

Exploring the Determinants of Travel Destination Selection: A Meta-Analysis of Tourist Decision-Making Factors

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Received: 22 Dec 2024

Revised: 30 Jan 2025

Accepted: 18 Feb 2025

The idea of tourism invokes a feeling of intrigue among mankind, instilling a sense of ease. The process of selecting a travel destination is both exciting and challenging, necessitating a significant investment of time. Typically, individuals consider a multitude of factors before ultimately deciding on their preferred destination. Numerous research studies have been conducted on the topic of tourism, which have identified several crucial elements that impact the decision-making process in selecting a travel destination. The present review research strictly adhered to the guidelines outlined in the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review (PRISMA), and thoroughly examined 38 relevant articles from various reputable journals, including Proquest, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar. The findings of this analysis demonstrated that numerous variables, such as attitude, perceived behavioural control, destination image, and behavioural intention, profoundly influence the behaviour of travellers when making decisions about which destination to visit.

Keywords: Travel destination, Destination image, Attitude, Perceived behavioural control, PRISMA.

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, the presence of humanity has been increasingly mechanized. In order to meet their daily needs, individuals lead a fast-paced existence, resulting in a rather frantic way of life. As a method of unwinding and escaping from this frenzied atmosphere, individuals temporarily relocate to another location, commonly known as tourism. The motivations behind human tourism activities are diverse and all converge in the pursuit of relaxation. Hence, tourism administrators create various types of tourism based on the needs of individuals. The endeavors of tourism administrators not only fulfil the requirements of individuals but also enhance the economies of nations. The tourism sector plays a significant role in bolstering the economies of numerous countries across the globe (Sofronov, 2018). With the progress of ICT, individuals are now well-informed about numerous tourism sites and activities, thus it is imperative to comprehend the behavior of tourists when selecting their travel destination (Thai, 2017). It relies on a multitude of factors, such as the economic state of the location, the allure of the location, and the tourists' experiences (Cruz-Ruiz, 2022) and the tourists visit the place frequently (Moon, 2018). Selecting a travel destination is a complex process for travellers (Ni, 2018). Each destination possesses its own unique traits that captivate visitors, and individuals take into account various factors when choosing a travel destination (Jariyachamsit, 2020).

The major factor in deciding on a travel destination is the destination image (San Martín, 2008), and the attributes of the location also influence people's decision to visit (Chen C.-F. &, 2007). The promotional activities related to a particular place have a significant impact on the number of visitors who choose to visit (Stepchenkova S. a., 2006). All tourism sites have common and unique attributes, and the uniqueness of a destination plays a major role in its selection (Stepchenkova, 2008). While selecting a travel destination, people consider Natural and man-made attractions (Phau, 2010) and those attraction are classified as cognitive and affective images (Chen C.-C. L.-H.-

H., 2016) (Stylos, 2016). In terms of gender, female travellers tend to place greater importance on natural attractions compared to their male counterparts (Wang, 2018).

All of the aforementioned factors that influence a person's decision to visit a particular travel destination can be classified into categories such as attitude, perceived behavioural control and destination image. These components play a significant role in shaping a person's intention to visit a particular place, and ultimately influence their behaviour accordingly

METHODOLOGY

The researcher adhered to the guidelines of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review (PRISMA) and conducted a thorough collection of reviews from various databases including ResearchGate, Google Scholar, and Proquest. This task was accomplished by utilizing specific search terms such as 'travel destination decision', 'selection of travel destinations', and 'factors influencing in selecting the travel destination' (Siddaway, 2018) during the months of January and February 2024.

Information extracted from the previous researches included the title, abstract, name of the author, name of the journal, year of publication, page number, issue number, research objectives, and findings related to the travel destination decision. Following the screening process, the search results yielded 758 articles, out of which only 102 articles were considered after screening the titles. Finally, from the 102 articles, only 38 articles were deemed suitable and highly relevant for this study and therefore included in the final analysis.

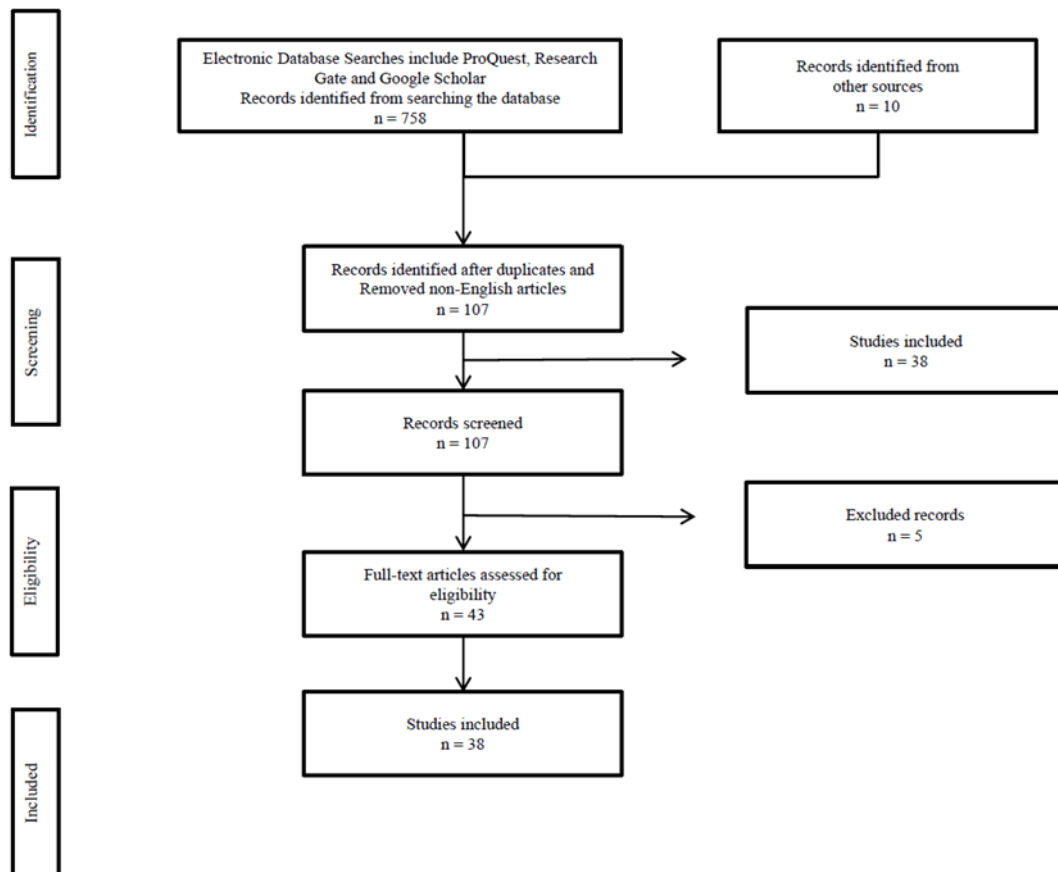


Figure 1: PRISMA Model for Data Collection

RESULTS

Attitude

The ability of an individual to evaluate and assess various matters and concerns is commonly known as attitude, as stated by Yasong (2006). Specifically, when discussing one's inclination or tendency towards certain behaviour, it is essential to take into account their overall attitude towards the matter at hand. The positive or negative

judgment, perception, or evaluation of an individual towards specific behaviour is essentially their attitude towards it, which can either motivate or discourage them from engaging in it (Ajzen, 2001). Importantly, there are three crucial components that constitute a tourist's attitude, namely cognitive, affective, and behavioural elements, which collectively shape their perception and evaluation of various activities and influence their behavioural responses to them (Lee, 2009). This is particularly evident in the context of tourist destination selection, as emphasized by Park (2017). Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the attitude of college students can have a significant impact on their choices of travel destinations (Babu, 2021), while social media has been found to play a pivotal role in shaping the attitude of millennial tourists towards their holiday destinations (Kasim, 2019). Additionally, the attitude of tourists towards the image of a destination may vary depending on their gender (Ceylan, 2021).

Perceived Behavioural Control

Perceived behavioural control, as explained by Perugini (2001), relates to an individual's capacity to exert control over external factors such as time and money while engaging in behaviour. This concept is further supported by Bin-Nashwan (2021), who asserts that an individual's belief in their competence and proficiency in performing activities despite environmental obstacles is a crucial aspect of perceived behavioural control. The unprecedented and prolonged global pandemic has had a profound impact on the intention of tourists to visit the Island, as stated by Rosli (2022). Clearly, the behavioural intention of visitors not to travel to Hong Kong during the protests is significantly influenced by their perceived limitations. These limitations, in turn, shape the attitudes of tourists towards visiting Hong Kong, as explained by Girish (2020). Furthermore, Babu (2021) emphasizes that college students primarily determine their travel destination by considering their budget. It is important to note that an individual's perceived behavioural control is largely influenced by the availability of resources, opportunities, and time to travel, as argued by H. Han (2011).

Destination Image

The comprehension, preconceived notions, emotional viewpoints, and imaginative constructs of an individual or group towards a specific location are commonly known as the destination image (Lopes, 2011). This destination image includes an evaluation of the various attributes and elements closely associated with the particular place (MacKay, 1997), or the emotional and rational interpretations that an individual may have towards a given location (Septchenkova, 2010). This destination image is a multidimensional construct that consists of three distinct components: cognitive, affective, and conative (Pike, 2004). There is a widely held belief that the destination image directly or indirectly influences an individual's post-travel behaviour (Chen, 2013), (San Martín, 2008). Due to its extrinsic nature, the destination image greatly impacts an individual's choice of travel destination. Previous research has shown that the destination image has a positive effect on tourist behaviour (Zhang, 2014). Indeed, the image of a particular visit is its origin point (Chen C.-F. &, 2007), which subsequently serves as the starting point in the individual's decision-making process for travel destinations (Kim, 2014). An individual's attitude towards a tourist destination is positively affected by its image, which is determined by the characteristics or attributes of the place and the promotional information provided by tourism authorities and tour operators (Tasci, 2007). Studies in the field of tourism have demonstrated that the destination image not only influences the selection of a location and an individual's perception of that location but also plays a significant role in determining the tourist's intention to revisit the destination (Hsu M. S., 2010). Based on the above discussions, the following framework has been formulated.

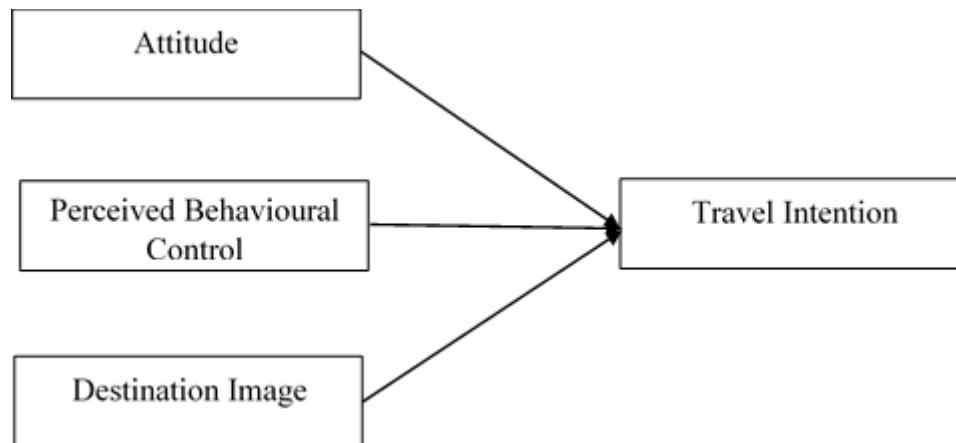


Figure 2: Proposed Model

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In the domain of travel, there exists an abundance of research studies which have identified a myriad of factors that exert influence upon individuals in the process of making decisions pertaining to their desired destination. By means of a comprehensive and methodical review of existing research, it has been ascertained that a multitude of variables plays a substantial and noteworthy role in the determination of the travel destination of individuals. These variables have been categorized and classified as attitude, perceived behavioural control, destination image, and behavioural intention. Drawing upon an analysis of extant literature, it becomes patently clear and evident that the image of the destination assumes a pivotal and prominent role in the process of destination selection, with the aforementioned image being contingent and dependent upon such factors as the physical allure and attractiveness of the location, the attractions that have been created by human hands, the availability and provision of amenities and facilities at the site, as well as the safety features that are in place. Consequently, it logically follows that once tourists hold the belief and perception that a particular location is secure and free from harm, they are more inclined and predisposed to revisit and return for future visits.

Hence, it is of paramount and utmost importance and significance that the authorities and stakeholders in the domain of tourism take cognizance of and duly consider these variables when formulating and devising their marketing strategies and tactics, with the ultimate objective and goal of attracting and enticing a greater and larger number of visitors and tourists. While this research has only examined and scrutinized a limited and finite number of variables, and has not been directly tested and validated with actual travellers, it is strongly recommended and suggested that future research endeavours and investigations should place emphasis and focus on conducting comprehensive and extensive surveys with real-life travellers, so as to provide concrete and empirical evidence and substantiation for the aforementioned variables.

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