

## An Analysis of Travel Experience Satisfaction : A Comparison between Domestic and International Tourists

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**Abstract:** Due to the importance of travel experience concept this paper, aims to identify some dimensions of travel experience and measure the satisfaction of international as well as domestic tourists regarding these dimensions. For this purpose, a field survey has been undertaken in Delhi as India's capital from 600 participants with an equal number of international and domestic tourists. A total of 467 usable samples were collected in a convenience sampling from the New Delhi railway station. Using a structured questionnaire, data relating to the demographics and satisfaction of the tourists was collected. Following the analysis of tourists' satisfaction across nationality, an assessment was made about the satisfaction of the visitors of this destination. The mean score of visitors' attitude regarding their experience was analyzed. With the help of Exploratory Factor Analysis, six independent sets of underlying factors viz. People & Staff, Accessibility, Travel Environment, Entertainment, Infrastructure Facilities, Historic Attractions associated with travel experience were determined for further analysis. Independent sample t-test was conducted to research the effect of the nationality of the respondents on satisfaction towards travel experience. Research findings demonstrated that historic attractions, infrastructure facilities, and people & staff were the most satisfied dimensions among international visitors.

**Key Words:** Travel Experience, Tourists' Satisfaction, Dimensions of Travel Experience, International & Domestic Tourists, Exploratory Factor Analysis.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism destinations today are facing high competitions in attracting more tourists and gaining a bigger share of the tourist market. Likewise, the tourism industry must enhance their travel experience and create diverse experiences to attract more visitors in order to take advantages of the competitive market. A review of the literature on travel experience demonstrated that destination managers must, provide visitors with a wide range of choices of things to see at different destinations and thereby ensure that the visitors stay in the travel destination for a longer time. Destination managers should also make efforts to retain the interest of the customers satisfied with travel experience within the destination, as they can help the destination to attract new visitors by gaining a high level of WOM recommendation. This study is conducted in order to identify different dimensions of travel experience, to examine tourists' satisfaction of these dimensions and to assess differences between international as well as domestic tourists toward satisfaction of travel experience dimensions.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is applied to identify determinants of travel experience and satisfaction of visitors towards these determinants are examined. Domestic and international visitors may have different attitudes toward any travel experience. In this study, the goal was to reveal

the effects of the nationality of tourists visiting New Delhi and their satisfaction towards travel experience.

Independent sample t-test was applied to research this effect on satisfaction towards travel experience in Delhi. In this paper, tourists' attribute regarding the travel experience is measured and the mean score of each item is actually given. Within the field research, the application of the survey form used as the data collection process is mentioned, and in the findings section the data obtained with the survey method is evaluated. Finally, concrete suggestions based on findings are formed.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### Travel Experience

Travel experience, in general, is a complex concept and has received much attention in the tourism and travel literature (Murray *et al.* 2010, Jurowski, 2009). The success of the tourism industry is dependent on delivering unique and complete travel experience. It is recognized that the success of tourism relies on building destination loyalty through the creation of the travel experience satisfaction (Donnelly, 2009). Travel experience satisfaction can be considered as a driving force to the loyalty. Tourist experiences are a combination of all tourists activities when they arrive at the

destination. The elements of tourists experiences are destination attractions, tourism services, shopping, accommodations, food, friendliness, roads, transports, infrastructure, safety, and environment. Tourists experience the natural beauty, culture, tradition, safety and security of the environment, atmosphere, general infrastructure and other services and facilities which are provided at the destination. The tourist destination is formed in a way to develop their visitors experience by measuring tourist satisfaction regarding these experience element and formulate a suitable strategy to improve tourist experience satisfaction (Chowdhary, 2013). According to Australia's National Landscapes Program (2012), The term visitors experience refers to the “emotions and feelings generated by the people met, places visited, activities participated in and memories created by travel, through watching, tasting, smelling, touching, listening and being part of a culture or lifestyle that is distinctly different from everyday life and that reaches an individual's deep needs and desires”.

Since visitors seek memorable experiences and tourism industries must enhance and improve their services in order to meet the expectation of their visitors. The recognition of the nature of tourism experiences is essential for successful improvement (Jurowski, 2009). Travel experience plays a vital role in developing tourist destination. Destinations offer a mixture of products and services. Using these assets, travelers create their own experiences. Therefore, Providing a pleasant and distinctive tourist experience is essential for destinations' long-term development (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2014, pp.137-154). To sum up, Review of related literature revealed that quality of travel experience leads to customer satisfaction.

### Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has become a major area of interest to hospitality and tourism studies for it has a high contribution to building destination loyalty. The satisfaction has been playing an important role in planning tourism products, facilities and services. Tourist satisfaction is important for the development and success of tourism destination as it influences the selection of the destinations, the utilization of the products and services, and the decision to revisit (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000, pp.260-269).

Formulating suitable tourist experience strategy depends on measuring tourist satisfaction regarding travel experience elements (Chowdhary, 2013). Holjevac *et al.* (2009) claimed that “providing and maintaining customer satisfaction is one of the biggest contemporary challenges of management in service industries”. In the tourism and hospitality context, there have been several studies that measure elements of travel experience that tourists may find important regarding satisfaction. Chi & Qu (2008) proposed seven realms of tourism activities viz. accommodation, dining, shopping, attractions, activities & events, environment, and accessibility as determinants of satisfaction.

Jurowski (2009) analyzed “Four Realms of Tourism Experiences” viz. entertainment, education, escapism and esthetics. Corte *et al.* (2015) identified fourteen indicators that contribute defining the level of satisfaction achieved by the tourist such as accessibility, Accommodation, Restaurants' Quality, Entertainment, Price & Value, Transportation, Safety & Security, Infrastructures, Friendliness & Hospitality, Cultural Events, Cleanliness, Activities.

The importance of the study of tourist satisfaction relies heavily on the fact that tourists' memorable experiences of service, facilities, products, and other elements of tourism destinations can produce customer intention to revisit as well as recommend the destination to others. In fact, satisfaction with travel experiences contributes to the destination loyalty (Corte *et al.*, 2015)

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Objectives of the study:

The study aimed to identify various dimensions of travel experience in India in order to analyze the satisfaction of domestic as well as international visitors toward identified dimensions. Along with that, the study compares the satisfaction of Domestic and International tourists with respect to various dimensions of travel experience.

### 3.2 Sampling Design:

The population of this study is all the visitors who were at New Delhi railway station during a 2-week survey period. Identification of sample in case of tourism is a difficult task for the researcher. In practical purpose, it has been seen that tourists are unwilling to answer at tourist destination because of the fact that either they have not completed their experience or they are not interested to waste their time of filling in the questionnaire at the time of vacation. Therefore, it has been decided to collect data from respondents at New Delhi railway station by employing convenient sampling technique while collecting data from the tourists in the present research. 300 international tourists from International Tourist Bureaus (ITB) located at New Delhi railway station and 300 domestic tourists from the same railway station, are selected. A total of 467 usable samples were collected and processed for further analysis.

### 3.3 Methods of Data Collection

For the purpose of data collection, a structured questionnaire was designed. The pilot study was undertaken to pretest and validate the research instrument. This study was also intended to identify the main factors of travel experience by conducting exploratory factor analysis, with 200 respondents through a structured questionnaire.

After pretesting the research instrument, the survey of identified samples was carried out and the data for the research was collected by self-administering questionnaire. The proposed method of conducting data analysis in the present study was independent sample t-tests to assess differences between international as well as domestic

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visitors toward satisfaction of travel experience dimensions. The mean score of each variable were computed in order to gauge the most satisfying travel experience among visitors.

**3.4 Research Tools**

In order to identify various dimensions of travel experience, this study utilizes travel experience construct. The indicator variables related to travel experience construct were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis to determine the underlying factors. 26 scale items were used to measure travel experience in India. In order to identify the

dimensions of travel experience all 26 items were subjected to a factor analysis.

Before proceeding with the factor analysis the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was performed. As the following Table ‘KMO and Bartlett’s Test’ showed the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) overall value was 0.725, Bartlett Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p < 0.000$ ) with a Chi Square value of 4019.398 with 105 degrees of freedom, indicating that data were suitable for factor analysis (Refer Table 1).

**Table 3.4.1:** Result of KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy & Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity for Travel Experience

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>	
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>	0.650
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	3597.365
	91
	0.000

Source: Author

The Principal Component Extraction method along with Varimax rotation was performed to identify the underlying dimensions of travel experience and factor loading of 0.30 or above on the items was taken into consideration. Exploratory factor analysis considered all the 26 items of travel experience satisfaction. The Exploratory factor analysis identified six components with an Eigen value

greater than 1, which together explained over 67 percent of the variance indicated a good fit and hence it was assumed that the model represents the data. Table 2 below provides the details of each factor along with items contributing it to the component loadings for each item. The 14 out of 26 items were identified for travel experience dimensions which have been grouped into six factors.

**Table 3.4.2:** Underlying Dimensions of Travel Experience Satisfaction

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Eigen Value</b>	<b>Variance Explained</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Factor Loadings</b>	<b>Communalities</b>
<b>F1 People &amp; Staff</b>	<b>3.806</b>	<b>27.183</b>	<b>0.900</b>		
Quality of staff				0.962	0.955
Friendliness of staff				0.961	0.952
Friendliness of local people				0.745	0.716
<b>F2 Accessibility</b>	<b>1.863</b>	<b>13.310</b>	<b>0.702</b>		
Air Connectivity				0.700	0.575
Availability of tourist information center				0.838	0.751
Availability of travel agent				0.770	0.664
<b>F3 Travel Environment</b>	<b>1.630</b>	<b>11.641</b>	<b>0.722</b>		
Peaceful and restful atmosphere				0.878	0.785
Safety and security				0.830	0.774
<b>F4 Entertainment</b>	<b>1.369</b>	<b>9.775</b>	<b>0.736</b>		
Recreational Facilities				0.863	0.795
Spa / massage /healing				0.880	0.803
<b>F5 Infrastructure Facilities</b>	<b>1.190</b>	<b>8.499</b>	<b>0.719</b>		
Accommodation Facilities				0.864	0.817
Restaurant / Cuisine Facilities				0.854	0.807
<b>F6 Historic Attractions</b>	<b>1.165</b>	<b>8.323</b>	<b>0.745</b>		
Variety of historic/cultural sites				0.914	0.842
Museums and art galleries				0.812	0.785
<b>Total Variance Explained</b>			67.668		

Source: Author

Exploratory Factor Analysis determined following six independent set of underlying factors related to travel experience were extracted and described for further analysis;

#### **People & Staff**

Factor analysis revealed that ‘People & Staff’ is the most important aspect of travel experience for international and domestic tourists visiting different destinations in India. This factor had the greater significance among all items of travel experience, which explained 27.183 of the total variance (see Table 2). At the same time, this factor was also found extremely reliable with Cronbach’s Alpha value 0.900.

#### **Accessibility**

Accessibility explained 13.310 percentage of the total variance. As far as reliability of this factor is concerned, with Cronbach’s Alpha value 0.702 which was found to be reliable (Table 2).

#### **Travel Environment**

Factors related to safety and cleanliness of destination have been named ‘Travel Environment’. It explained 11.641 percentage of the total variance. As far as reliability of this factor is concerned, with Cronbach’s Alpha value 0.722 Which was found to be reliable (Table 2).

#### **Entertainment**

Entertainment factor explained 9.775 percentage of the total variance and with Cronbach’s Alpha value 0.736 was found to be reliable (Table 2).

#### **Infrastructure Facilities**

Infrastructure Facility dimension explained 8.499 percentage of the total variance and was found reliable with Cronbach’s Alpha value 0.719 (See Table 2).

#### **Historic Attractions**

Historic Attractions dimension of travel experience explained 8.323 percentage of the total variance and was found to be reliable with Cronbach’s Alpha value 0.745 (See Table 2).

As a result of the EFA, travel experience constructs grouped in six factors and a few items were deleted. This result helped to finalize the questionnaire and to plan the process of data collection. The revised survey questionnaire has been divided into the following two sections:

**Section I:** Consisted of questions designed to gather demographic information of the visitors, focused on the characteristics of the visitors themselves.

**Section II:** the second section of the questionnaire contains questions that measured visitors’ satisfaction of various dimensions of travel experience and were rated on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree (SD) and 5 = strongly agree (SA).

### **3.5 Research Hypotheses**

In order to examine international and domestic tourists’ satisfaction with underlying dimensions of travel experience the following hypotheses were proposed:

H01. There is no significant difference in satisfaction of tourists of **People & Staff** across the nationality.

H02. There is no significant difference in satisfaction of tourists of **Accessibility** across the nationality.

H03. There is no significant difference in satisfaction of tourists of **Travel Environment** across the nationality.

H04. There is no significant difference in satisfaction of tourists of **Entertainment** across the nationality.

H05. There is no significant difference in satisfaction of tourists of **Infrastructure Facilities** across the nationality.

H06. There is no significant difference in satisfaction of tourists of **Historic Attractions** across the nationality.

### **3.6 Limitation & Scope of the Study**

In the current study, with the aim of measuring visitors’ satisfaction towards dimensions of travel experience in India as a tourist destination, a sample of 467 international as well as domestic tourists were collected in a convenience sampling technique from New Delhi railway station. The population of this study was limited to visitors who were at New Delhi railway station. Therefore, the results of the study may not be generalized beyond this population. As India is a large country and geographically it is challenging to travel. Frequent travel to the places at different states increases time and expenditure. Hence, the study locations were decided to restrict into the New Delhi railway station. The study was conducted in the summer, therefore findings were limited to summer visitors. Tourists who travel in different seasons may form different opinions of a destination. Seasonality limits the generalizability of tourism research findings.

## **4. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS**

A total of 467 questionnaires were returned, about 78% of the targeted sample size. Over 58% of the respondents were male. The majority of the respondents were international tourists (51.40%) and aged between 20-30 (54.40%). Over (46%) of the respondents were single followed by over (21%) were young Couple with a graduate level over (45%) followed by P.G & above level (35%). Approximately 29% of the respondents’ monthly household income ranged from 30,000 to 45,000, while nearly 28% of them earned 45000 or more each month. The majority of visitors’ were the student (31.90%) followed by Pvt. Employee (26.30%).

**Table 4.1:** Mean Score of Underlying Dimensions of Travel Experience

S.No	Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>F1</b>	<b>People &amp; Staff</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>3.9379</b>	<b>.80277</b>
F1.1	Quality of staff	467	3.9615	.85581
F1.2	Friendliness of staff	467	3.9486	.87498
F1.3	Friendliness of local people	467	3.9036	.90618
<b>F2</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>3.4254</b>	<b>.80048</b>
F2. 1	Air Connectivity	467	3.5139	1.02821
F2. 2	Availability of tourist information center	467	3.2570	1.07164
F2. 3	Availability of travel agent	467	3.5054	.92965
<b>F3</b>	<b>Travel Environment</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>3.2966</b>	<b>.97685</b>
F3.1	Peaceful and restful atmosphere	467	3.0749	1.13127
F3.2	Safety and security	467	3.5182	1.07707
<b>F4</b>	<b>Entertainment</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>3.3319</b>	<b>.75844</b>
F4.1	Recreational Facilities	467	3.4069	.76778
F4.2	Spa / massage /healing	467	3.2570	.93014
<b>F5</b>	<b>Infrastructure Facilities</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>4.0396</b>	<b>.78957</b>
F5.1	Accommodation Facilities	467	3.9529	.98809
F5.2	Restaurant / Cuisine Facilities	467	4.1263	.78825
<b>F6</b>	<b>Historic Attractions</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>4.0493</b>	<b>.66143</b>
F6.1	Variety of historic/cultural sites	467	4.2612	.71184
F6.2	Museums and art galleries	467	3.8373	.76908

Source:Author

Satisfaction of visitors of various dimensions of travel experience demonstrated in the table3.Mean score of each item was given in order to explore most satisfied dimensions of travel experience. Among the six underlying factors of travel experience, it was found that historic attraction and infrastructure facilities had the highest mean and hence the most satisfied dimensions of travel experience among visitors. It is followed by people & staff factor. The least satisfied factor among tourists was activity & event dimension of travel experience (Refer Table 4.1).

**Dimensions of Travel Experience Satisfaction Differences Across Domestic and International Tourists**

The hypotheses of this study seek whether there is any significant difference in satisfaction of domestic and international tourists toward the six dimensions of travel experience satisfaction viz. **People & Staff, Accessibility, Travel Environment, Entertainment, Infrastructure Facilities, Historic Attractions.**To test these hypotheses, independent sample t-test has been conducted.

**Table 4.2:** Results of Independent sample t-test

Dimensions of Travel Experience	Visitors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	F- value	Sig. value
People & Staff	International	240	4.0181	0.83794	465	2.228	0.026 <sup>*</sup>
	Domestic	227	3.8532	0.75647			
Accessibility	International	240	3.4056	0.82294	465	-0.551	0.582
	Domestic	227	3.4464	0.77728			
Travel Environment	International	240	3.4188	1.05332	457.16	2.814	0.005 <sup>**</sup>
	Domestic	227	3.1674	0.87274			
Entertainment	International	240	3.4271	0.74169	465	2.809	0.005 <sup>**</sup>
	Domestic	227	3.2313	0.76456			
Infrastructure Facilities	International	240	4.0958	.74681	465	1.585	0.114
	Domestic	227	3.9802	.82992			
Historic Attractions	International	240	4.1208	.63541	465	2.417	0.016 <sup>*</sup>
	Domestic	227	3.9736	.68110			

\* Significant at 0.05 level  
 \*\* Significant at 0.01 level

Source: Author



Table 4.2 demonstrated that there is no significant difference between international and domestic tourists with regard to accessibility ( $p = .582$ ) and infrastructure facilities ( $p = .114$ ) as dimensions of travel experience since  $p$  value is greater than 0.05. Hence it is concluded that null hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 level of significance with regard to these dimensions of travel experience. Based on mean scores, domestic tourists were more satisfied with accessibility ( $M = 3.44$ ,  $S.D = .77$ ), where international were more satisfied with infrastructure facilities ( $M = 4.09$ ,  $S.D = .74$ ), but not significant at 5 percent level.

Table 4.2 also, revealed that  $p$  value is less than 0.01 for travel environment ( $p = .005$ ) and entertainment ( $p = .005$ ). Since  $P$  value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected at the 1 percent level of significance with regard to travel environment and entertainment as dimensions of travel experience satisfaction. Hence, there is a significant difference between international and domestic visitors with regard to their perception of travel environment and entertainment. Based on mean score, international visitors were more satisfied with travel environment ( $M = 3.41$ ,  $S.D = 1.05$ ) and entertainment ( $M = 3.42$ ,  $S.D = .74$ ).

Table 4.2 also, proved that  $p$  value is less than 0.05 for people & staff ( $p = .026$ ) and historic attractions ( $p = .016$ ). Since  $P$  value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at the 5 percent level of significance with regard to people & staff and historic attractions dimensions of travel experience. Hence, there is a significant difference between international and domestic visitors with regard to their satisfaction of people and staff and historic attractions. Based on mean score, international visitors were more satisfied with people & staff ( $M = 4.01$ ,  $S.D = .83$ ) and historic attractions ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $S.D = .63$ ).

## CONCLUSION

The term travel experience is a complex concept that aims to provide a memorable experience for customers and it is considered to be the major issue from the tourism perspective. A review of the literature on travel experience reveals that destination management must provide visitors with a wide range of choices of things to see and do in destination thereby help in inviting more tourists and enhancing the popularity of the spot. Travel experiences are a combination of all tourist activities offered at tourism destination like destination attractions, tourism services, shopping, accommodations, food, friendliness, roads, transports, infrastructure, safety, and environment.

This research paper was identified six underlying factors for travel experience construct viz. People & Staff, Accessibility, Travel Environment, Entertainment, Infrastructure Facilities, Historic Attractions. This result can help in understanding the factors contributing to tourist satisfaction in order to carefully deliver appropriate facilities and services and that accommodate the tourists' needs and wants.

The results of the descriptive analysis in order to gauge the most satisfied travel experience dimension among visitors demonstrated that historic attractions, infrastructure facilities and people & staff were the most satisfied dimensions of travel experience among international visitors. Travel environment has emerged as the least satisfied factor among domestic tourists and it has been found to be a serious concern.

Findings from the comparison of the means of each dimension of travel experience across domestic and international tourists implies different levels of satisfaction of domestic and international visitors of four dimensions of travel experience viz. people & staff, travel environment, entertainment and historic attraction.

From travel experience analysis, it is observed that historic attractions, friendliness of the staff and local people are the biggest assets for India and the visitors usually are much focused on these activities. There have been few areas which do need attention, like accessibility, entertainment and environment etc.

More research is needed to validate the role that travel experiences play in visitor satisfaction and to enhance the tourism products and services. It is clear that the determination of the dimensions of travel experience is in its nascent stage and it can be effective to guide planners and destination marketer in creating conditions for these experiences to happen constantly and to a very high quality. Destination managers should concentrate on maintaining historic attractions and developing infrastructure facilities in and around Delhi in order to fetch more attraction.

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