

# Impact of Technology on Purchase Behaviour of the Destination Tourist

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## ABSTRACT

Information Technology had great impact on different industries; tourism is not exempted from that. In almost all the countries had adopted new technologies for attracting tourists. Indian is also moving in the same way. The Indian Government Tourism Department have offer several tourism services through on-line and government claim that they offer better services than the others. So it is very important to know whether the tourists are satisfied or not. In this research focuses on the tourists perception towards the Indian Tourism website services as well as to know the Information technology has any significant role in Indian tourism industry. The objective of the study is to find out the perception of tourist towards the technological approach of stakeholders. This study aims to gather information and analysis the perception of tourists towards technology changes in Indian tourism industry. People have started to adapt the technology in travelling and smartphones make it that much easier and here the statistics of mobile internet user is better evidence. A majority of people responded that booking their flight or hotel online resulted in a better price when compared with going to a brick and mortar store. And another group of people said that online booking enabled them tailor their own holiday plan. Online sites enable them to research faster the desired destination and the comparison of prices make more efficient. Getting virtual assistance online makes better deals for those web-surfers at home or on their smartphones. There is no need to drive out to the agency when it can be done within your home or anywhere. Booking a flight online is now becoming simpler not just in the way of costs but also through availability. Travel can be planned for better convenience and the last minute rush can be solved now. As internet is a global showcase of information at the click of a button, vendors host servers sources to market their good and services internationally and buyers buy these services regardless of where ever they may be located. This study attempted to investigate the potential of the technology for tourism marketing and advertising and the current constraints on the full realisation of such potential. The study concluded with a brief discussion of the major strategic issues in the implementation of Internet tourism marketing.

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## 1. Introduction

This paper deals with analysis of the data that is collected from the primary sources. The test of the empirical information in the secondary format in literature review and the data collected through the use of primary quantitative research. The information is collected through online structured questionnaire. The responses illustrate the trend to understand the habits, attitudes and perceptions regarding the use of technology affecting the user's purchase behaviour. The first part of this paper presents the findings obtained which reflects the demographic characteristics of the sample (representing the population) and the latter part consists of the contextual survey questions regarding the research aim, objectives.

## 2. Review of literature

The innovation of computer technology i.e. the Internet has deeply affected the purchase behaviour of consumers on tourism and travel intermediaries who perform their business. The development of vertical portals has redefined the travel business as it has helped to shift the power of information available and ability to plan and book online a reality (Choi et al. 2012). The study conclude that the foreign tourists are satisfied with the online services compared to the traditional services. And also recommend the e-satisfaction model for

tourism. So this sector should be provided with incentives for sustainable and overall economic growth along with creation of jobs. Mallick (2012) highlighted about the tourism as strategy for rural development. He has given more priority of tourism sector and its contribution to earn foreign exchange and the accelerating trend of this sector towards attracting the foreign tourist arrival in India from 2001 to 2010. Singh and Kasavana (2012) predicted that future IT applications will probably rely on wireless infrastructure, and that online purchasing with cashless payments will become more commonplace. Providing services at the destination, now that mobile phones have become a necessity in this era of wireless communication, POS (point of sales) machines for usage of card swipes, entry and exit of passengers in airports, hotels, scanners for passport, documents using barcode has expedited the entire process of tourism operations and legal compliance. Law and Jogaratnam (2005) further suggested that IT can transform the nature of tourism and hospitality products, processes, businesses, and competition, and that tourism and hospitality organizations that have failed to master the right IT systems would find difficult to direct and manage their information-intensive business damaging their competitiveness Tourism and hospitality sectors, and the industries associated with them are largely application oriented. Researchers in this field have conducted, and will continue to conduct, research that

generates innovative knowledge that will benefit these industries and ultimately society. As investment in and the adoption of IT are now an indispensable components of tourism and hospitality business, IT serves as a tool for both enabling and inducing change.

**3. Objective of the study**

- To find out the tourists perception towards the Indian Tourism website services as well as to know the Information technology.
- To find out buying behaviour of tourist towards the technological approach of stakeholders.

**4. Analysis and interpretation**

**a) Demographic:**

**i) Gender**

The respondents showed that there is predominance of males against the females. The males (70%) and the female respondents at (30%) are chosen randomly for the research purpose. Though, the gender factor is not affecting the research topic outcomes and has a neutral effect on the outcomes.

**ii) Age:**

The sample represents (21-30) years of age at 27% of representation, (30-41) years of age with 43% of representation, and middle aged (41 years and above) showed 30% of representation. The age group using technology with respect to the research topic showed that the highest usage of IT in tourism website, is in the age group of middle aged adults. They are matured and are likely to take their own decisions for

the use of technology in terms of searching, booking a destination of choice.

**iii) Annual income:**

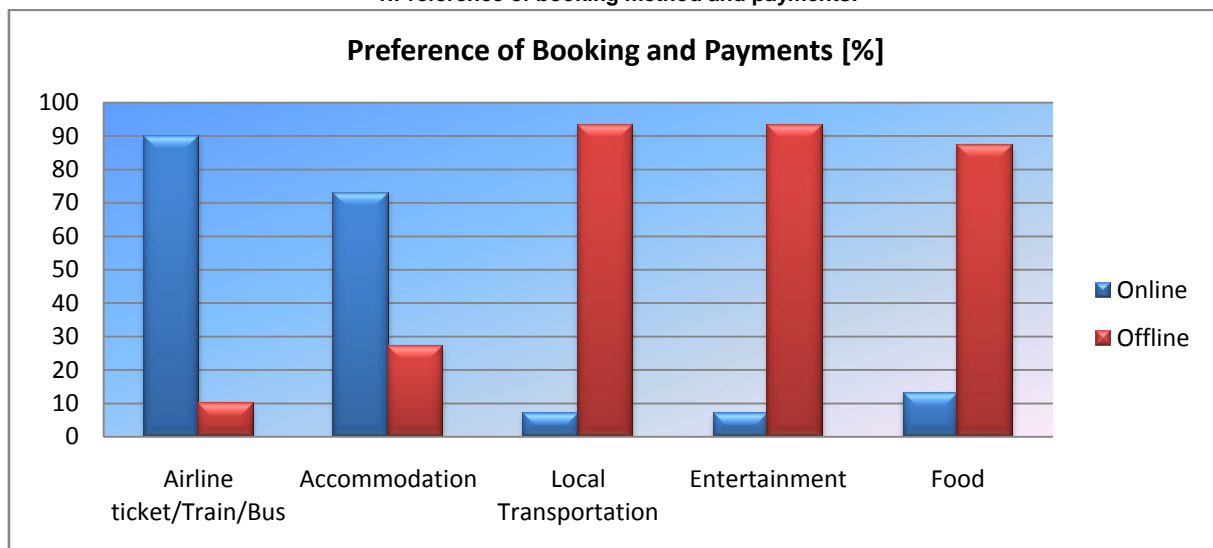
The higher income consumers cornering their interest and occupation in their life, It shows that consumers at that income bracket is seeking convenience as a method and maximise their 'information search process' to be optimised for planning a destination. They are using technology as an enabler platform to fulfil search, narrow down, get opinions and read review and finally pay to complete the entire booking process of a destination online.

**iv) Occupation:**

The responses shown by occupation types are as follows – the professionals (23%), business (30%), student at (20%), agriculturalist at (3%), salaried persons at (24%). The above illustration depicts that the sample size representation has more of professionals and business and rest students along with salaried persons. The usage pattern of technology platform enabled 'tourist destination search', using online or smartphone apps has found acceptance across the varied occupations. Hence, it is evident that people from all walks of life are able to connect, fulfil their information search, narrow down choices, and complete the purchase for a tourist destination of their choice. This is for single individual or for their families, or larger group of people across the occupation segment, as in each occupation the purpose of purchase behaviour differs by scale and needs.

**b) Contextual questions: Quantitative data analysis [n=500 respondents]**

**1.Preference of booking method and payments:**



**Findings:**

The representation of the sample shows 90% of them booking airlines, train, bus tickets online, with 73% booking accommodation online, 7% using for local transportation, 7% for entertainment and 13% for food. The offline representation of the sample size, shows that 10% are using physical methods for airline, train tickets, with 27% booking accommodation physically, 93% using local transportation, 93% using offline for

booking entertainment, and 87% using offline for food purchase and payments.

The use of technology to purchase online has increased for airline, trains, bus ticket bookings along with accommodation as preference amongst the consumers surveyed. The convenience factor of reducing the visits to the store, and ability to search, browse, select and complete the transaction for a destination is a major trend amongst the

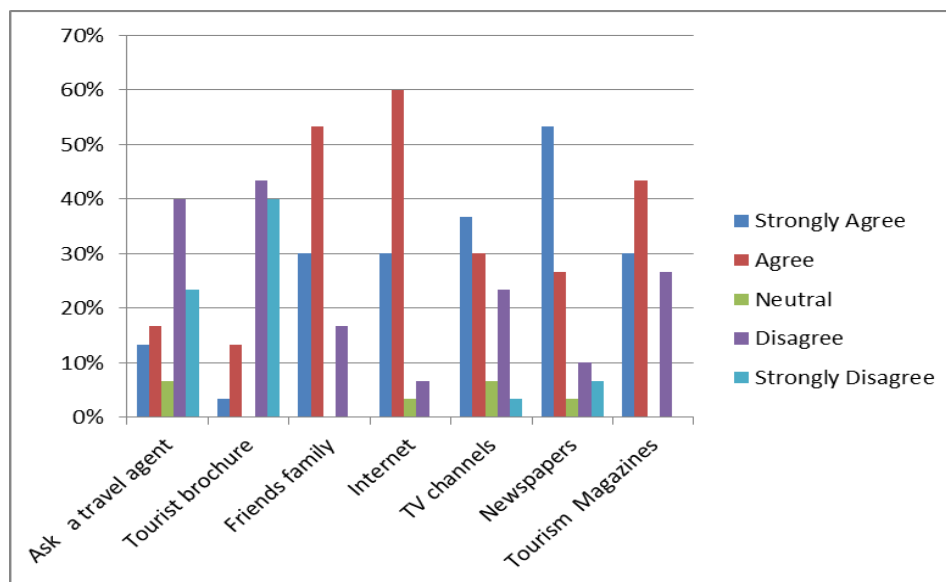
consumers. The associated tours and travels, accommodation choices related to the destination has also witnessed a high jump in terms of technology enabled purchase behaviour amongst the consumers. The technology as an enabler for local transportation, entertainment has not found many representations as the consumers tend to pay it physically rather than online. The food ordering segment has been however, witnessing a steady growth as consumers are using options online (website, apps) to purchase for home delivery or book a table in a restaurant. Implications of this trend amongst the consumers, show that habits are formed as technology is able to provide support of all physical processes for purchasing items that are far away (distance), services yet to be consumed (for an occasion). IT based usage is not seen in immediate consumption activities, like daily local transportation or it is more of a value seeking behaviour in home delivery of restaurant food, groceries where consumer does not have to waste time in long queues. Most of the online purchases are high valued and requires considerable amount of time for

decision making, reading online reviews for decision making to narrow choices, to avail the best ones which fits the expectation set criteria.

The offline purchase behaviour for different types of items have evolved also with airlines, train tickets, buses in long distance journey have used website, apps to enable the users to avail their service at their convenience. This was predominantly a physical booking process a decade back. The accommodation industry also had outlets to book stays (short and long) in multiple cities, that have reduced drastically. For local transportation and entertainment consumers are still using physical mode of purchase as the immediacy of consuming the factor is predominant. Hence the consumer shows lesser plan to execution time (desire to consumption) which the online booking system seems to offer. It is a low value purchase and a daily event, and little consideration is given in terms of time spent for entertainment, food and local transportation.

**2.Source of Information**

Sources of information	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Ask a travel agent	13%	17%	7%	40%	23%
Tourist brochure	3%	13%	0%	43%	40%
Friends family	30%	53%	0%	17%	0%
Internet	30%	60%	3%	7%	0%
TV channels	37%	30%	7%	23%	3%
Newspapers	53%	27%	3%	10%	7%
Tourism Magazines	30%	43%	0%	27%	0%



**Findings:**

On asking to consumer about their attitude towards source of information about their planning tours and travels, on they ask travel agent – they are strongly agreed (13%), agreed (17%) disagree (40%),strongly disagreed (23%) and was neutral (7%). For obtaining information from tourist brochures, the consumers in the sample size exhibited the following – strongly agreed (3%), agreed (13%), neutral (0%), disagreed (43%) and strongly disagreed (43%). The respondents relate to friends and families to find tourism information that is

represented by the responses with (30%) strongly agree, (53%) agree, no responses in neutral, (17%) disagree, and no responses in strongly disagree category. In internet as a medium for destination tourism, (30%) strongly agreed, (60%) agreed, (3%) remained neutral, (7%) disagreed, and none was strongly disagreed. Television channels as a source of information shows (37%) people strongly agreed, (30%) agreed, with (7%) staying neutral, (23%) disagreed and (3%) strongly disagreed. The use of newspapers for seeking destination tourism information shows (53%) people strongly

agreed to it, (27%) agreed, (3%) being neutral, (10%) disagreed and (7%) strongly disagreed. The use of tourism magazine as a source of information is done by (30%) people strongly agreed, (43%) agreed, no neutral representation, (27%) people disagreed, and none was strongly disagreed participants.

#### **Discussion:**

The results show a tendency of reduced involvement of the travel agents in providing information, preparing tour itinerary for customisation as per customer requirements. Though the trends show positive responses, the people not agreeing to the use of travel agents show a trend in the consumer behaviour. This shows the online travel portals providing enough information about the destination (place, price, product offerings of tour package) which has minimised their physical role in destination tourism buying process. The tourism brochures influencing the consumer's decision making choices helping to narrow down is not finding enough responses either. This trend has few positive supporters as most of the responses pattern show disagreement which proves that online access of the tourism destination sites have eclipsed the traditional method. Hence the practice of providing travel and tourism brochures to provide information to prospective leads, influence their purchase decision through leaflets is fading away. The presence of online (portal, apps) has made information freely available, (24X365) which has expedited the customer decision making process and shortened buying process cycle.

The use of friends and families who are influencers for the consumer purchase decision making process is only related to information provider and not a seller. The word of mouth helps the consumers to find gaps in tourism service who have already experienced in the past, that has strong impact on the consumer decision making before choosing a tour package, narrow a destination.

The use of internet has received a strong positive support from the respondent group that shows the Indian market trend of tourism and destination marketing process to be available online. The evidence of technology which has been penetration in aiding the traditional tourism business as an enabler of

functions and services (from internet search, showcase products, make payments, customise) have transformed end to end process.

The use of television as the source of tourism destination information shows responses to be positive as people are readily perceiving the product (destination as a product), and few negative responses show that the media has still got its power to influence the consumers.

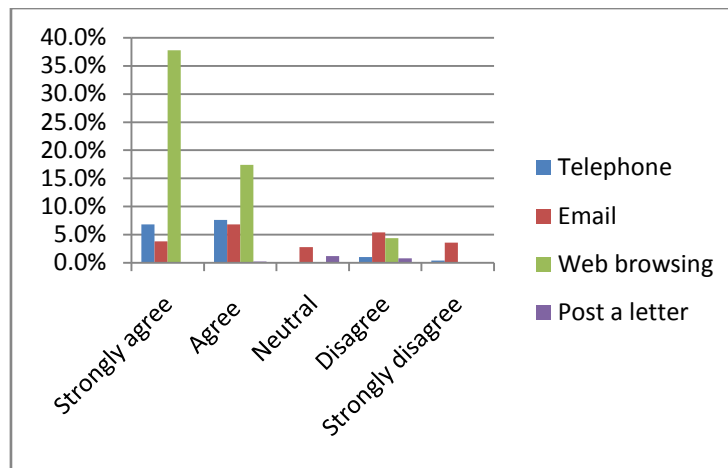
The newspapers used in the survey shows that the consumers are also using newspapers in print media to obtain the latest offers as per season and festivals to meet their needs. Though it serves only as a point for providing information, the visibility is limited to a wider area and is limited to 24 hours exposure to address the needs of consumer.

The tourism magazine are a niche category where its subscription is done by travel enthusiasts. Though limited in its market penetration it does have strong following as it provides in-depth information which the consumers get to enhance their knowledge.

The above discussion clearly shows how the tourism market in India is embracing technology to aid the process of information gathering, product positioning, pricing, and involving consumers. It is initiating the consumers to adopt technology enabled processes and activities that is closely linked to the technology devices used in personal and business environment. As a result, adapting IT enabled purchase process has transformed the consumer behaviour elements significantly. This is a major shift in how the physical activities are being mapped by technology that offers real time access, user convenience; that is spreading the wide spread acceptance of this model. Though traditional tourism model is still in existence, but the pure online players (only through internet), physical outlet (traditional tourism players) and omni channel (both online and offline presence) is being found to change the consumers buying habits and perceptions. The use of technology has increased due to advent of technology enabled devices like PC, laptop, smartphone by consumers and also the tourism companies adopting (websites, portals, smartphone apps) to reach out and tap the market.

### **3. Types of communication method you use for collecting information**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Telephone	6.8%	7.6%	0.0%	1.0%	0.4%
Email	3.8%	6.8%	2.8%	5.4%	3.6%
Web browsing	37.8%	17.4%	0.0%	4.4%	0.0%
Post a letter	0.0%	0.2%	1.2%	0.8%	0.0%



**Findings:**

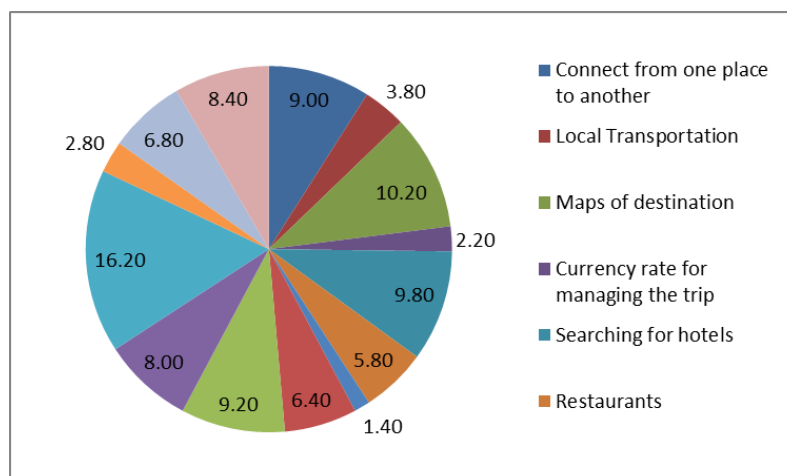
The responses show that 6.8% strongly agreed, 7.6% agreed, 1% disagreed, and 0.4 strongly disagreeing for using telephone for communication for collection of information. The variable email shows 3.8% strongly agreed, 6.8% agreed, 2.8% neutral, 5.4% disagreed, 3.6% strongly disagreed. In web browsing as a communication method for tourism, 37.8% strongly agreed, 17.4% agreed, 0 neutral, 4.4%disagreed, and 0 strongly disagreed. For using posting a letter only 0.2% agreed, 1.2% remained neutral and 0.8 were disagreed.

The predominance of the use of web browsing is evident in this responses, which shows the current practices for buying and selling the tourism as a product and a service has web enabled website to support all communication processes. It is a digital platform that is accessible by users using computers and internet where webpages containing the text, video, audio, is displayed for the online users. It has gained as a primary support for business where the exchange process of buyers and sellers is taking place with facilitation of immediacy of transaction helping to aid consumer preference. The email, telephone scores low as they are supplementary medium to aid or complete a business communication. The richness of the technology which uses audio, video and text helps the online user to seek the destination information readily that no other platform is able to provide. The emergence of web based tourism websites form the corporate identity and also has transactional capabilities which enables the tourists to complete a transaction by paying online. The technology inclusiveness in the tourism sector has become more penetrative as it is extending company identity online to any

customer anywhere in the world and also providing associated services. Therefore the services are value add to the consumer decision making process, as the destinations showcased in tourism website that the users or audience is readily accepting in the evolved format in tourism. The adoption web based communication is a consumer behaviour where both buyers (retail and corporate) are using technology based gadgets to access web pages of tourism companies.

**4. Types of information you search on the website**

Variables	Number of responses in %
Connect from one place to another	9.00
Local Transportation	3.80
Maps of destination	10.20
Currency rate for managing the trip	2.20
Searching for hotels	9.80
Restaurants	5.80
Travel Tips	1.40
Latest tourism Programme	6.40
Timetables	9.20
Costs	8.00
Facilities available in the destination	16.20
Home stays	2.80
Information Centre	6.80
Popular Festivals	8.40



**Findings:**

The responses show that 16.2% respondents stated facilities available in destination as the most important criteria for destination selection, followed by maps to locate destination by 10.20%, searching for hotels at 9.80%, timetables by 9.20%, connectivity from one place to other at 8.40%, festivals associated by 8%, costs issue by 6.80%. The lesser rated factors are local transportation at 6.4%, currency at 5.80%, restaurants by 3.80%, travel tips 1.40%, homestays 2.80%, travel information centre by 3.80%.

**Discussion:**

The responses show that users have shown some predominant search patterns that show once the destination is fixed then the customers seek facilities available in that destination. They also seek maps their next requirement to locate, hotels, time tables that allows them to plan the destination route with available transport. The higher ratings is also for the festivals related to culture factor, latest tourism program, restaurants which forms the second line of information requirements for the online users in tourism site. The above responses with the maximum frequencies for each variable is therefore depicting a trend as to how the users of tourism websites navigate, their primary needs for deciding on the destination of their choice and the need to consider other

associated factors that comes secondary in nature once first line of requirements have been met. The higher ranking frequencies therefore forms 'a user based search criteria' that most of the consumers follow while they search for a destination of their choice in a tourism website. The companies perspective it is important as the placement of the information in webpage of the tourism website is important as the search pattern reveals the key areas the users are likely to click first to make up their decision about the destination finally based on the availability of information.

**Hypothesis testing:**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference of internet technology on purchase behaviour of the destination tourist

**Data Reliability Test**

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.851	500

In the present study referred to above table, total 500 tourists were selected and the result comes 0.84 ( $\alpha > 0.6$ ), which confirms the internal consistency and reliability of the data.

**ANOVA (Analysis of variance)**

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between People		2993.079	499	5.998		
Within People	Between Items	2955.169	53	55.758	62.284	.000
	Residual	23675.905	26447	.895		
	Total	26631.074	26500	1.005		
Total		29624.153	26999	1.097		
Grand Mean = 2.18						

**5. Discussion**

The F test value (62.284, p 0.00<0.05), indicates the proposition of the variation in the dependent variables explained by a particular independent variables or factor. It indicates that there is a difference exists between the online and offline booking mode. This variation remains across the mean of all the age group and gender irrespective of their income pattern. Therefore there is a difference in the purchase

behavior pattern across individual and the phenomenon is completely independent across all age group. Hence, the null hypothesis cannot be accepted, there is a significant difference of internet technology on purchase behaviour of the destination tourist and they now prefer to collect on line information for all variables related to their tour and travel plan.

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