a more informed understanding of their own action and help tourism industry to gain more accurate understanding & knowledge regarding changing tastes and preferences of their consumers.

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To observe consumer behaviour towards vacation trips.
2. To determine expenditure pattern of Indian consumers in Delhi
3. To review the customer choice and preference which they demand at vacation.
4. To examine the factors which consumers foresee while choosing vacation destination.
5. To examine the demographic profile of the respondents and their satisfaction on the services rendered on vacation.

3. Result and Analysis

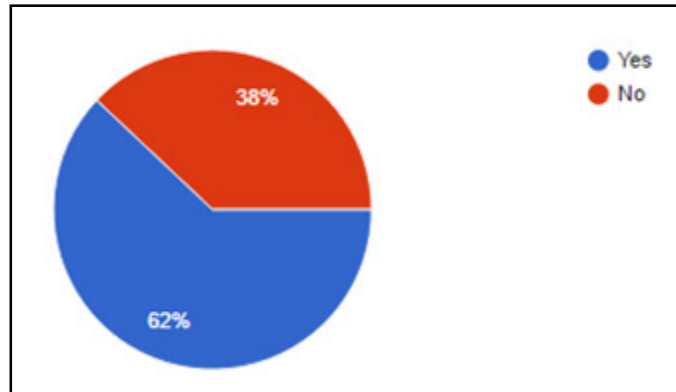


Figure 1: Have you been on a domestic vacation in last six months?

With maximum number of votes, 62% people have taken a domestic vacation in past 6 months whereas 38% people have not.

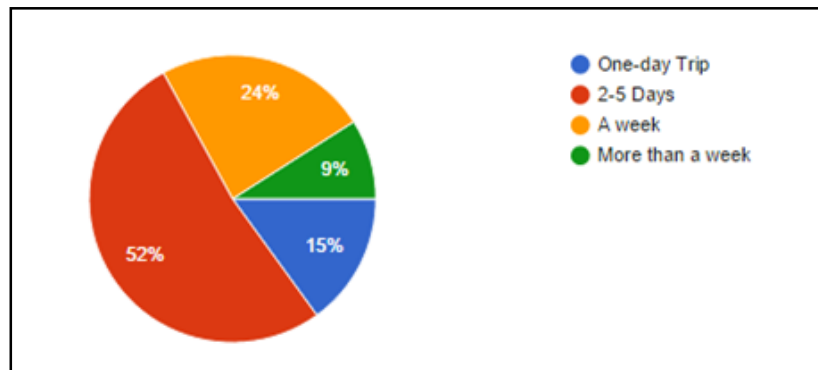


Figure 2: Generally, for how many days do you intend to go on a domestic vacation? (100 responses)

To know for how many days people take a vacation for, with maximum number of votes, 52% people go on a vacation for 2-5 days followed by 24% of people for about a week. Around 15% people take a one-day trip whereas 9% people for more than a week.

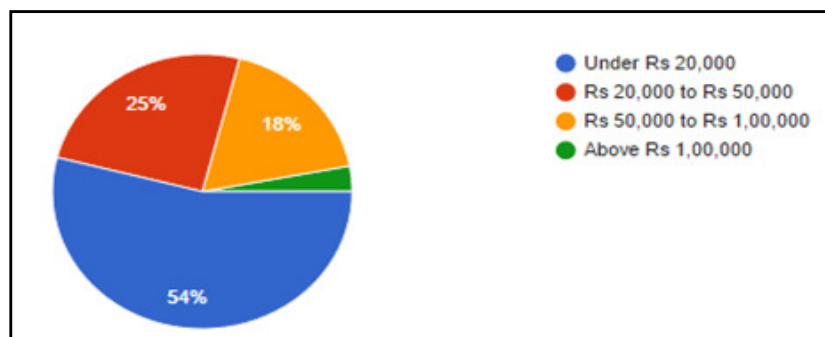


Figure 3: What is the planned budget for your vacation? (Budget including Accommodation, Conveyance, Shopping and other things) (100 responses)

For 54% of the people, a budget means somewhere less than Rs 20,000 whereas it is Rs 20,000- Rs 50,000 for 25% of the people followed by 18% people who prefer to set their budget somewhere around Rs 50,000 to Rs 1, 00,000. Only 3% people choose above Rs 1, 00,000.

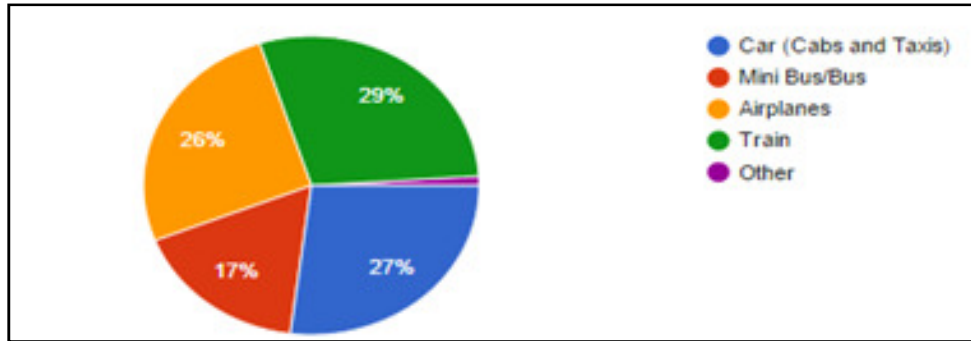


Figure 4: What is your mode of transportation? (100 responses)

With maximum number of votes, 27% of people choose Train/Railways as their mode of transport for a vacation followed by Car/Cabs/Taxis with 27%. Giving a close competition, comes the airways with 26% and Mini bus/Bus with 17% followed by other modes of transportation with least number of votes.

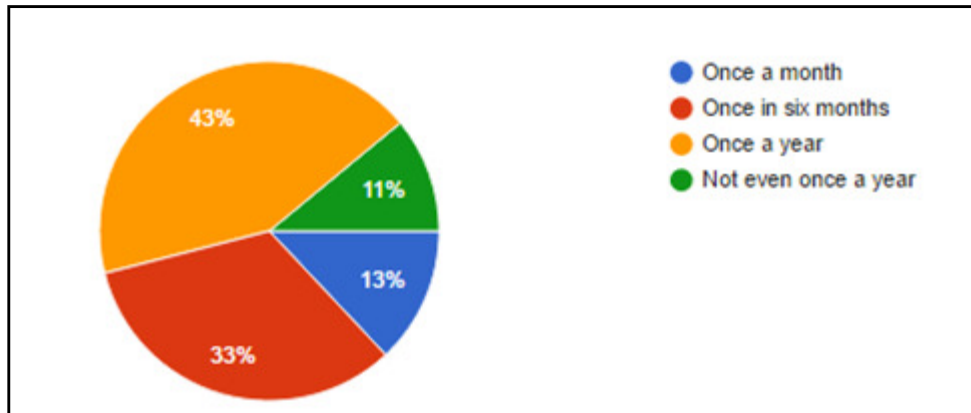


Figure 5: How often do you take a domestic vacation in a year? (100 responses)

43% of the people take a vacation once a year whereas 33% of the people for once in six months. Following the trend, 13% and 11% of the people choose to go for once a month and not even once a year respectively.

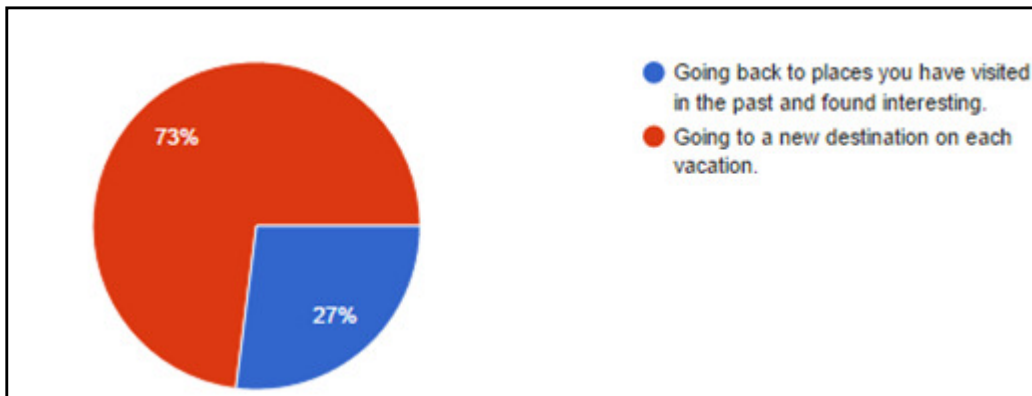


Figure 6: Which destination or places do you prefer most? (100 responses)

Talking about the destination preference, 73% of the people prefer to take a vacation to a new destination every time they plan one whereas 27% of the people like to revisit the places they have been once there for.

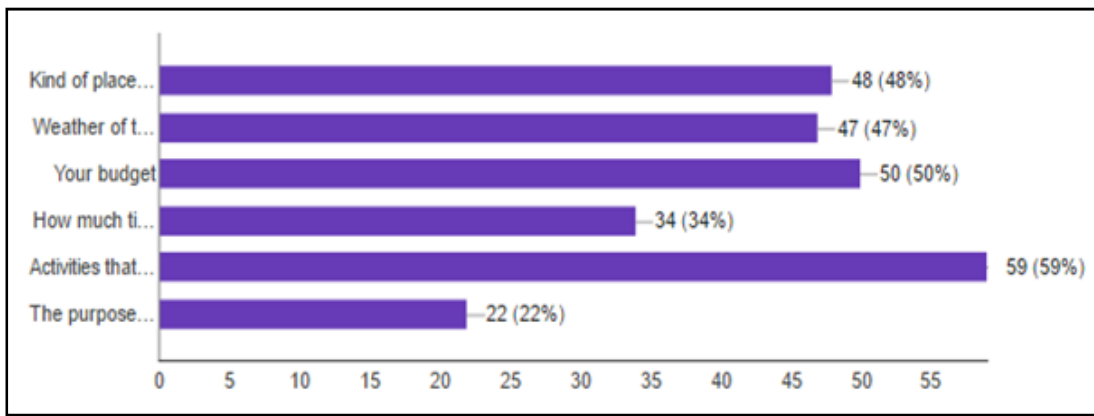


Figure 7: What things do you keep in mind before choosing a travel destination (choose any 3)? (100 responses)

Keeping the essentials of a vacation destination in mind, 59% of the people give importance to the possible activities that could be carried out at the location whereas 50% of the people consider the amount of money they have in their hands i.e. budget. Giving a close competition, 48% and 47% of the people consider the kind of the destination it is and the weather of the location concerned, respectively followed by 22% people considering the purpose of a vacation.

All in all, the three most influential factors that affect the choice of destination of vacation are: Activities that could be carried out at the place, Budget of the consumer and the kind of place it is.

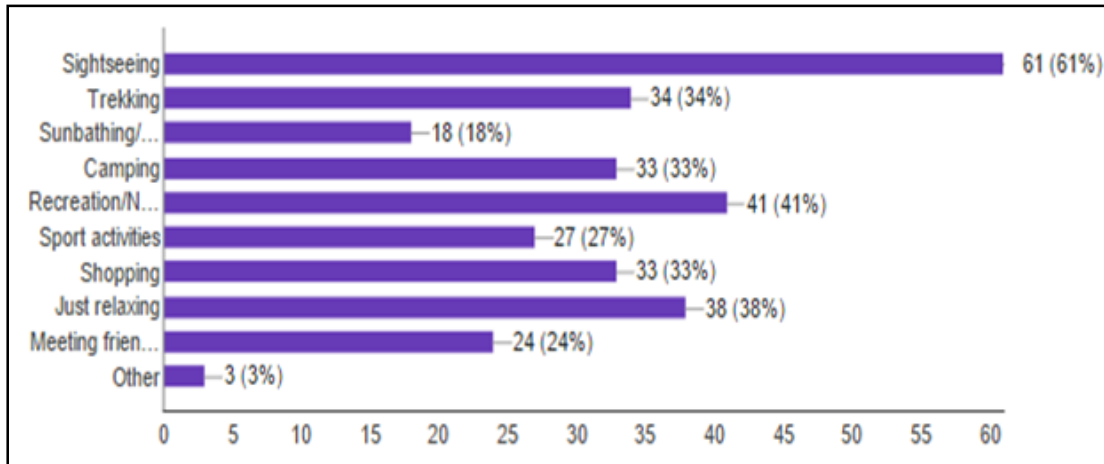


Figure 8: Which of the following activities do you look forward to on a vacation? (choose any 3)? (100 responses)

When asked to pick three activities people look in a vacation, the highest votes went to Sightseeing with 61% followed by Recreation with 41%, Relaxing with 38%, and Trekking with 34% and 33% for both Camping and shopping. Moreover, 27% of people are interested in sports and adventure activities followed by 24% interested in meeting friends and family. Only 3% people have miscellaneous reasons to go on a vacation.

All in all, the three most preferred activities that people seek during a vacation are: Sightseeing, Recreation/Nightlife and Relaxing.

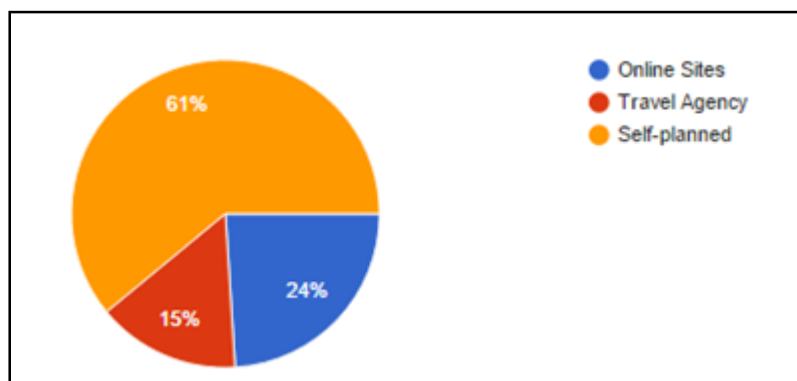


Figure 9: Do you hire any tour operator of online site or travel agency for package sort of vacation trips or your vacation trip are self planned or self managed? (100 responses)

As far as planning of a vacation is concerned, 61% of the people like to plan and organize everything by themselves followed by 24% who take help from online websites such as makemytrip.com and 15% hiring a travel agency.

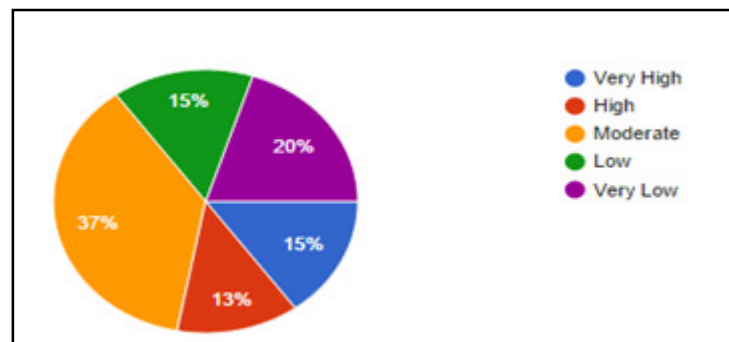


Figure 10: What are the chances of your going on a vacation to an international destination this time? (100 responses)

To know if people are interested to take an international vacation this time, 37% of the people had their opinion neutral followed by 20% who had very low chances for the same and 15% people for both very high and low chances. With the least number of votes, 13% of the people had high chances of going to an international destination.

4. Literature Review

- 1 "Tourism demand affects all sectors of an economy" (Sinclair & Stabler, 1997, p.15) and
- 2 it is "the foundation on which all tourism-related business decisions ultimately rest" (Song & Witt, 2000, p.1).
- 3 Understanding tourist expenditure is critically important in measuring tourism's economic impact on the destination because tourism is an expenditure-driven economic activity (Frechtling, 2006).
- 4 Today, tourism is one of the world's largest industries. It is consisted of many segments such as transportation, accommodations, food and beverage services, shopping and activities for tourists. Each of these products and services is the key of an economic generator for the community specifically and the nation generally. Therefore, tourism is also considered as the sum total of tourist expenditures within the borders of a nation or a political subdivision or a transportation-centered economic area of contiguous states or nations (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2006).
- 5 Some background tourism elements are often free goods (supply) as plentiful as sunshine (Safari 1983). However, for most tourism- and resident-oriented products, tourists have to pay in exchange for the product. For instance, to use accommodations and public transportation, or to get health service, tourists have to compensate providers.
- 6 Therefore, supply and demand of tourism- and resident-oriented products have similar economic characteristics and can be analyzed in the same context, in contrast to the background tourism elements (Gunn 1980; Leiper 1979).
- 7 As CAI (1999, p. 16) remarked, "Market demand, when expressed in dollar amount, should be a preferred measurement of its substantiality".
- 8 Wang, Rompf, Severt, and Peerapatdit (2006, p. 333) also pointed out that tourism expenditure is "typically scrutinised by policy makers, planning officials, marketers and researchers for monitoring and assessing the impact of tourism on the local economy".
- 9 Understanding tourist expenditure is critically important because "tourism is an expenditure-driven economic activity" and "the consumption of tourism is at the centre of the economic measurement of tourism and the foundation of the economic impacts of tourism" (Mihalic, 2002, p. 88).
- 10 Analysis of tourism demand has been predominantly at the macro-economic level that uses aggregated data such as total arrivals and expenditure in a tourist destination by a market (Crouch, 1994; Lim, 2006; Rosselló-Nadal, Riera-Font, & Capó-Parrilla, 2006).
- 11 The longer distance people travelled, the higher their expenditure (Chhabra et al., 2002; Nicolau & Más, 2005; Pouta et al., 2006; Thrane, 2002) and advanced forward planning is also associated with higher expenditure (Chhabra et al., 2002; Thrane, 2002).

5. Limitations

In this we analyze consumer's behavior towards vacations, expenditure pattern of tourist at vacations, the degree of impact on the consumers, preferences and tastes at vacations, customer choices and preferences which they demand at vacations, factor effect on consumer decision while choose vacation destinations. Future research may focus on only international vacation or comparative analysis of consumer behavior on domestic vacation or at international vacation. Research may take also on analysis consumer preferences at holidays. It would be interesting to find where people want to go most either on domestic or an international vacation. The target group comprises young professionals, who have either recently entered to professional life or are about to graduate from universities and already have vast working experience. It also takes into account the views of young students from college and universities who plan or intend to go on vacations with friends and relatives. Their preferences may change over time and with the development of their careers.

Social media has offered new opportunities to involve the customer in creation of his or her own travel experience, and more research would help shaping better understanding on how those new services impact customer satisfaction on vacation.

This study attempted to introduce to understand people's behavior at vacations, how many times they want to go to vacation in a year, what is their expenditure pattern. This approach could be further improved and developed as well as applied to other industries.

6. Conclusion

Based on the fact that consumer behavior towards vacation has incorporated the sensation seeking trait, it is evident that researchers in the field consider this an important variable. This paper analyzes a personality trait of tourists in innovative behavior and provides an analysis of the conceptual perspectives of the consumer. This study is concerned with domestic vacation that people in India take for various reasons, for a particular time frame and concludes that most of the people preferred duration of the vacation for about two to five days. In addition, it was found that the individuals are not likely to spend more on vacation. Also, we got to know their preference for transportation mode which is more towards railways (Train) and roadways (Cars/Cabs and Buses/Mini Buses). Largely people like to go back to those places where they have visited earlier and found things interesting there. Furthermore, people wanted to go on vacation to enjoy the surrounding of that area. In the end, most of the people wanted their trip to be self-planned or managed so that they could make any last moment alterations with ease.

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Annexure

- Q1) Have you been on a domestic vacation in last six months?
A) Yes
B) No
- Q2) Generally, for how many days do you intend to go on a vacation?
A) One-day Trip
B) 2-5 Days
C) A week
D) More than a week
- Q3) What is the planned budget for your vacation? (Budget including Accommodation, Conveyance, Shopping and other things)
A) Under 20,000
B) 20,000 to 50,000
C) 50,000 to 1,00,000
D) Above 1,00,000
- Q4) What is your mode of transportation?
A) Car (Cabs and Taxies)
B) Mini Bus
C) Train
D) Airplane
E) Other
- Q5) How often do you take a vacation in a year?
A) Once a month
B) Once in six month
C) Once a year
D) Not even once in a year
- Q6) which destination or places you prefer the most?
A) Going back to places you have visited in the past and found interesting.
B) Going to a new destination on each vacation.
- Q7) What things do you keep in mind before choosing a travel destination (choose any 3)?
A) Kind of places you usually like
B) Weather of that place
C) Your budget
D) How much time you have on hand
E) Activities that can be enjoyed there
F) The purpose of your vacation
- Q8) Which of the following activities do you look forward to on a vacation? (Choose any 3)?
A) Sightseeing
B) Trekking
C) Sunbathing/Swimming
D) Camping
E) Recreation/Nightlife
F) Sport activities
G) Shopping
H) Just relaxing
I) Meeting friends and relatives
J) Any other
- Q9) Do you hire any tour operator of online site or travel agency for package sort of vacation trips or your vacation trip are self-planned or self-managed?
A) Online sites
B) Travel agency
C) Self-planned

Q10) What are the chances of your going on a vacation to an international destination this time?

- A) Very high
- B) High
- C) Not so high
- D) Low
- E) Very low