Factors Influencing Destination Choice of Indian Tourists Visiting Abroad – An Analytical Study

Dr. Kunal Gaurav

Associate Dean (Strategic Research), ICBM – School of Business Excellence, Hyderabad - 500048, Telangana, *India*

Abstract

In recent past, the travel and tourism sector has emerged as one of the vital as well as fastest growing sector across the world. The rising disposable income coupled with changing lifestyle of Indians fuel the growth of Indian outbound travel and tourism. The Indian outbound travel and tourism is on the rise as increasing number of Indian tourists are going to international destinations. Marketers offering international tour packages always try to understand the pulse of Indian tourists in order to offer wonderful tour and travel experience to them. In order to predict future travel patterns of the tourists, it's vital to gain knowledge of people's travel motivations and its association with destination selection. At this backdrop, the present research study is designed with an intention to uncover the underlying factors that influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad. Exploratory factor analysis was employed to extract the underlying factors that are deemed to influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad. This study also tries to capture the travel intention of Indian tourist with reference to their interest associated with their foreign travel.

Key Words: *Outbound travel, destination choice, Indian tourist, Factor analysis.*

1. Introduction

Time is gone when people used to travel abroad mainly because of obligatory reasons such as education, employment, therapeutic reasons etc.; today most of the people travel abroad for leisure. In recent time, tourism has emerged as one of the fastest growing areas of the global economy and its contribution to certain nation is phenomenal. In India, tourism sector is economically important and is growing leaps and bound.

The Indian globetrotter (traveler) has emerged as one of the leading spenders who is being wooed aggressively by the world for his big bucks. Rajeev D Kale, Thomas Cook (India)'s president and COO, outbound tourism, said, "India is one of the largest outbound travel markets globally. World Travel & Tourism Council's Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2014 (shows) that the total expenditure on outbound travel in India was Rs 75,000 crore in 2013 and (is) projected to be Rs 160,500 crores in 2024"[1]. It's really interesting to note that United Kingdom (UK) counts Indian tourists as the 14th largest spenders in different British tourist destinations. At the same time, the German National Tourism Office (GNTO) opines that the Indian tourists are the fourth largest spenders for them, in terms of expenditure per person, per trip. Every year,

---

[1]   http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Indian-travellers-among-biggest-spenders-abroad/articleshow/52002855.cms

more than 5.4 million Indians visit international destinations for various reasons such as doing business, attending meetings, honeymoon, sightseeing, shopping and especially meeting friends and relatives. United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimated that the number of Indians tourists heading abroad will grow to 50 million for both business and leisure travel by the year 2020[2].

Today's Indians are more likely to visit abroad for vacations in comparison with yesterday's Indians who used to prefer indigenous holiday destinations. Increasing GDP of India, growing air connectivity, rise of low cost carriers, augmentation of urban middle class are some of the noticeable factors that have contributed to the growth of Indian outbound tourism. Rising income coupled with world class life styles often encourage Indian wanderers to shift their preferences from standard group tours to personalized luxurious vacations. While traveling to the international destinations, Indian tourists are among the world's highest spending globetrotters. According to a recent statistics, the spending power of Indian globetrotter is estimated to be four times that of the Chinese and Japanese[3]. Travel industry professionals strongly feel that the Indian middle class is on the move and set to fuel the global travel boom from Asia. According to a recent statistics, Dubai, USA, Thailand, and Singapore are the top choices for Indian tourists travelling abroad. The UK, Australia, Indonesia, Turkey, Oman, Sri Lanka and Maldives are the other conventionally most visited international destinations by Indian tourists. In recent times, countries such as Canada, Indonesia, Philippines, Mauritius, Jordan, Taiwan and Kenya are also witnessing significant rise in receiving Indian tourists[4].

Different people prefer to visit different destinations because of varied stated as well as unstated reasons. Similar to all products and services, tourist destinations do strive for the limited time and resources available at the disposal of the consumers (tourists). When an individual decides to visit a specific destination, there must be some purpose that makes him / her to do so. The marketers of tourist destinations leave no stone unturned in understanding the tourists' priorities in order to offer wonderful travel experience to the tourists. In order to predict future travel patterns of the tourists, it's vital to gain knowledge of people's travel motivations and its association with destination selection. At this backdrop, the present research study is designed with an intention to uncover the underlying factors that influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad.

2. Research Objectives

The following are the objectives of the present research study:

- To extract the underlying factors those are deemed to influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad.

- To appreciate the relative importance of various factors affecting the destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad.

---

[2] https://www.voanews.com/a/number-of-globe-trotting-indian-tourists-swells-with-rising-incomes/3486099.html

[3] https://www.forbes.com/sites/edfuller/2017/03/14/ignore-india-at-your-peril/#3a6ba3614225

[4] http://mediaindia.eu/news-india-outbound/indian-outbound-tourists-grow-in-number/

▪ To capture the travel intention of Indian tourist with reference to their interest associated with their foreign travel.

3. Literature Review

Tourism refers to the act of travelling abroad for leisure or recreational purpose. According to The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) *"Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes"*[5]. The impact of customer perception, destination choice and tourist satisfaction has been trendy research topic in tourism research. It is very important to determine the destination image while taking decisions for strategic destination marketing (Bédiová & Ryglová, 2015). Understanding why people travel and what factors influence their behavioral intention of selecting a travel destination is vital to tourism planning and marketing.

As far as tourism is concerned, India caters to several market types. Historically, the cultural tourist vacation market attracted the most foreign visitors, but marketers now target the business travel market as well, enticing them to schedule conventions and business meetings in combination with cultural activities. Additional markets include adventure and eco-tourism, as well as the pilgrimage market, which is a major source of Indian domestic tourism. This is a well known fact that the attractiveness of a destination depends on several inter-related factors. Das, Mohapatra, Sharma & Sarkar (2007) tried to present a case study elucidating factors influencing the attractiveness of tourist destination. The study was conducted for two months and 1000 questionnaires were circulated; out of 1000 respondents, 202 were foreign tourists. Factor analysis and Multiple regression analysis were employed to undertake data analysis. The results of factor analysis indicated that the expectation on seven factors namely (i) Ease of accessibility, (ii) Touristic infrastructure, (iii) Support services, (iv) Ancient flavor of the city, (v) Distinctive local features, (vi) Psychological and physical environment and (vii) Cultural attributes broadly determine the perception of tourists towards the attractiveness of a tourist destination. Multiple regression analysis indicated that the most important factor was the Ancient flavor of the city followed by Distinctive local features.

Like all products the tourist destinations also vie for the limited time and resources available at the disposal of the consumers (tourists). Tourists too build a psychological preference set of competing destinations before finally selecting a place to visit. Sarma (2004) made an attempt to study destination choice and tourists' segments. The preference levels of tourists on several variables while selecting a destination for visit was considered for the study. The research concentrated on finding out the segment-wise difference of the preference levels. In all, five tourist segments based on age, origin, benefit sought, level of exposure (to travel) and per day per person disposable income were examined, and four such bases are identified with significant difference on level of preference from segment to segment. A survey was conducted among prospective tourists in famous and not so famous destinations in India. A total of 505 samples were interviewed. The study indicated the existence of different destination choice patterns for separate segments. Four out of five segmentation schemes examined had generated enough evidence of different outlooks towards the destination choice factors.

---

[5] http://www.tugberkugurlu.com/archive/definintion-of-tourism-unwto-definition-of-tourism-what-is-tourism

Tourism is a complex event which encapsulates a varying number of services and progressions. Majority of Indians still consider travel and tourism for fun, pleasure and recreation as an elite 'five star' activity. Mishra (2013) aimed to measure the perception of cultural tourists with respect to the various factors which affect the perception of tourists. With the help of a structured and non-disguised questionnaire, primary data pertaining to the perception of tourists was collected. The research study revealed that the medium through which Indian inbound tourists gain awareness about any tourist destination (i.e., media, friends, teachers, etc.) is often influenced by a few demographical variables. In addition, this study also found that the demographical characteristics such as age, education and family income of Indian tourists have an influence on the sources of knowledge about the destination. It was also noted that the tourists of different genders may have different perceptions for the same variable at the same time.

It is well known fact that different tourists evaluate the attractiveness of the destination in different manner. Kaushik, Kaushik, Sharma & Rani (2010) tried to determine the factors responsible for determining the attractiveness of a tourist destination with respect to selected north Indian destinations. Subsequently, a descriptive study was designed considering a judgmental sampling. 200 respondents were considered for this study. A structured questionnaire was designed and administered on the selected respondents. The questionnaire included 21 statements pertaining to various attributes of tourist destinations for the consideration to the respondents. The data collected for the study was analyzed with the help of exploratory factor analysis. This study revealed that Communication, Objectivity, Basic Facilities and Attractions are the major factors that determine the attractiveness of a tourist destination in north India. At the same time, it was observed that the male tourists are likely to give more importance to 'communication' whereas female tourists are likely to give more importance to 'attractions'.

The loyalty is a concept strongly related to tourists' satisfaction and as a consequence even with the ideas there is a high degree of satisfaction with loyal tourists. Rajesh (2013) tried to develops a destination loyalty theoretical model by using tourist perception, destination image and tourist satisfaction. The conceptual framework model was developed on the basis of existing theoretical and empirical research in the field of destination marketing. The models include four constructs viz. Tourist Perception constructs, Destination image construct, satisfaction construct and destination loyalty construct. Its effects and antecedents may serve as a theoretical background designing measurement instrument for destination managers.

In recent times, medical tourism has transformed the traditional health-care sector and has set a new benchmark for every country around the globe and India is no exception. Increasing number of tourists are now travelling abroad to get high quality health care services on affordable cost. Rise for medical tourism has open world of opportunities for various sectors adding to the nation's economy. Now a day, both developed and developing nations are investing in building their general as well was health care infrastructure in order to be ahead of competition. Gill & Singh (2011) aimed to explore the interest in US travelers in medical tourism. An exploratory research study was employed to understand the factors that affect the choice of destination for medical tourism. The findings of the research study revealed that 'competent doctors', 'high quality medical treatment facility', and 'prompt medical treatment when needed' are the top

three factors medical tourists considered before deciding whether or not to take visit abroad for medical tourism.

Seyidov & Adomaitienė (2016) tried to analyze factors influencing the behavior and decision-making of local tourists in choosing Azerbaijan as a destination. The analysis of social, cultural, personal and psychological factors influencing the decision-making of local Azerbaijani tourists to travel to various types of tourism destinations with different attributes like, attractions, available amenities, accessibility, image, price and human resources were undertaken. The quantitative method was used in the study and both primary and secondary data were collected. The data for this research study were obtained by a questionnaire surveys, the evaluation was qualitative, and the ten-degree Likert scale was used. The research results showed that the age, monthly income and marital status of local Azerbaijani travelers affect their travel behavior especially in the duration of their trip. Destination amenities, tourism infrastructure, environmental features, human resources and price were the important attributes for local tourists in choosing tourism destination.

The 'Homestay' is a rising trend in modern tourism across the world where tourists stay in a house or apartment of a local resident of the city to which they are traveling. VINH (2013) examined the relationship among tourist motivation to use homestay and to predict tourists' overall satisfaction based on cultural destination attributes. This research study was aimed at helping tourism planners and marketers to get an understanding that may provide a foundation for their strategic marketing decision in tourism service. The empirical analysis was undertaken on data collected from 150 international visitors having experience in using homestay service. An explorative factor analysis (EFA) using the principle component method was performed to shorten the number of variables and to look for underlying constructs within the data. 'Learning different cultures/ways of life', 'Have fun and enjoyment' and 'having a variety of activities' are three most important attributes influence tourist motivation as per this research study. At the same time, this research study also indicated that homestay managers and marketers should provide quality service with their shopping, some entertainments, souvenirs, opportunity for rest, and recreational activities, culture.

As tourist destinations are complicated sets of services and attractions with a variety of functions, their evaluation is very difficult. Vajčnerová, Šácha & Ryglová (2013) tried to identify factors influencing destination quality on overall customer satisfaction. The data for this research study were obtained by a questionnaire surveys, the evaluation is qualitative, and the ten-degree Likert scale is used. This study relied upon Multivariate regression analysis as the suitable method for data analysis. As per this study, the relevant factors are comprised of both technical quality and functional quality and the customer satisfaction is thus a reflection of the satisfaction with both dimensions. The assessment of the factors elucidated that the tourists were most satisfied with 'Natural attractions' and the 'Uniqueness of destination' was also rated very high. These factors thus had an encouraging effect on customer satisfaction.

The cultural tourism market segment has experienced growing interest in most recent years. The fight for competitiveness in the tourism industry has activated the rise of several new market segments. There is a felt need for more research to deepen the understanding of destination image in influencing tourist travel behavior. Using the island of Mauritius as a case study,

Ramkissoon, Uysal & Brown (2011) tried to analyze the structural relationship between destination image and cultural behavioral intentions of tourists. This research study adopted a structured approach consisting of a survey questionnaire. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used for analyzing the data collected for this study. In addition, Confirmatory factor analysis was employed to test the measurement structures of destination image and behavioral intentions. From the perspective of cultural tourism, the analysis of the relationship between destination image and tourists' behavioral intentions to consume cultural attractions confirmed that the destination image would be a determinant of future intentions of tourists in cultural tourism consumption.

The size of the international education industry is noteworthy in terms of the number of international students and the export earnings of any country. Students are likely to go abroad for higher education because of several reasons. Shanka, Quintal & Taylor (2005) employed a correspondence analysis technique to elicit information from international students pertaining to their choice of study destination. The main intention of the research study was to examine the major reasons why international students chose an Australian higher education institution (located in Perth, Western Australia) as a study destination. Perth was selected as an education destination for a variety of reasons. A hand-delivered survey was conducted for this study and respondents were asked to give their opinion. Fifty-two percent of respondents indicated that the decision to study in Perth was mainly influenced by family/friends. A survey of international students at a major Australian university revealed that the proximity of the city to the students' home countries, in addition to safety, the educational quality/variety, etc. were the main reason for choosing this city for their study.

As the market of tour and travel destination is getting more competitive, it's also vital to appreciate the revisit intention of tourist to visit the same destination in future. At the same time, understanding the factors influencing the revisit intention of international visitors suggestively allows destination tourism managers or authorities to fundamentally know better on how to develop effective tourism marketing and management strategies and build up travel motivation to attract visitors. At this backdrop, Thiumsak & Ruangkanjanases (2016) undertook an empirical study to primarily explore the key factors which have a significant impact on influencing visitors to revisit Bangkok in the near future. The study was based on the data collected from 189 international tourists by administering a structured questionnaire. The simple as well as multiple regression analysis were adopted to evaluate the key factors which significantly predict the revisit intention. The perceived satisfaction of 'accommodation', 'shopping', 'attitude of Thai people', and 'restaurant & food' were identified as key factors in predicting the intention of international tourists in visiting Bangkok.

Tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries. The tourism industry has benefited several nations in terms of its economic and cultural development. This has seen through the movement of international tourists as well as the domestic tourists, which have caused the development of the tourism destination across the world. The tourist friendly destination is a concept, which satisfies the tourists through utilization and the relationship between elements of activity, space and product without any interruption and difficulties starting from the resident to the preferred of tourism destination. The most fascinating concerning tourist friendly destination is through the concept that gives a optimistic impact in terms of creating a

traveling package at a reasonable prices, the distribution of development & use of infrastructure, facilities, accommodation, transportation up to the use of internet, marketing methods and easier marketing distribution, satisfying the demand & supply of tourists so that all experience and expectation are met and finally earned the right distribution to the target group of entrepreneur, such as the local community and the respective stakeholder (Anuar, Ahmad, Jusoh & Hussain, 2012).

The selection of tour and travel destination has been a vital area of study in the tourism literature since long time. "Pull and Push" model (Crompton, 1979) is a well known typology for understanding the selection of travel destination. This model says that the individual's preference for the destination choice is the result of the interaction between two forces.   The first force is the push factor that pushes an individual away from home and attempts to develop a general desire to go somewhere else, without specifying where that may be. The second force is the pull factor that pulls an individual toward a destination due to a region-specific lure, or perceived attractiveness of a destination. Tomiš, Kovaţeviš, Berber & Miliš (2014) tried to examine the motivation factors which influence young people when choosing city destinations in Europe. This research study also aimed to elucidate   if there are any differences in the decision making process that exist between the students of different countries. The results of the factor analysis employed in this study indicated seven important factors in the decision-making process. These factors are: partying and having fun, accessibility to destination info, easy and cheap travel organization, outdoor activities, socializing with the local people, good shopping places and exploring the unknown.

During the last two decades, the attractiveness of ski and snowboarding activities in Korea has amplified to a great extent. Although, Across different countries, many of the factors that influence a ski/snowboard destination choice might be the same for skiers and snowboarders; the possibility of country specific factors can't be ruled out. Won & Hwang (2009) investigated which choice factors are most valued by Korean college skiers and snowboarders in choosing a domestic ski/snowboard destination. This study employed conjoint analysis as it allows the researchers to investigate the combined influence of a number of product/ service attributes on consumer preferences, where the product (or service) can be described by key attributes (Green & Rao,1971; Green & Srinivasan, 1978). The research study successfully investigated the relative importance of the five selected choice factors in choosing a ski or snowboard destination and revealed that snow quality, lift wait time, travel time, cost, and trail variety, in that order, influenced college skiers/ snowboarders' collective preferences in choosing a ski/snowboard destination. At the same time, The findings also suggested that there were differences in prioritized choice factors between skiers and snowboarders. College snowboarders give more importance to 'travel time' (as the second most important factor) while they considered the number of snowboard slopes/trails (i.e. trail variety) as the least important factor. Meanwhile, college skiers considered the travel time as the least important choice factor.

A large and growing literature has mounted up of late to the effect that workers of all kinds, and particularly skilled or talented workers, are attracted to cities as a function of the psychic satisfactions that they can obtain from the urban setting. Scott (2009) undertook a study to analyze factors influencing the destinations chosen by 13 different categories of migrant engineers in the USA between 1994 to 1999. Migration patterns were analyzed with the aid of

fractional-response regression models. The paper analyzed various factors influencing the destinations chosen by 13 different categories of migrant engineers in the USA. The research intention of this research study was to assess the relative weight of employment opportunities and selected amenities in guiding the migratory shifts of these workers. Engineers were divided into two categories representing individuals of working age and those who were either retired or are close to retirement. The results indicated that local employment opportunities have a dominant impact on the destinations chosen by the former group and that amenities play virtually no role in this regard.

The online social media have transformed communications and subsequently the marketing of tourism destinations and businesses. Sotiriadis & Zyl (2013) tried to understand the importance of electronic word of mouth online reviews in tourism services: especially the use of twitter by tourists. The aim of the study was to develop a conceptual framework for understanding the foundations of digital communication and empirically examine its validity by examining the factors influencing the tourism consumer behavior. This study embraced a conceptual model of e-WOM and discovered the use of Twitter by the tourists. This area has been chosen for the reason that it combines two challenging issues: (i) the need to explore tourism services covering a high degree of involvement purchase process within a digital environment; and (ii) the increasingly expansion of Twitter; this social media is a real-time information network powered by people all around the world. Social media is used by persons in nearly every country in the world in six languages. It was established in 2006, although it has an impressive penetration; every day 370,000 new users are added, spending more navigation time. Findings of the study revealed the factors affecting tourists' decision-making and shown that this social medium is not a remedy; it is another marketing channel to be wisely used in integrated communications marketing of tourism services.

4. Research Methodology

The quantitative research method was used in this research study because of its ability to uncover trends in thought and opinions, and dive deeper into the problem. This study is completely based on the primary data collected from the respondents based at Visakhapatnam (also known as Vizag). Popularly known as 'The Jewel of the East Coast', Visakhapatnam is the largest city and financial capital of the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. This study represents a combination of exploratory research and descriptive research where efforts are made to identify and comprehend various factors that influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad.

The convenience sampling method is used to identify the respondents for this study. Respondents who have visited abroad or have plans to visit abroad in near future were asked to give their response for the present study. Subsequently, a structured questionnaire was developed and administered to 118 respondents who showed their interest in participating in the research study.

The structured questionnaire developed for this study had two broad sections. In first section of the questionnaire, the closed ended questions related with demographic characteristics and travel behaviors were kept. In second section, various statements related to destination preference along with scale were kept to capture the respondents' perception towards the level of importance they

assign to each indicated variable affecting decision-making. In addition to 10 demographics related question, the questionnaire contains 30 scale based statements for respondents to respond.

Various items used to measure the construct dimensions were identified from previous research viz. Das, Mohapatra, Sharma & Sarkar (2007); Kaushik, Kaushik, Sharma & Rani (2010); Mishra (2013) and Seyidov & Adomaitienė (2016). For the present research study the selected variables were adopted and transformed into the statements so that respondents can give their responses in agreement with the statements.

All the items were measured by responses given by the respondents on a five-point Likert Scale in agreement with statements, ranging from '1' stands for 'Highly Unimportant' (HU) to '5' stands for 'Highly Important' (HI). The questionnaire developed for the study was checked for reliability and it was found to be reliable with Cronbach's alpha (α) of 0.888.

SPSS 20.0 was employed to analyze the data collected for this research study. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was considered as major statistical tools for undertaking effective data analysis. Exploratory factor analysis was employed to extract the underlying factors that are deemed to influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad.

5. Data Analysis

This study relies upon primary data collected from 118 respondents who agreed to participate in the research study. Responses collected from the respondents were coded, tabulated, cleaned and analyzed with the help of statistical software called SPSS 20.0. In this study, data analysis has been carried out using exploratory factor analysis.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is a statistical method for finding out the underlying structure of a relatively large set of variables. Exploratory Factor Analysis is a technique within factor analysis that is intended to discover the underlying relationship between measured variables.

Table 1 - KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.613
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2741.445
	df	435
	Sig.	.000

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.613 and significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity strongly supported the use of factor analysis in order to extract the underlying factors that are deemed to influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad (Refer Table 1). Principle Component Analysis along with Varimax rotation was employed to identify the underlying factors and factor loading of 0.30 or above on the items was taken into consideration. Exploratory factor analysis considered all the 30 items considered in the research study to extract the underlying factors that are deemed to influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad.

With the help of exploratory factor analysis, nine factors were extracted and in unison all the nine factors explain 77.908 percent of variance. Eigen values are often utilized to decide the number of factors in the factor analysis after extraction and it represents the amount of variance in the data explained by a particular factor. In this research study, only the factors with Eigen values greater than 1 were retained. The very first factor extracted with the help of factor analysis has the Eigen value of 8.621 and it explained maximum amount of variance (28.735%) in the data (Refer Table 2).

With the help of Exploratory Factor Analysis, following nine independent set of underlying factors that are deemed to influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad were extracted (Refer Table 2).

Table 2 – Rotated Component Matrix (Reproduced)

Factor / Cronbach's alpha	Items	Loadings	% of Variance Explained
1 0.833	Sightseeing (Monuments, Attractions, Museums etc.)	.828	28.735
	Destination's Brand Image (Example – Singapore as a 'global city of influence')	.739	
	Advice of tour and travel operators	.615	
	Recommendation given by family, friends and colleagues	.655	
	Availability of customized tour packages	.504	
2 0.842	Climatic condition of the destination	.876	9.766
	Popularity of the place	.731	
	Tour and Travel Budget	.635	
	Scenic beauty/surrounding places	.642	
	Infrastructure (Communication, Public transport etc.) available at destination	.672	
3 0.754	Advertisements about the destination in different media	.705	7.954
	Law and order (Safety and Security) at destination	.413	
	Distance & Travel time (Duration from Origin to destination)	.512	
	Attitude of local people at destination towards the tourists	.463	
	Ease of travel arrangement and guides	.629	
	Historical importance of the destination	.495	
4 0.789	Connectivity (Direct / Connecting Flight)	.559	7.456
	Religious importance of the destination	.686	
	Availability of leisure and recreational facilities	.792	

	(Safari, Cruising, Rides, Drinking, Dancing, Swimming etc.)		
5 0.583	Visa processing and other documentations	.726	6.745
	Political stability of the destination	.842	
6 0.568	Desire to improve social status by visiting abroad	.701	5.519
	Language Compatibility	.451	
	Banking and Forex facility available at the destination	.499	
	Medical facility available during the trip	.850	
7 0.670	Prior knowledge about the destination	.733	4.250
	Accommodation / Local Transport & Food	.878	
8 0.721	Placement of the destination in Indian movies and serials	.872	3.968
	Special events (Honeymoon, Anniversary, Birthdays etc.)	.589	
9	Season and timing (Such as Summer, Winter etc.)	.847	3.515
		Total	77.908
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.			
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.			
a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.			

As per the exploratory factor analysis employed in the present research study, followings are the nine factors that influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad;

I. **Destination Image & Attractions:** Exploratory Factor analysis revealed that 'Destination Image & Attractions' is the most important factor that influences destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad. 5 out of 30 items loading on this factor relate to different aspects of destination's brand image and Sightseeing (Monuments, Attractions, Museums etc.) available at the destination. This factor explains 28.735% of total variance. It can be inferred that most of the Indian outbound tourists consider the destination's brand image and attractions available before deciding where to go. At the same time, this factor was also found extremely reliable with Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.833.

II. **Destination Climate:** 5 out of 30 items considered in the exploratory factor analysis relate with Climatic condition of the destination, Scenic beauty/surrounding places and Infrastructure (Communication, Public transport etc.) available at destination. This factor explains 9.766% of total variance and found to be highly reliable with Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.842. This research study noted that Indian outbound tourists are likely to

consider the destination's climate at the time of deciding their preferred international destination.

III. **Destination Credibility:** The present study elucidates the importance of Destination Credibility in influencing destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad. 6 out of 30 items loading on this factor relate to different aspects of destination's credibility. 'Advertisements about the destination in different media', 'Law and order (Safety and Security) at destination' and 'Attitude of local people at destination towards the tourists' are some of the important item that found to be loaded significantly on this factor. This factor was found to be reliable with Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.754 and explains 7.954% of total variance.

IV. **Recreational Facilities:** As per the exploratory factor analysis employed in the present research study reveals that the 'Recreational Facilities' available at the destination plays important role in determining the destination choice of Indian tourists travelling abroad. 3 out of 30 items loading on this factor relate to 'Availability of leisure and recreational facilities (Safari, Cruising, Rides, Drinking, Dancing, Swimming etc.)' and 'Religious importance of the destination'. This factor explains 7.456 % of total variance and has the Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.789.

V. **Political Stability:** 'Political stability of the destination' has also emerged as a vital factor influencing the destination choice of Indian outbound tourists. This factor accounts for 6.745 % of total variance and found to be quite reliable with Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.583. In addition of political stability of the destination, 'Visa processing and other documentations' was also found to be loaded on this factor. Indian outbound tourists are likely to visit a place that is politically stable and offers tourist friendly visa processing and documentation.

VI. **Value Added Services:** 4 out of 30 items considered for the exploratory factor analysis relate to the 'Value added Services' available at the destination. In addition to 'language compatibility', 'Banking and Forex facility available at the destination' and 'Medical facility available during the trip' were found to be associated with this factor. This factor was found to be reliable with Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.568 and explains 5.519% of total variance. Indian outbound tourists are often considerate for the value added services available at the destination.

VII. **Comfort:** 2 out of 30 items considered for the exploratory factor analysis was found to be related with 'Comfort' aspect of tour and travel. 'Prior knowledge about the destination' and 'Accommodation / Local Transport & Food' were found to be loading significantly on this factor. This factor explains 4.250 % of total variance and its Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.670. It can be noted that the Indian outbound tourists do consider 'comfort' as one of the determinant for their destination choice.

VIII. **Special occasions:** the present study highlighted the importance of Special occasions while visiting abroad. Special events such as Honeymoon, Anniversary, Birthdays etc. are often considered while deciding where to visit. The selection of the destination is

often done in sync with the upcoming special occasions. It was also noted that the Indian tourists decide a specific destination considering the placement of the destinations in Indian movies and serials. This factor explains 3.968% of total variance and its stability is under acceptable limit with Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.721.

IX.   **Timing:** The exploratory factor analysis employed for this study revealed that Indian outbound tourists do consider 'Timing' as an important determinant of their destination choice. Compared to other eight factors, this factor was found to be slightest significant as it explains only 3.515 % of total variance. This factor was not found to be so reliable as only 1 out of 30 items considered for the study was found to be associated with this factor.

6. Findings & Conclusions

Fueled by rising income and changing lifestyle, Today's Indian outbound tourism is rising with faster pace than ever before. The marketers of destination leave no stone unturned in attracting the tourists and delivering the awesome experience. Understanding the factors influencing destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad has become critical for international destination marketers in order to develop and deliver unforgettable tour & travel experience to Indian outbound tourists.

The present study is mainly intended to extract the underlying factors that are deemed to influence destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad. The findings of this study are based on data analysis undertaken with the help of exploratory factor analysis.

This research study successfully extracted following nine (9) important factors that are considered to be imperative in determining destination choice of Indian tourists visiting abroad; 'Destination Image & Attractions', 'Destination Climate', 'Destination Credibility', 'Recreational Facilities', 'Political Stability', 'Value Added Services', 'Comfort', 'Special occasions', and 'Timing'. Out of these nine factors, 'Destination Image & Attractions' was found to be the most important and 'Timing' was found to be least important in determining the destination choice of Indian outbound tourists. At the same time, it was also observed that the Indian outbound tourists are likely to invest in building experiences and memories and they don't mind spending significant amount of money for visiting abroad mainly for leisure.

REFERENCES

1. *Anuar, A., Ahmad, H., Jusoh, H., & Hussain, M. (2012). Understanding the Factors Influencing Formation of Tourist Friendly Destination Concept. Journal of Management and Sustainability, 2(1), 106-114.*
2. *Bédiová, M., & Ryglová, K. (2015). The Main Factors Influencing the Destination Choice, Satisfaction and the Loyalty of Ski Resorts Customers in the Context of Different Research Approaches. Acta Univ. Agric. Silvic. Mendelianae Brun, 63, 499-505.*

3. *CROMTON, J. (1979). An assessment of the image of Mexico as a vacation destination and the influence of geographical location upon that image. Journal of Travel Research, 17(4), 18-23.*

4. *Das, D., Mohapatra, P., Sharma, S., & Sarkar, A. (2007). Factors Influencing the Attractiveness of a Tourist Destination: A Case Study. Journal of Services Research, 7(1), 103-134.*

5. *Gill, H., & Singh, N. (2011). Exploring the Factors that Affect the Choice of Destination for Medical Tourism. Journal of Service Science and Management, 4, 315-324.*

6. *Green, P., & Rao, V. (1971). Conjoint measurement for quantifying judgmental data. Journal of Marketing Research, 8, 355-363.*

7. *Green, P., & Srinivasan, V. (1978). Conjoint analysis in consumer research: Issues and outlook. Journal Of Consumer Research, 5(3), 103-123.*

8. *Kaushik, N., Kaushik, J., Sharma, P., & Rani, S. (2010). Factors Influencing Choice of Tourist Destinations: A Study of North India. The IUP Journal of Brand Management, 7(1&2), 116-132.*

9. *Mishra, A. (2013). A Study of the Factors Influencing Cultural Tourists' Perception and Its Measurement with Reference to Agra. The IUP Journal of Marketing Management, 12(4), 42-64.*

10. *Rajesh, R. (2003). Impact of Tourist Perceptions, Destination Image and Tourist Satisfaction on Destination Loyalty: A Conceptual Model. PASOS. Revista De Turismo Y Patrimonio Cultural, 11(3), 67-78.*

11. *Ramkissoon, H., Uysal, M., & Brown, K. (2011). Relationship between Destination Image and Behavioral Intentions of Tourists to Consume Cultural Attractions. Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management, 20, 575-595.*

12. *Sarma, M. (2004). Destination Choice Pattern and Tourist Segments. In A. Raj, Tourist Behaviour: A Psychological Perspective (1st ed., pp. 137-149). New Delhi: Kanishka.*

13. *Scott, A. (2009). Jobs or amenities? Destination choices of migrant engineers in the USA. Papers in Regional Science, 89(1), 43-63.*

14. *Seyidov, J., & Adomaitienė, R. (2016). Factors Influencing Local Tourists' Decision-Making on Choosing a Destination: A Case of Azerbaijan. Ekonomika, 95(3), 112-127.*

15. *Shanka, T., Quintal, V., & Taylor, R. (2005). Factors Influencing International Students' Choice of an Education Destination – A Correspondence Analysis. Journal Of Marketing For Higher Education, Vol. 15(2) 2005, 15(2), 31-45.*

16. *Sotiriadis, M., & Zyl, C. (2013). Electronic word-of-mouth and online reviews in tourism services: the use of twitter by tourists. Electronic Commerce Research, 13 (1), 103–124.*

17. *Thiumsak, T., & Ruangkanjanases, A. (2016). Factors Influencing International Visitors to Revisit Bangkok, Thailand. Journal of Economics, Business and Management, 4(3), 220-230.*

18. *Tomiš, N., Kovaţeviš, B., Berber, N., & Miliš, N. (2014). Factors Influencing the Motivation of Young People When Choosing a City Destination in Europe – a Case Study From Esbjerg (Denmark). European Researcher, 69(2), 414-428.*

19. *Vajčnerová, I., Šácha, J., & Ryglová, K. (2013). The Impact Of Factors Influencing Destination Quality On Overall Customer Satisfaction. Acta Universitatis Agriculturae Et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis, 61(7(2), 2917-2922.*

20. VINH, N. (2013). *Destination Culture and Its Influence on Tourist Motivation and Tourist Satisfaction of Homestay Visit. Journal of The Faculty Of Economics And Administrative Sciences, 3(2), 199-222.*

21. *Won, D., & Hwang, S. (2009). Factors influencing the college skiers and snowboarders' choice of a ski destination in Korea: A conjoint study. Managing Leisure, 14, 17-21.*