

## Exploring Factors Influencing Destination Tourism Choice through Internal Information Search: A Northern India Study

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**Abstract**— Many people travel every year and they have many reasons to travel, as well as a several motivations to travel. This research can prove the motivation factors of Internal Information Search for choosing the destination tourism. This research focused on why and what motivates tourists to select and use northern region of India as tourism destinations. Therefore, this study focused on what are the most important factors for Internal Information Search to choose tourist destinations in northern region of India. The survey was distributed in a randomly to tourists. The identified population included 507 hundred male and female tourists. After collecting the data, the results were analysed to understand what motivates tourists to travel options in northern region of India. This study sought to analyze key motivational factors that lead tourists to destinations in northern region.

**Keywords**— Tourists, Consumer Behaviour, Decision, Internal Information Search & Tourism Destination.

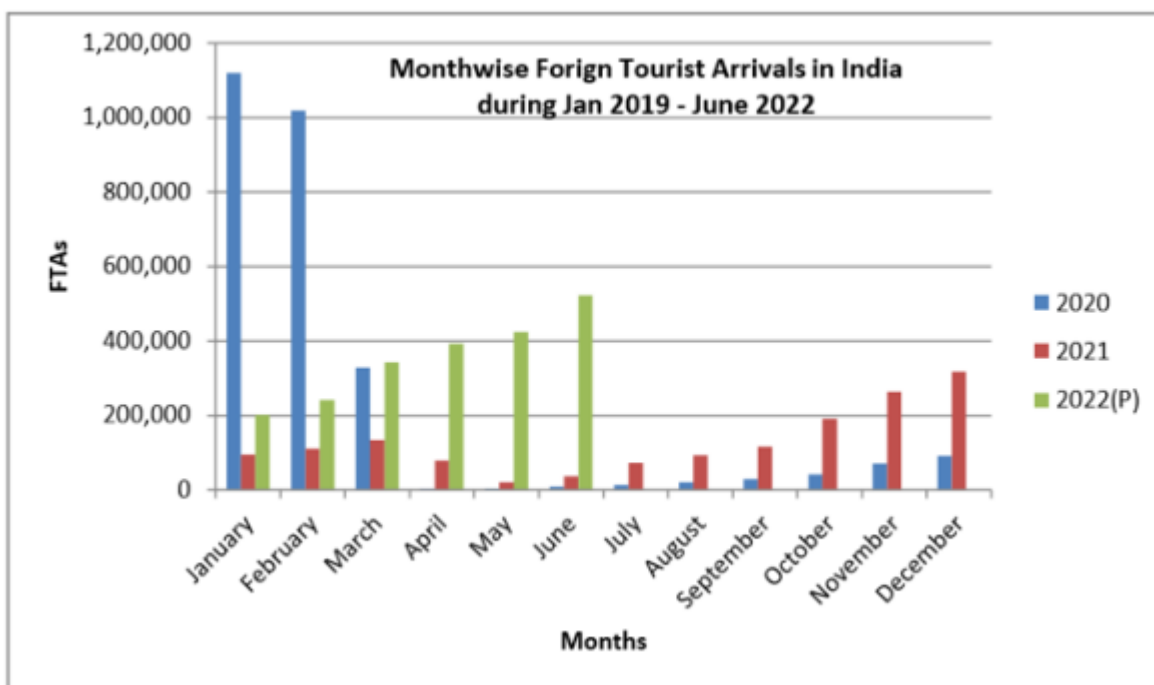
### Introduction

India has rich history, culture and geographical diversity that make its global tourism appeal large and diverse. It offers heritage and cultural tourism which is a large industry. The World Travel and Tourism Council calculated that tourism generated \$131 billion or 6.4% of the nation's GDP in 2014. In the year 2021, the tourism landscape in India bore the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic. Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) plummeted by a significant 44.5%, dwindling to a mere 1.52 million, while there was a noticeable upswing in arrivals of Non Resident Indians (NRIs) and Indian Tourists (ITAs). Among the modes of transportation, air

travel emerged as the favored choice for FTAs, with Delhi and Mumbai airports serving as the primary gateways for foreign visitors. Impressively, the top 15 source markets for FTAs collectively contributed to approximately 80.9% of the total arrivals.

Despite the challenges, India witnessed a commendable 26.4% increase in foreign exchange earnings from tourism, surging to a total of US\$ 8.797 billion. On a global scale, the tourism sector displayed a steady growth trajectory, with an anticipated 5.3% upswing in International Tourist Arrivals (ITAs). India carved out its place in this global landscape, accounting for 1.64% of all international tourists. Notably, India's tourism ranking ascended from 25th in 2019 to 19th in 2020.

Inflow of tourists can also be seen from the table given below that provides month wise foreign tourists arrival data.



**Figure 1.1:** Month-wise foreign tourists' arrivals in India (June 2019- June 2022)

Source: Bureau of Immigration, Govt. of India, [www.tourism.gov.in](http://www.tourism.gov.in), [www.incredibleindia.org](http://www.incredibleindia.org), Market Research Division, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, New Delhi, July 2021.

For Indian Nationals' Departures (INDs), there was a robust increase of 17.30%, predominantly facilitated by air travel. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) stood out as the leading source nation for INDs. On the domestic front, India recorded an impressive 11.05% growth in domestic

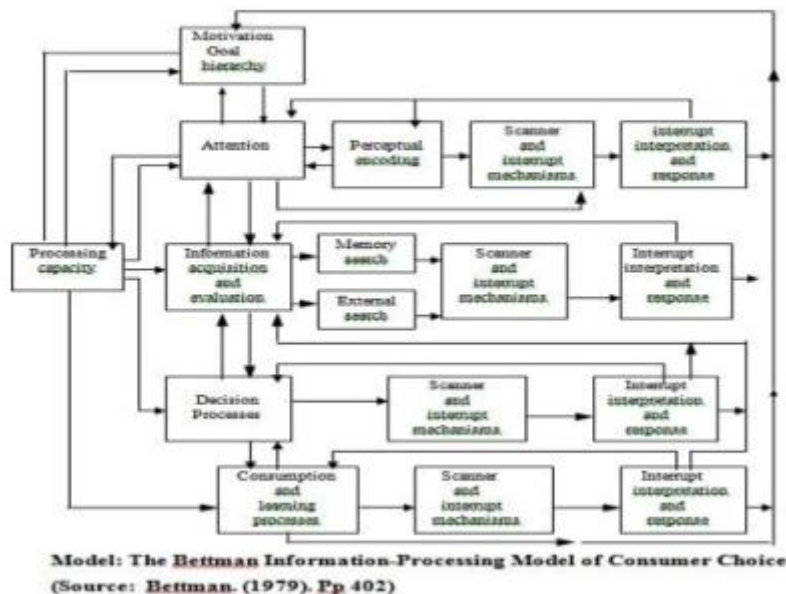
tourist visits, underscoring the resilience of domestic tourism. However, foreign tourist visits experienced a substantial decline of 85.29%. Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh emerged as the states with the highest domestic tourist visits, while Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu continued to be favored destinations for foreign tourists.

Furthermore, the report delves into the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), a comprehensive metric encompassing tourism-related goods, services, employment, and GDP contributions. In the global Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI), India secured the 54th position in 2021, reflecting its place in the global tourism landscape.

It is seen from the above table that trend of foreign tourists' arrival is higher from October till March. There may be a major reason behind this scenario of pleasant weather as compared to hot and rainy months of April till September respectively and there may be another reason behind their arrival that is festival season in India.

## Research Objectives and Hypotheses

- **Research Objective-1:** To find out the discrepancy gap between the perception of male tourists and female tourists visiting North India for the factors that influence Internal Information Search.
- **Alternate Hypothesis (H1)-1:** There is discrepancy gap between the perception of male tourists and female tourists visiting North India for the factors that influence Internal Information Search.
- **Null Hypothesis (H0)-1:** There is no discrepancy gap between the perception of male tourists and female tourists visiting North India for the factors that influence Internal Information Search.
- **Research Objective-2:** To find out the association between the Age of the tourists visiting North India and the factors that influence Internal Information Search.
- **Alternate Hypothesis (H1)-2:** There is association between the Age of the tourists visiting North India and the factors that influence Internal Information Search
- **Null Hypothesis (H0)-2:** There is no association between the Age of the tourists visiting North India and the factors that influence Internal Information Search.



The Engel-Kollat-Blackwell Model of Consumer Behavior.

(**Figure 1: Model:** Source: Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard,(1995) page No 95)

## Literature Review

Bettman's Information Processing Model of Consumer decision Making Process of the Choice Bettman (1979) in his model describes the consumer as possessing a limited capacity for processing information. He implicates that the consumers rarely analyze the complex alternatives in decision making and apply very simple strategy.

In this model there are seven major stages that are **Processing capacity, Motivation, Attention and perceptual encoding, Information acquisition and evaluation, Memory, Decision Process, and Consumption and Learning Process.**

**Ritchie and Zins (1978)**, studied the relationship of attractiveness of a destination vis-to-vis various attributes of tourist destinations.

**Moutinho (1987)**, studied on vacationing behavior, and suggested to take adequate actions in the area of tourism marketing, one must understand how people perceive such things as destination areas, air travel, travel distances and travel advertising; how they learn to consume and to travel; how they make travel decisions; and how personality affects those decisions.

**Macintosh and Goeidner 1990; Inskeep (1991)**, any tourist destination comprises complex product mix of natural resources, infrastructure; services provided, distinctive local features, cultural attributes and historical importance.

**Das et al. (2007)** showed that various socioeconomic characteristics of tourist significant by influenced their expectations level.

**India Tourism Industry forecast (2007-11)**, mentions that in India inbound tourism expenditure per head in third highest in the world, even more than the global average tourist spending and tourist in future to India is expected to increase a CAGR of 22.65% between 2007 and 2011. Chopra (2008), Travel and tourism in India have now become a significant industry which provides employment to about 41.8 million people.

**India's tourism industry (2009)**; It's contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) was 60% (97.3 billion) in 2009 and in expected to be 187.3 billion by 2019.

**According to ministry of tourism (2009)**, foreign tourist Arrivals (FATs) were 4.72 million and the decline in FATs may be mainly due to the ongoing global financial meltdown. FATs during Jan-March 2009 were at 1.461 million.

## **Research Methodology**

This chapter defines the research design, research objectives, population samples, data collection procedures and the techniques of data analysis for examining the factors that affect choice of destination within northern region of India. This research is exploratory in nature. A survey was designed to measure the perceptions of tourists visiting northern region of India (Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana & Punjab), with the help of the questionnaires and schedules using close ended dichotomous questions, multiple choice questions, five-point LIKERT scale such as strongly agree-1, agree-2, neutral-3, disagree-4, and strongly disagree-5.

To collect information / data for the research purpose we have used convenient sampling technique. The target population, to which I would like to draw inferences, comprises the tourists visiting northern region of India. The total Sample size was of 507 tourists. For the analysis of the data, IBM SPSS Statistics 22 version software has been used to perform Frequency analysis with Pie charts, t- test & Chi square test.

## Data Analysis, Interpretation & Findings

### Analysis: Age based analysis of tourists

**Table 1:** Age of the tourists

		age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-30 years	160	31.6	31.6	31.6
	31-40 years	251	49.5	49.5	81.1
	41-50 years	63	12.4	12.4	93.5
	51-60 years	16	3.2	3.2	96.6
	More than 60 years	17	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	507	100.0	100.0	

### Interpretation & Findings:

From the above crosstab, it can be said that out of total 507 respondents (tourists), 31.6% respondents belong to 20-30 age group, 49.5% respondents belong to 31-40 age group, 12.4% respondents belong to 41-50 age group, 3.2% respondents belong to 51-60 age group and 3.4% respondents belong to more than 60 age group.

**Analysis:** Association between choice of destination influenced by My previous experience (Factors of Internal Information Search) and Age of respondents.

**Table 2:** Crosstab: My previous experience

Crosstab								
			My previous experience					Total
			Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't Know/ Neutra	Agree	Strongly Agree	
age	20-30 years	Count	2	10	24	15	109	160
		% of Total	0.4%	2.0%	4.7%	3.0%	21.5%	31.6%
	31-40 years	Count	16	4	6	21	204	251
		% of Total	3.2%	0.8%	1.2%	4.1%	40.2%	49.5%
	41-50 years	Count	0	0	0	0	63	63
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.4%	12.4%
	51-60 years	Count	0	0	0	0	16	16
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	3.2%
	More than 60 years	Count	0	0	2	0	15	17
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	3.0%	3.4%
Total		Count	18	14	32	36	407	507
		% of Total	3.6%	2.8%	6.3%	7.1%	80.3%	100.0%

Interpretation & Findings: From the above crosstab, it can said that out of total 507 respondents (tourists), 80.3% respondents strongly agreed, 7.1% respondents agreed, 6.3% respondents were neutral, 2.8% respondents disagreed and 3.6% respondents strongly disagreed that 'My previous experience' plays role in decision making process of choice of destination for tourism.

**Table 3:** Chi-Square test

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	68.898 <sup>a</sup>	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	80.924	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	16.295	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	507		
a. 13 cells (52.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .44.			



**Table 4:** Symmetric Measures

Symmetric Measures		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	.346	.000
N of Valid Cases		507	
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.			
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.			

**Interpretation & Findings:** From the table we find out that asymptotic significance for Pearson Chi Square comes out to be 0.000 (less than 0.05) so we reject null hypothesis at 5% level of significance. Hence it can be concluded that two variables are associated.

Analysis: Gender based information search

**Table 5:** Gender of the tourists

Gender				
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Male	356	70.2	70.2
	Female	151	29.8	29.8
	Total	507	100.	100.0

### Analysis: T-Test: Male & Female: Internal Information Search

**Table 6:** Group Statistics of gender based internal information search

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
My previous experience	Male	356	4.7247	.69408	.03679
	Female	151	4.2318	1.39257	.11333
My knowledge	Male	356	4.5197	.83051	.04402
	Female	151	4.0464	.93336	.07596
My Moral values	Male	356	3.8904	.90496	.04796
	Female	151	3.7483	1.05968	.08624
My Religious values	Male	356	3.7640	1.02940	.05456
	Female	151	3.6556	1.16073	.09446
My religion	Male	356	3.8118	1.11379	.05903
	Female	151	3.6159	1.13055	.09200
My belief & values	Male	356	3.8652	.95759	.05075
	Female	151	3.5762	1.08589	.08837
My cultural and traditional values	Male	356	3.9494	.89928	.04766
	Female	151	3.6291	1.08084	.08796



**Table 6:** Independent Sample Test

Independent Samples Test					
		t-test for Equality of Means			
		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
My previous experience	Equal variances assumed	.49293	.09288	.31045	.67541
	Equal variances not assumed	.49293	.11915	.25785	.72801
My knowledge	Equal variances assumed	.47331	.08375	.30877	.63784
	Equal variances not assumed	.47331	.08779	.30042	.64619
My Moral values	Equal variances assumed	.14211	.09260	-.03983	.32404
	Equal variances not assumed	.14211	.09868	-.05225	.33646
My Religious values	Equal variances assumed	.10842	.10392	-.09576	.31259
	Equal variances not assumed	.10842	.10908	-.10640	.32323
My religion	Equal variances assumed	.19590	.10865	-.01756	.40937
	Equal variances not assumed	.19590	.10931	-.01928	.41109
My belief & values	Equal variances assumed	.28901	.09687	.09870	.47932
	Equal variances not assumed	.28901	.10191	.08832	.48970
My cultural and traditional values	Equal variances assumed	.32030	.09292	.13774	.50286
	Equal variances not assumed	.32030	.10004	.12324	.51736

Interpretation: Finally, we see the results of the T Test. We should keep in mind that, this test is based on the difference between the two variables. To the right of the T- Test, Differences, we see the T, degrees of freedom, and significance.

If the significance value is less than .05, there is a significant difference. If the significance value is greater than .05, there is no significant difference.

Interpretation: It can be seen that there is no significant difference between the males' perception and females' perception for three factors namely-My Moral values, My Religious values, My religion; so we can say that there is no difference between perception of male tourists & Perception of female tourists.

As the significance value in case of My Moral values, My Religious values, My religion is greater than .05, hence it can be said that there is no significant difference.

So, it can be concluded that My Moral values, My Religious values, My religion are the factors of Internal Information Search that influence the choice of destination equally in case of males and females.

It can be seen from the above table that other four factors have significant value less than .05, so, it can be concluded that there is significant difference between the perception of male tourists and perception of female tourists for the following factors that influence Internal Information Search of males and females respectively.

## Conclusion

There is statistically significant association between Factors of Internal Information Search that influence the choice of tourism destination of the tourists that visited northern region of India. Following were the factors of Internal Information Search- My previous experience, My knowledge, My Religious values, My religion, My belief & values, My cultural and traditional values, and My Moral values.

It can be seen that there is no significant difference between the males' perception and females' perception for Social Networking Sites so we can say that there is no difference between perception of male tourists & Perception of female tourists.

As the significance value in case of social networking sites is .166 when Equal variances assumed & .171 when Equal variances not assumed, it shows that the significant value is greater than .05, hence it can be said that there is no significant difference.

So, it can be concluded that social networking sites influences the choice of destination equally in case of males and females.

It can be seen that there is no significant difference between the males' perception and females' perception for three factors namely-My Moral values, My Religious values, My religion; so we can say that there is no difference between perception of male tourists & Perception of female tourists.

As the significance value in case of My Moral values, My Religious values, My religion is greater than .05, hence it can be said that there is no significant difference.

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and perception of female tourists for the following factors that influence Internal Information Search of males and females respectively.

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