

A STUDY OF PUSH AND PULL FACTORS INFLUENCING TRAVEL PREFERENCES OF GEN X TRAVELERS FROM PUNE CITY

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Introduction:-

Every day millions of people travel all across the world. They make plans related to travel for business or pleasure. These trips may be of short or long duration. Travel formalities include visa applications, booking tickets, booking hotels for stay and itineraries are planned according preferred time of travel. All these preparations stem from the fact that people have definite motivation to travel. Tourist activity can be viewed as a means to satisfy a person's needs and wants. It is an action which is the result of a motive which comes from within self or due to external environment. Earlier travel constituted going to another place to spend holidays to relax. Mostly it was going to visit friends and relatives or religious travel. As modernization led to saving of time and brought the world closer, tourism is seen in many forms. A tourist may have one or multiple motives to travel to experience these forms of tourism which are very different from the traditional reasons to travel.

People travel to satisfy their needs and wants which can be called the motivators for tourism. These come in the form of push and pull factors which influence the tourist to identify their need and fulfill their want to travel to a particular destination. Tourism will not survive if people are not motivated to travel.

The researchers have chosen the Gen X tourists from Pune city for this study as this is one segment of tourists who have their basic wants or necessities fulfilled, are part of the urban population who have believe that travel is a must do activity as their basic priorities are in place, they have disposable income to invest in tourism activities, have families and children for which they travel, would like to explore after they read about places especially new types of tourism, would like to rejuvenate from stress of daily life, have aspirations to travel and give travel, short or long trips, an important place in their lives

Objectives of the study:-

- 1) To find out the push and pull factors motivating travel of Gen X travelers from Pune city.
- 2) To segregate the relevant push and pull factors that influence the travel preferences of Gen X travelers from Pune city.

Research methodology:-

With reference to the different theories of motivation to travel in tourism listed in the theoretical background below, a list of push and pull factors was identified. The researchers have used primary as well as secondary data to collect information on the said topic.

A structured questionnaire was designed on the basis of the list compiled to explain pull and push factors (Huang & Hue) 2009 by the researchers to obtain primary data related to the topic. The findings from the

primary data helps to prove the objective number two and the objective number one is fulfilled by the help of secondary data gathered from sources like books, research papers and articles and industry literature.

Convenience sampling method has been adopted for this research considering the time constraint for the research. In order to make the questionnaire effective Likert – Scale questions were designed.

Theoretical background:-

There are many theories of motivation to explain the reasons for people to travel and motivation is the need or wants from within as well as due to external factors to travel. These needs and wants are both physiological and psychological which can be fulfilled through both services and products. When a tourist travels to a destination he/she does that due to push or pull motivation.

Push factors are defined as internal motive, need, force or want that makes tourists to seek activities to reduce these needs, while pull factors are destination generated forces and the knowledge that tourists hold about a destination. (Gnoth, 1997)

The sign-gestalt paradigm, better known as the ‘push-pull factor’ compendium theory by Tolman (1959) and later by Dann (1977), is the most recognized theory in tourism research. There are many models containing variables such as perceptions, images, attitudes, emotions, cultural aspect, and learning contributed to an increased understanding of tourist behavior, motivation is the reason for tourist behavior in tourism, which makes it an important aspect to study. (Gnoth, 1997; Sirakaya et al., 2003). (Dunn Ross and Iso-Ahola, 1991; Fodness, 1994; Gnoth, 1997). If travel marketers understand travel motivations of the travelers it would result in offering correct products to the correct segment markets, allowing them to allocate tourism resources more efficiently. It will be a benefit to the tourism that segmentation is done of the tourists and then a study like this is done based on motivations because it could provide insights or ideas that tourism marketers to develop and promote the tourism destinations.

Crompton and McKay (1997) argued the importance of understanding motivation by giving three reasons: (1) understanding tourist motivations would make the way for creating better products and services, (2) satisfaction with tourism experiences is intrinsically related to initial motives of tourists, and (3) motives must be identified and prioritized first before a destination marketer can understand tourist decision-making processes.

Marketing of tourism product will not be effective if there is no study of motivation. (Fodness, 1994). As a result, motivation is seen as an important variable because it is the force behind all behavior that often tourists exhibit. According to Iso-Ahola (1980, 1982) motivation is one of the most important determinants of leisure travel. Thus it is important to understand what motivates people to travel allows researchers to better define the value of tourism behavior, and ultimately predict or influence future travel patterns (Uysal and Hagan, 1993). When these motivations are studied one gets important insights into understanding how tourists make the selection of the destination. (Crompton, 1979)

Definitions related to this study:-

Push factors include the intrinsic factors which come from inner self of a tourist. These depend upon his/her psychological, sociological and cultural background. These include inner need or fondness or eagerness to see a place, to show off his/her travels to friends or peers through travel or just relaxation.

Pull factors refer to the extrinsic factors which create a desire in him/her to visit a destination. These include the six A's namely accessibility, accommodation, activities, attractions amenities and affordability. (Roday S, et al Tourism operations and management Oxford press)

Accessibility:- This refers to the transport and transport infrastructure options a tourist has to reach the destination and within the destination. Many places are extremely unique in terms of natural beauty or the experience they give the tourist but if one has a problem reaching the destination he /she may hesitate to travel there. Tourists want smooth travel in terms of comfort, safety and time efficiency. He /she are unwilling to compromise on these factors.

Accommodation:- This factor plays a major role in a tourist deciding to travel to a destination. Every tourist needs a clean, hygienic and comfortable place to stay with basic amenities. Accommodation is available in a wide spectrum from traditional to alternative options. It is dependent on the tourist what he chooses. Accommodation at the destination is often seen as a home away from home. Without suitable accommodation there would be no tourism activity in today's world.

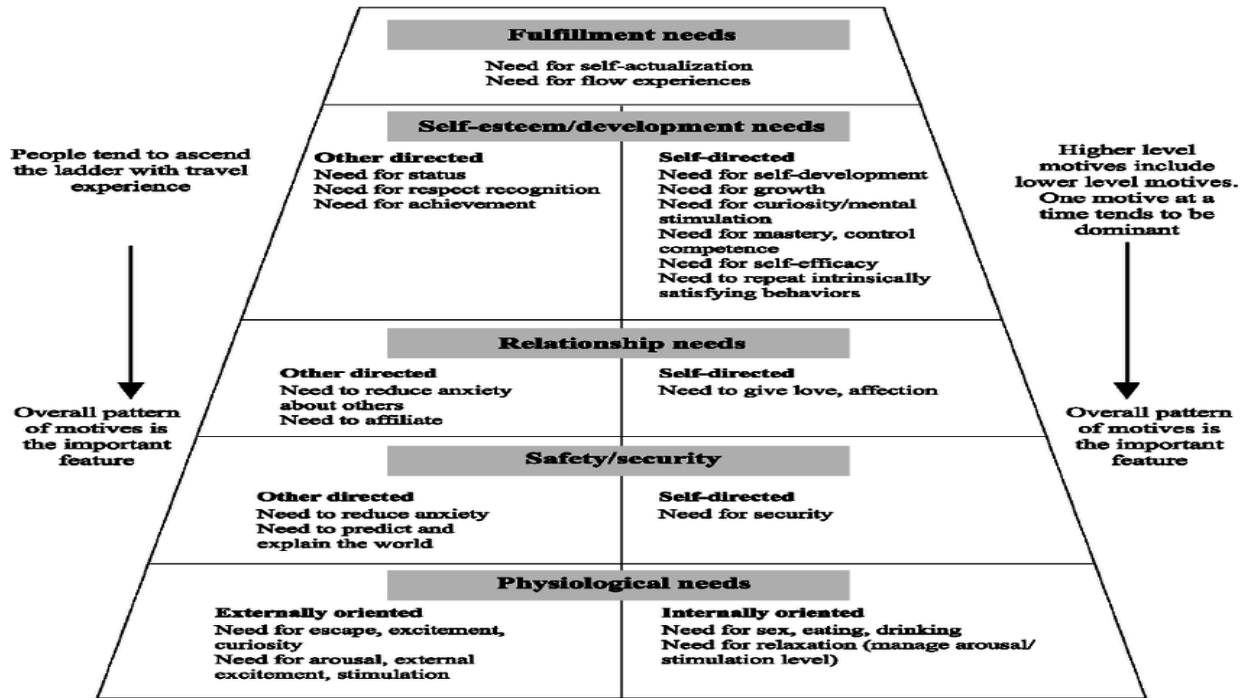
Activities:- Travel is initiated when people want to take a break from routine and want to do different things. People like to just sit or relax, try adventure sport, see wildlife, take part to volunteer for a cause. Tourists are attracted to a destination due to number of activities he /she can participate in. It is a important pull factor.

Attractions:- Attractions are the main reason why people travel to destinations. These include natural, man-made, cultural and social attractions.=

Affordability:- Tourists will only travel if they can afford travel and related costs. Affordability not only in terms of money but also time.

Motivational theories studied for reference of this research paper include:-

- 1) **Travel Career Ladder Theory:-** This theory is based on the Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs. Each person has a travelling experience (career) and each person reaches at different levels through this career. The travel motivation only comes after the fact that a person progress in his/her life when he/she fulfils their basic needs.



Source: Pearce (1991)

This theory suggests that people’s travel needs and wants can over their life time and depends upon the total experience they get while travelling. When tourists are more experienced they want to get satisfaction in the higher level needs. Many tourists move through these stages and have a predictable pattern in motivation towards travel. The travel career ladder proposes that gathered experiences (career) makes people psychologically mature as they go up the ladder. Movement of tourists varies from each other making motivation to travel developmental, dynamic and multi leveled. This theory also suggests that after people gather experiences their motivations.

- 2) **Optimal Arousal Theory:-** This theory puts forth the idea that a person is stimulated by the kind of life he/she lives and environment he/she is exposed to. If a person is living a hectic life he/she would select a destination which is quiet and faraway from his / her usual environment. This theory puts forth the suggestion that each individual has a unique arousal level .When our arousal level drop below the optimal level we look some sort of stimulation to increase these levels. This also can be linked to motivation to travel as we are motivated to act to maintain a balance of these levels. When we get over excited we look for activities that would calm us down for example if we undergo stress and day to day work is hectic the motivation would be to go a serene quiet place for a holiday to relax or if we get bored we do energetic things like go travelling or hiking. This arousal level of each individual is unique and interesting as if we study segment of the tourists and come to know motivation through this theory we could predict travel behavior and preferences of such individuals or tourists. To cite an example, Gen X tourists are people in their mid forties and above are pursuing careers or jobs that are well paying but extremely stressful. Their response to their ideal holiday would be always the one where they are lazing, relaxing, catching on much required sleep. For millennials, an ideal holiday would be an adventure holiday, an activity related holiday or an experiential holiday which they seek to fulfil their need to explore or experience a new aspect of travel every single time.

Types of motivators:-

Travel motivators can be defined as those factors which create a need for people to travel. McIntosh and Goeldern have put forth 4 categories of motivators:-

- 1) Physical motivators:- these are related to rest ,relaxation, sport and adventure activities.
- 2) Cultural motivators:- These are related to interest about different cultures, lifestyles, folk tales, customs, dance music or food.
- 3) Interpersonal motivators:- These are related to interest in meeting new people, escape from routine.
- 4) Status and prestige motivators:- These are related to a person's status, travel related to business ,education or fulfilling personal interests.

TABLE FOR PUSH AND PULL FACTORS:-

Table 2.1: Push and Pull Factors

Push factors	Pull factors
Experiencing new and different lifestyles	Extremely beautiful scenario
Meeting with people from other places	Personal safety
Relaxing from a busy job	Standards of hygiene and cleanliness
Having fun and excitement	Public transport availability
Visiting family and friends	Activities for the whole family
Shopping	Reliable weather
Escape from daily routine	Travelling to a cosmopolitan city
Fulfilling dream of travel	Amusement or theme parks
Going to places that a person has not visited before	Variety of short guided excursions/tours
Enjoying a holiday	Convenience of getting visa
Seeking novelty	Outdoors activities

Source: Adopted from Hsu & Huang (2008: 18-21)

Tourism Motivation Factors:- This aspect of tourism is the very foundation of tourist activity in the world. It is very necessary to find out what motivates the tourists to take decisions regarding travel or the attributes that are considered important by travelers. The destination image can be portrayed based on the requirements of a tourist's needs.

Push Motivation Factors:- There are mainly four motivations (Pierret, 2011) behind touristic activity or travel rest, unique experience, meeting new people or seeing new cultures and discovery through a new destination with respect to attractions, food ,lifestyles etc. These are true in case of domestic as well as international tourists. Tourists travel to places to relax from their daily routine or a break from their daily

work. The tourist will consider this aspect while deciding on a destination. (Huang & Hsu 2009). To wish or desire to know the unknown is another need that a tourist may want to fulfil. Thus he / she will decide to travel to a destination which can offer a unique experience through culture, food, people, lifestyle, customs and much more. (Mohnsin, 2005; Huang & Hsu, 2009). The need to discover is the eagerness a tourist shows when he is excited to learn something new by visiting a destination. (Huang & Hsu, 2009). Meeting others or family and relatives is the most common motivation to travel.

Travel motivation is a broad concept which also suggests that the destination and its offerings or services have an influence on what the tourist decides before zeroing on a destination. He / she would give a deep thought into the destination's hotels, food variety, entertainment places, attractions, sightseeing, transportation to name a few. If the tourist gets all these services in one destination along with perfection he / she will definitely travel there and if all goes well may turn into a repeat customer of that destination. Apart from the actual destination, road transport plays a crucial role (Wang 2014 & Wang 2010) in motivating tourists to go to certain destination as the access is good due to well constructed roads. Income is also listed as a motivation to travel. If a person has more disposable income chances are that he will use it for travel. Tourist activity in China is greatly enhanced by the fact that the infrastructure, the roads, income and leave policies were the most influencing factors to travel. (Lui,2003, Wang,2004). Shopping for tourists is a great pull factor to a destination. (Yuksel,2004, Kinley et al.,2010).

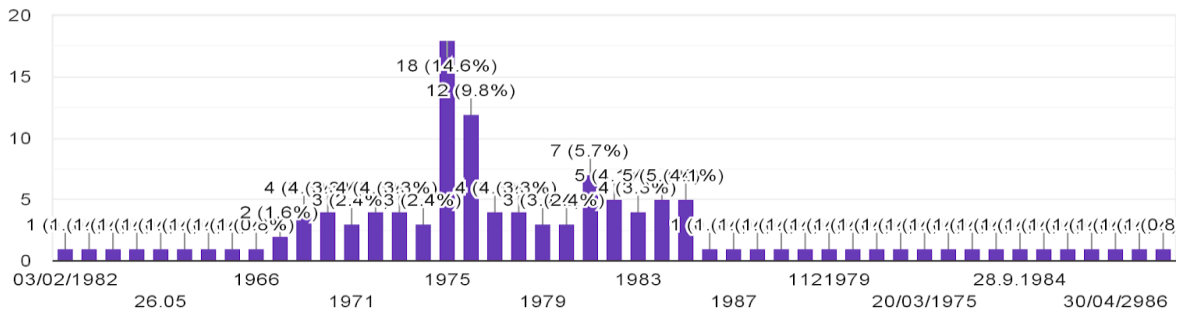
Gen X:- Gen X refers to the people born between the birth years 1965-1985. The current age of these people lies between 34-54 years .These are also referred to as latchkey generation as these children were alone at home as both the parents were working and used to come back to a locked house to let themselves in. The people of this generation are well exposed to books, magazines and newspapers but still is tech savvy and well adjusted to the use of the internet. This generation has a mix of people and is likely to be employed in management as well as supervisory positions. Entrepreneurs have also made a mark in this generation. These people are in well paying jobs and have disposable income set aside for indulgences other than the basic needs. Family and children is a priority for generation X.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:-

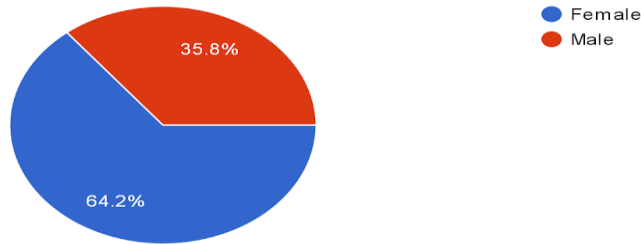
Data was collected from Gen X tourists with the help of a questionnaire. The researchers have used convenience sampling method and shared the designed questionnaire with 130 Gen X tourists as respondents for the research. 124 responses have been recorded. The researchers were able to analyse following data collected from Gen X tourists.

All the respondents who answered the questionnaire are from generation X who have been selected for the study. Out of the respondents who have answered the questionnaire 65% are women and 35% are men.

YEAR OF BIRTH:-
 123 responses

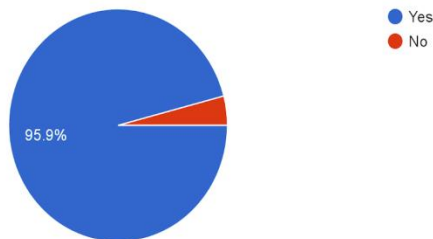


GENDER
 123 responses



1) Do you enjoy travelling?

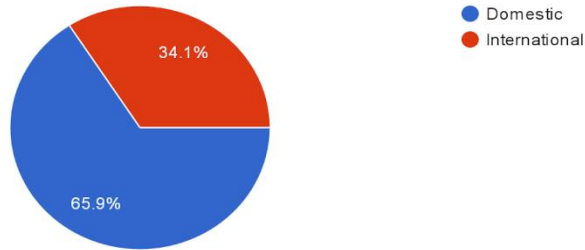
1) Do you enjoying travelling ?
 123 responses



The data reveals that 96% of the respondents enjoyed travelling whereas 4% respondents did not enjoy travel.

2) Last trip you took was:-

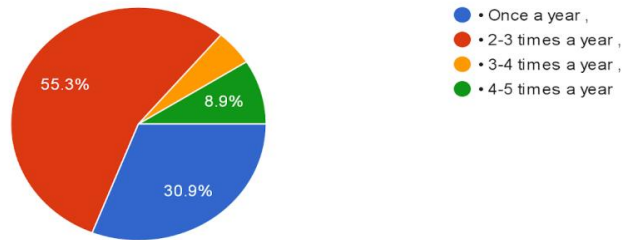
2) The last trip you took was :-
123 responses



According to the responses 66% of the travellers took a trip to a domestic destination and 34% of the travelers took an international trip.

3) How many times do you travel in a year?

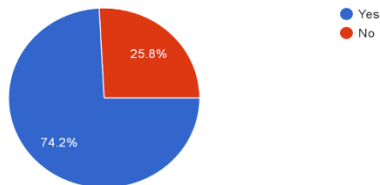
3) How many times do you travel in a year?
123 responses



The information got from the Gen X respondents reveals that 32% travelled once a year, 55% travelled for 2-3 times in a year, 9% travelled for more than 4-5 times in a year and 4% travelled for 3-4 times in a year. Maximum of the respondents travel for 2-3 times in a year and can afford to spare and money towards travel twice or thrice in a year.

4) Do you find international travel convenient?

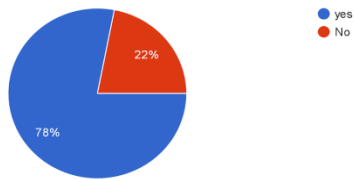
4) Do you find international travel convenient?
120 responses



Out of the total respondents, 74% respondents find international travel convenient whereas 26% of them found this type of travel not convenient. It can be deduced that 74% of the respondents would not mind travelling internationally frequently.

5) Do you like to take day trips /short trips frequently?

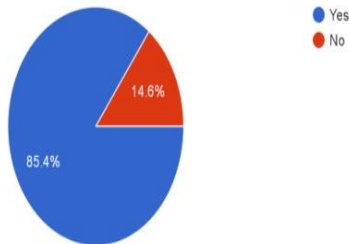
5) Do you like to take day trips / short trips frequently?
123 responses



Day or short trips are taken frequently by 79% of the respondents whereas 29% do not take such trips. It can be deduced that majority of Gen xers like to take such trips frequently.

6) Do you look for discounts before travelling?

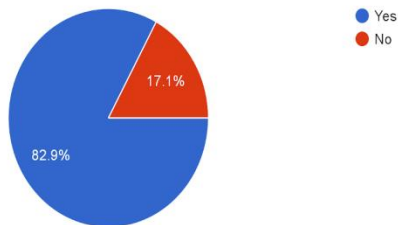
6) Do you look for discounts before travelling?
123 responses



Getting discount contributed to 85% respondents choosing to travel to a destination whereas 15% said it didn't matter or contribute to their decision to travel to a particular place.

7) Do you regard travel as a must do activity?

7) Do you regard travel as a must- do activity ?
123 responses

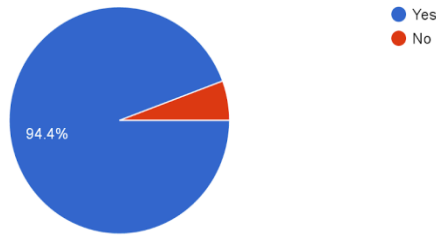


Out of the 124 responses received it is evident that 83% of the Gen X tourists regard travelling as a routine must do activity. 17% respondents disagreed.

8) Is hygiene and cleanliness a key issue in your travel decision?

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124 responses

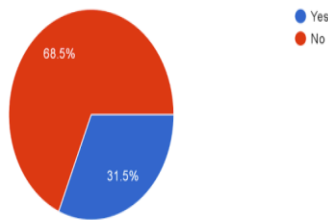


95% of the Gen X respondents answered in affirmative resulting in the inference being that hygiene and cleanliness matter to most people who travel.

9) Does travel advertising affect your choice of destination?

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124 responses

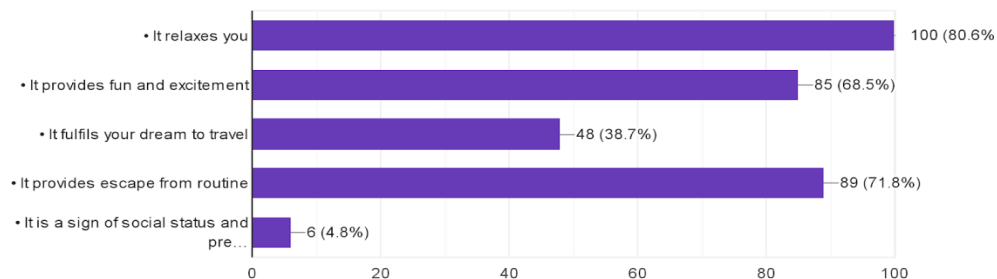


124 responses of Gen X respondents were recorded out of which 68% said that travel advertising does not affect their choice inspite of being common in print as well as in audio visual media. This clearly suggests they do not go to destinations because of an attractive advertisement or campaign.

10) You travel because :- (You can select more than one answer)

10) You travel because:- (you can select more than one option)

124 responses

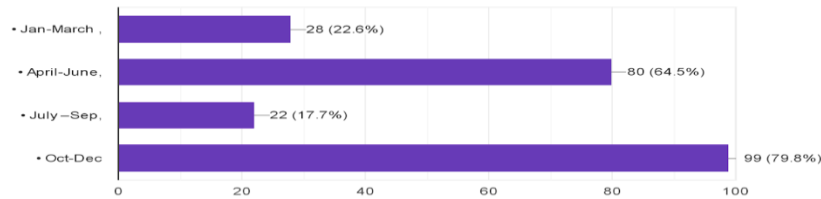


Maximum of the Gen X respondents answered saying that rest and relaxation is the reason for their travel. Followed response was that it provided them the escape from their routine and day to day work. The next reason stated was that it provided people with fun and excitement from daily stress. Fulfillment of a

dream to travel is next and negligible amount of responses stated that travel is a matter of social status and prestige for them.

11) What time of the year do you travel? (You can select more than one option)

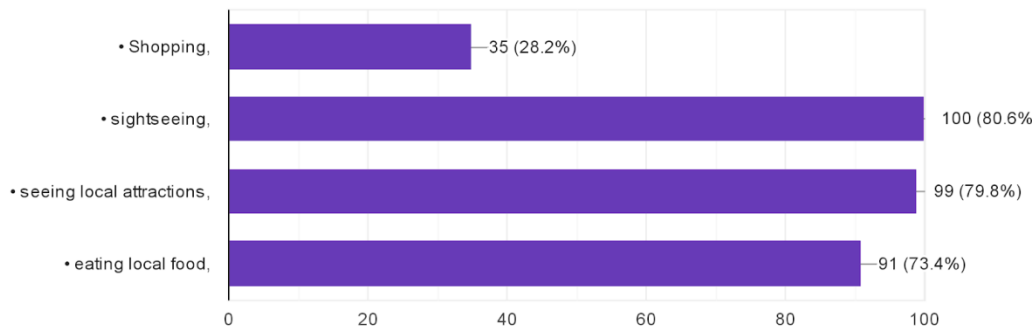
11) What time of the year do you mostly travel ?(you can select more than one option)
 124 responses



Maximum of the Gen X respondents travel in the months of October November and December. This is followed by travel in April May and June. Compared to these two sets of months, less travel is seen in January, February and March and least travel is seen in the months of July, August and September.

12) When you travel to a destination you look forward to :- (You can select more than one option)

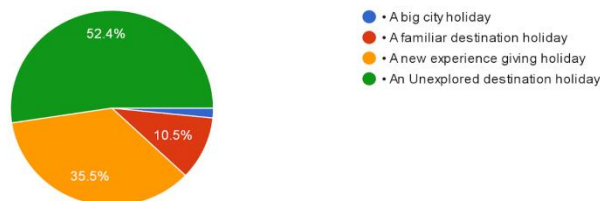
12) When you travel to a destination you look forward to:-(you can select more than one option)
 124 responses



Sightseeing is listed at the top by Gen X tourists when they go to a destination. Followed by seeing or visiting specific attractions at that destination. Eating local food features third on their list after reaching their destination. Surprisingly shopping is the least of their interests at a destination.

13) Your most preferred holiday would be:-

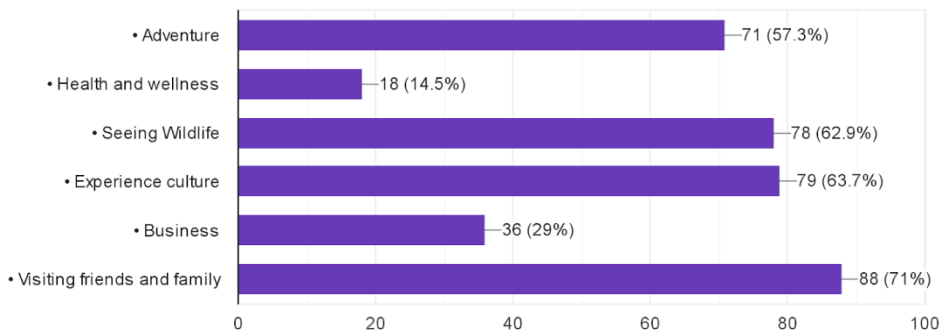
13) Your most preferred holiday would be :-
 124 responses



52% of the Gen X respondents would be interested to see an unexplored destination An experiential holiday would be the next preferred by 36% of respondents. In the middle about 11% of Gen Xers would like to return to a familiar destination which they have already seen whereas only 1% would prefer a big city holiday.

14) Have you ever travelled to a destination for any of the below:- (You can select more than one option)

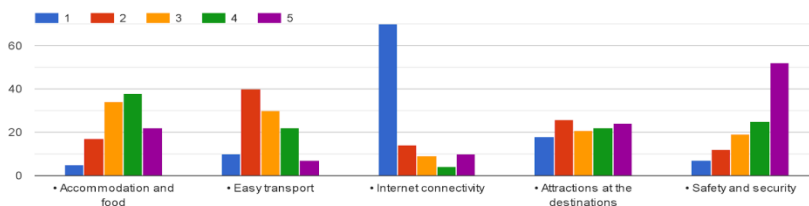
14) Have you ever travelled to a destination for any of the below ?(you can select more than one option)
 124 responses



The most common reason for travel for Gen X respondents is visiting friends and relatives. The on would be to visit a new culture. The third reason is to see wildlife followed by travel for adventure. Travel for health and wellness takes second last place and Business was cited as at last reason for travel to a destination.

15) When you travel to a destination you give priority to:- (Please rank the below options on the scale of 1-5 . 5 being highest and 1 being lowest)

15)When you travel to a destination you give priority to :-:(please rank the below options on the scale of 1 to 5 . 5 being highest and 1 being lowest.)



The Gen X respondents were requested to assign priority to five factors they would rank in the order of importance when they decide on a choice of a destination to travel. The resultant inference is as follows: For the Gen X respondents, Safety and security was the most crucial factor and maximum priority was awarded to this aspect. Second most important was Accommodation and Food. The third in line priority was given to the Attractions at the destination. Easy transport was ranked as the second last on the priority basis and internet connectivity was ranked as the least among all the five factors with least assigned priority.

Analysis of Push factors in the Questionnaire:-

According to the primary data, collected by the help of a structured questionnaire from Gen X respondents in this study reveal that their number one intrinsic need to travel was to relax. This answer suggests that these people wish to unwind and take time out from their hectic professional lives. The second response as per priority was that they wanted to escape from everyday life they are leading in the urban jungle and they try to find a different setting to visit. Next answer was that travelling provides them fun and excitement. They see travelling an activity to enjoy and the journey is as important for them as the destination itself. Travel brings new thrill and exposure that one has not experienced before as the unknown can be exciting. Fulfilling their dream about going to places listed in a priority list is next need to travel.

Gen X respondents from the group studied here say acquiring social status and prestige through travel done or planned to be done is the least of their priorities of factors that intrinsically motivate or push them to travel.

Another push factor that important to mention here is the time of travel and duration of the travel. Gen X respondents travel to shorter distances as they can enjoy the journey as well as the destination both. Gen X tourists in the study travel most in the months of October, November and December, followed by April, May and June as both periods are peak seasons when movement happens. This may be due to trips taken in summer and winter vacations of their children. Visiting friends and relatives or visiting people in different lands to see their lifestyles, habits, and food is definitely a push factor.

Wanting to seek novelty in travel or love for the unknown is another push factor for Gen X persons.

Analysis of the pull factors in the questionnaire:

According to the primary data collected by the help of a structured questionnaire from Gen X respondents in this study reveal that their number one pull factor towards a destination is safety and security. They seek assurances while visiting different places they will be protected by law.

For the Gen X respondents, want an assurance by the law and order of the destination or en route that they will be safe. Second most important was Accommodation and Food. This aspect is very important to tourists as they want many options in accommodation and food. Each person needs options to suits their needs and would need variety in food as they may have children, parents with them. The third in line of priority was given to the Attractions at the destination. Gen X wants to sightsee as they may not want to come back to the same destination again. Easy transport was ranked fourth by the respondents in this study which means that they give this aspect less importance as if they are motivated by other factors like beauty of the place for example they would travel in any case even if the accessibility may be relatively difficult.

Findings and conclusions:-

From the data analyzed and collected from Gen X respondents for the purpose of this study following conclusions can be made regarding the push and pull factors of Gen X travelers from Pune city.

- 1) Gen X tourists like to travel for relaxation and see it as a way to escape from routine and stress. This acts a push factor for them to get out of their busy schedule. This means that people of this age are making time to travel 2-3 times a year to get “me time”. This type of travel happens domestically as well as internationally. The intention of the respondents was to fulfil their dream to travel and not to attach any elevated social status or prestige to their travel.

- 2) Gen X tourists like to escape whenever possible and prefer taking short, frequent vacations or day trips which involves less or minimum travel time. As most find international trips convenient by the means of more disposable income to spend for travel abroad or convenient visa process or availability of options of activities, it could be possible for them to take short duration international trips resulting in a strong pull factor. A new country closer to home can make an ideal destination to fulfil the need to go to an unexplored destination or an experiential holiday like volunteering for a cause can be an option closer to home.
- 3) Gen X tourists show keen interest in destinations and packages which are offered at a discount which acts as a positive pull factor. This implies that majority of them can plan their travel to an unexplored destination which is on offer through discounts. But there is a section of Gen Xers who feel that a discount is not the reason to compromise the fact that if they get to travel to an exotic destination sans the discount they would be willing to take that option also.
- 4) Gen X tourists believe that travel must be taken as a routine activity. Due to hectic, busy lifestyles they want to connect with nature, scenery, attractions at the destination, participate in culture and social aspect of the destination, and also participate in special interest tourism like wildlife or adventure tourism.
- 5) Cleanliness and hygiene is a top necessity for these tourists at the destination which has to be included in their travel arrangements, accommodation, external environment, toilets at public places, proper clean drinking water, clean and pollution free roads and sanitation etc. Because of all these aspects are taken care at destinations abroad, many Gen X tourists would like to concentrate on international destinations compared to the Indian counterparts.
- 6) One of the findings suggest that Gen X tourists do not rely on lavish tourism advertising to make their decisions and can very well pick a destination with all its plus points and according to their priorities only. Tourism marketers need to find other means of marketing their products in a way to reach the larger Gen X audience through social media as they have easy access to smart phones and can get information from source at a click of a button saving time and money.
- 7) It is also very clear that a big city holiday and shopping as an activity at the destination interests Gen X tourists the least as they all come from a urban environment. This is important that such sentiments of travel preferences can give valuable information to tourism professionals which planning itineraries and suggest activities or destinations that fulfil these needs. for e.g. Dubai is a close by destination from India in terms of proximity and a commercial tourism destination which offers activities related to natural scenery (sand dune rides/desert safari), man-made wonders (Burj khalifa or Jumeirah Palm Beach) and also famous for its shopping festival. The respondents in this group have given least importance to shopping, they wish to do, as a part of activities at a destination. Such information can be vital for tourism marketers to make itineraries devoid of shopping or should refrain from suggesting shopping as it may not be on the list of such tourists, or can be suggested only if time permits or replace shopping time to see some attraction. Value can be given to tourists if you can give them what suits their needs and that will save money, effort and time for both parties involved resulting a satisfied customers.
- 8) Gen X tourists prefer to travel most in the winter months of October, November and December and summer months of April, May and June which are the peak months for domestic as well as international travel throughout the world. This may be prompted due to the fact that children may have vacation prompting their parents to travel, weather conditions are suitable, season time at particular destinations for examples Christmas festivities in December etc.

- 9) This study has help the researchers to find the relevant push and pull factors which influence travel preferences of Gen X tourists in the following order of priority
- a. Safety and security is at the top of the list. Gen X tourists would like to places which are safe and stable geographically, politically, culturally and socially. They would like to travel to places where they would not be exposed to theft, breach in personal security, unstable situation. This also includes willingness and acceptance of them as tourists by the host population.
 - b. Accommodation and food is given second priority as it is viewed as a basic necessity by Gen X tourists. Ample options are required by these tourists assuming they may be with children, parents, family or only by themselves.
 - c. Third priority goes to the attractions at a destination as the pull factor as these may include natural as well as man-made attractions. People may like to take part in social and cultural aspects of the destination.
 - d. Gen X tourists do not give too much importance to the easy in transport or accessibility to a destination. This means they would travel to an inaccessible place without making a fuss.
 - e. GenX tourists considered in this study are from an urban setting and are leading a constantly connected to the world lifestyle. They want to travel for peace, quiet surroundings and relaxation. It comes as no surprise that they would do without or priorities internet connectivity as the least priority. This suggests they can function well on a holiday without connectivity to the world or any distractions provided from social media. This would be ideal as a gadgetless holiday.

Scope of research:- Gen X are all the people (males and females) who are born between the years 1965 to1985 were studied as a part of this research. The sample population considered was from Pune city who are urban respondents. A list of push and pull factors affecting travel preferences were identified on the basis of a detailed structured questionnaire and segregation of these factors on the basis of their priority was identified. This factual information gives accurate picture of the relevant push and pull factors that affect travel preferences of Gen X. As Gen X segment is an universal concept, these findings may be applicable not only in Pune city but can be a guideline for travel agents or tourism professionals from all over the world to design or market their tourism offerings when their customer is from this segment. This would save money, effort and time on part of both the parties benefiting them both.

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