

A STUDY ON TRAVEL DESTINATION DECISIONS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

S. Ramesh Babu¹, G. Murugesan² and R. Arthy³

¹Department of Management Studies, Mepco Schlenk Engineering College, India

²Department of Business Administration, V.H.N. SenthikumaraNadar College, India

³Department of Information Technology, Kamaraj College of Engineering and Technology, India

Abstract

Travelling is the life blood that fascinates the lives of human beings. In particular, young adults are more attracted by many tourist places and they travel to visit those places. This study aims to explore how college students in the Virudhunagar District are deciding their travel destinations. The researcher considers the factors of theory of planned behaviour to explore the travel destination decisions of college students. Specifically, the study tries to find factors that influence the attitude of students towards the intention to visit a place. A questionnaire was framed by considering factors of the theory of planned behaviour model to analyse the travelling intentions of college students. The Multistage random sampling method was used to identify 300 respondents from two arts and science colleges and two engineering colleges in Virudhunagar District. Data were collected from the identified respondents using the survey method. The collected data were analysed using correlation and multiple regression methods. The results show that the attitude of the college students plays a major role in their intention to visit a place. The results also show that the students want to enjoy a lot in the tourism place; they expect good recreation facilities and fun activities to enjoy their tour.

Keywords:

Travel Destination, Attitude, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioural Control, Intention

1. INTRODUCTION

Travel has mesmerized human beings since the ancient period. Every individual has important social activities including travel and tourism. Tourism is movement of people for the purpose of a day visit or excursion [1]. Individuals who temporarily leave their usual location, where they live and visit other places are called tourists or visitors. These people will engage in different activities at their destinations [1]-[3]. There are two basic types of tourism (i) Domestic tourism, and (ii) International tourism. Involvement in the tourism activities within the boundary of one's nation is the former one and travelling to other nations is the latter one. The former one has a major impact in the balance of payment of a country that reduces the outflow of money from the tourists' home country. The Tourism industry helps the domestic destinations to develop their local economy [4] [5].

People are engaging in tourism activities by independently or in groups. In general, young adults prefer group tourism. They can go along with their family members or friends. In particular, the young adults are playing a major role in selecting travel destination for their family. Hence, this study aims to study how college students decide their travel destinations. In this study the model of theory planned behaviour is used to know how the college students decide their travel destinations. In this model, attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control will influence the intention and the intention will shape the behaviour of the individual [6].

The aim of this study is to know how the college students are deciding their travel destinations. Hence the researcher gathered the data from the college students of Virudhunagar District. The Virudhunagar District is located in southern Tamilnadu. It is 2,600km away from Delhi and 500km away from Chennai. The district consists of eight Taluks (Rajapalayam, Srivilliputhur, Sivakasi, Virudhunagar, Sattur, Aruppukottai, Thiruchuli and Kariapatti). The headquarters of the District is Virudhunagar, one of the largest towns in the District. It is the birth place of the former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Shri.K.Kamaraj. The district has many places to visit. Andal temple, Ayyanar water falls, Sathuragiri hills, Kamaraj Memorial house, Grizzled Squirrel Sanctuary are the few famous places to visit in the district. The district is well connected with both railways and roadways. Madurai Airport is the nearest airport, which is located 50km from Virudhunagar. The district is famous for producing crackers, calendars, diaries and edible oils. Trading of pulses is also one of the important businesses in this district. Apart from business the District gives more importance to education. There are fourteen arts and science colleges and twelve engineering colleges in Virudhunagar District.

1.1 ATTITUDE

Attitude is how an individual is evaluating the thinks and that is depending on the perception, belief, qualities and their personality [7]. It influences the college students' decision to visit a place [8]. The three constructs (Attitude, Subjective norms and Perceived behavioural control) are having significant impact in the behavioural intention of an individual in wine tourism [9].

The attitude of the tourists includes cognitive, affective and behavioural components. The cognitive component assess the object and shape the attitude whereas the element affect makes the tourist to like or dislike the activities and based on that they will behave [10]. Women tourists perceive that tourism activities provide relaxation, fun and help to learn new things and making new friends [11]. Youngsters in the age group of 18 to 35 are interested in learning culture through tourism activities. They consider shopping facility, flexibility in activities while selecting their travel destination [12]. The purpose of visiting various places is being relaxed from their routine activities [13], [14]. Youngsters felt that tourism provides an opportunity to enjoy the nature and also gives a chance to interact with the people in that region [15]. Attitude of an individual is having major impact in the behavioural intention to visit japan [8]. The attitude and the spirituality play a major role in the intention of the tourist to decide the travelling decision [16]. The visitors' attitude is depending on their previous visit to the place and they give either positive or negative view about the place [17]. Tourist get positive attitude by online reviews and that motivate them to visit [18]. The attitude of Chinese college students has major impact on their intention to visit Japan [8].

1.2 SUBJECTIVE NORMS

The next construct is subjective norms; means the social constraints consider by the people to judge something and that will play a major role in the individual's intention to behave. An individual does not participate in any of the tourism activities because of intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints [19]. The social interactions or the relationship between the family members and friends are the interpersonal factors will influence the individual's intention to behave [19]. The Chinese residents' behavioural intention to visit a place is highly influenced by the subjective norms [20].

1.3 PERCEIVED BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL

The perceived behavioural control of an individual is depending on the availability of resources, time and opportunity to travel to the destination [21]. Lack of time, money and opportunity are the disturbing factors between the preference, satisfaction and participation of an individual in the tourism activities. These structural constraints are mostly examined by the researchers [22]. More number of studies considered that money and time are the major constraints for the individuals' to take part in tourism activities [19], [23], [24]. Socio- demographic factors are also the constraints in the decision of travel destination. People in different demographic profile are having different difficulties in travel destination decision. Youngsters consider cost as the major constraint whereas age old people consider interpersonal factors are the constraints [24].

In deciding the travel destination, the attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control are change the behavioural intention of an individual, which implies the three components, may impact one another or has diverse effect on behavioural intention independently [25]. Image of a tour destination is having good impact in the values gained by the tourists and the perceived value is having impact in the intention of the Asian visitors in preferring the cultural tourism [26].

2. OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives for this study

- To analyse the impact of attitude of the college students on their intention to decide the travel destination.
- To know the impact of subjective norms on the intention of the students to decide the travel destination.
- To identify the impact of perceived behavioural control of college students in deciding the travel destination.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study is descriptive in nature. Researcher used survey method to identify how the college students are deciding their travel destinations. Structured questionnaire is framed based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour model to gather data. The study focuses on three factors namely attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control [27]. Under the factor attitude, the researcher considers the items like making new friends [28], fun, relaxation and learn new things [11], enjoyable [21]. In subjective norms, family members and friends [19] are considered

and perceived behavioural control include amount of money ready to spend, time and resources [19], [22], [23], [24]. All the three, attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are measured using five point Likert scale (range: 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree).

Multistage random sampling method is used in this study. In first stage the researcher identified the list of arts and science colleges and engineering colleges located in Virudhunagar District by using simple random sampling method. In second stage one Arts and Science College and one engineering college from Virudhunagar Taluk and one Arts and Science College and one engineering college from Sivakasi Taluk are selected by using purposive random sampling whereas in the last stage stratified random sampling is used to identify the respondents from selected engineering colleges and arts and science colleges. To explore how the college students are deciding their travel destinations, 300 samples were gathered from college students of Virudhunagar Districts. 119 samples were collected from arts and science colleges and 181 samples were collected from engineering colleges. From this sample 71 are male students and 229 are female students. 140 students are pursuing under graduation and 160 students are pursuing post-graduation.

Direct survey method is used to collect the data. The questionnaire is explained by researcher to each respondent and gathered 300 samples from both engineering colleges and arts and science colleges in Virudhunagar District. Usually the college students are having summer vacations in the month of May and June in every year and they may plan for the vacation trip. So the research gathered the data during the month of January 2020 and February 2020. The collected data were analysed by using various statistical tools like multiple regression, correlation, chi-square, cross tabulations, independent t- test and various charts.

3.1 HYPOTHESIS

- H_{01} : There is no relationship between the gender of the students and they are learning through tourism.
- H_{02} : There is no relationship between the gender of the students and their consideration for tourism is recreation
- H_{03} : There is no relationship between the gender of the students and their consideration for tourism is fit to budget.
- H_{04} : There is no relationship between the gender of the students and their consideration for tourism is fun activities.
- H_{05} : There is no relationship between the gender of the students and their consideration for tourism is making new friends.
- H_{06} : There is no relationship between the gender of the students and their consideration for tourism is time availability.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 STUDENTS' FAMILY INCOME LEVEL

The Fig.1 shows that majority students (139) family monthly income falls in the category of Rs.25,000 to Rs.50,000 followed by 94 students are in the category of above Rs.50,000 as their

family monthly income and 67 students family monthly income fall in less than Rs.25,000 category.

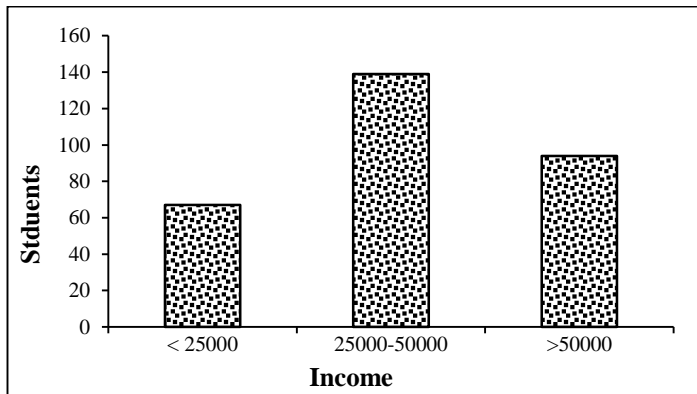


Fig.1. Family Monthly Income

4.2 COMPANION PREFERENCE IN TOURISM

Everyone is having their own preference of companion to engage in tourism activities. To know the college students preferred companion while engaging in tourism activities, cross tabulation is used.

Table.1. Cross tabulation between gender of the college students and their companion preference in tourism activities

Gender	Companion Preference				Total
	with college friends	Family	with other friends	lonely	
Male	57	10	3	1	71
Female	93	136	0	0	229
Total	150	146	3	1	300

The Table.1 shows that male students prefer to go to tour along with their college friends and 60% of female students prefer their family members are the best companion and 40% of female students consider their college friends are the best companion in tourism activities.

4.3 TYPE OF TOURISM PREFERRED

The researcher used cross tabulation to find the type of tourism preferred by the college students.

Table.2. Cross tabulation between gender of the college students and the type of tourism they prefer

Gender	Type of Tourism				Total
	Adventure	Leisure	Pilgrimage	Cultural	
Male	49	0	6	16	71
Female	76	120	11	22	229
Total	125	120	17	38	300

The Table.2 indicate that 70% of male students prefer adventure tourism and 22% prefer cultural tourism. Only very few students prefer pilgrimage tourism. From female students category 53% prefers leisure tourism 33% prefer adventure tourism and few students prefer cultural tourism.

4.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VARIOUS FACTORS OF CONSTRUCTS USING CORRELATION

Table.3. Relationship between the Factors of Attitude

Factors	Pearson Correlation	Significance value
Recreation (A1)	0.535	0.000
Learn (A2)	0.615	0.000
Financial status (A3)	0.601	0.000
Fun (A4)	0.700	0.000
New friends (A5)	0.499	0.000
Time (A6)	0.496	0.000

From the Table.3, it is inferred that the significance value is less than 0.05. Hence, there is significant relationship between the various factors and the attitude of college students towards the intention to decide the travel destination. Since, the Pearson correlation value is positive and greater than 0.5, the variables have strong positive relation with attitude of students.

Table.4. Relationship between the Factors of Subjective Norms

Factors	Pearson Correlation	Significance value
Parents (S1)	0.669	0.000
Friends (S2)	0.616	0.000
Siblings (S3)	0.545	0.000
TIP (S4)	0.740	0.000
Agencies (S5)	0.718	0.000
Government (S6)	0.656	0.000

The Table.4 depicts that the significance value is less than 0.05. This shows that there is a significant relationship between the various factors and the subjective norms of college students towards their intention to decide the travel destination. In addition, the Pearson correlation value is positive and greater than 0.5 this shows that all variables have strong positive relation with subjective norms of students.

Table.5. Relationship between the Factors of Perceived Behavioural Control

Factors	Pearson Correlation	Significance value
Needs (P_1)	0.681	0.000
Wants (P_2)	0.695	0.000
Time available (P_3)	0.629	0.000
Budget (P_4)	0.724	0.000
Information (P_5)	0.732	0.000
Knowledge (P_6)	0.572	0.000

It is observed from the Table.5 that, the significance value is less than 0.05. Hence, there is significant relationship between the various factors and the perceived behavioural control of college students towards their intention in deciding the travel destination. Since the Pearson correlation value is positive and greater than 0.5, the variables have strong positive relation with perceived behavioural control of students.

4.5 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE GENDER OF THE STUDENTS AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS TOURISM

The independent *t*-test is used to know the relationship between the gender of the students and their attitude towards tourism.

Table.6. Relationship between the gender of the students and their attitude towards tourism

Factors	Significance Value
Gender vs. Learning through tourism	0.018
Gender vs. Recreation	0.340
Gender vs. Budget	0.722
Gender vs. Fun	0.025
Gender vs. Friendship	0.744
Gender vs. Time	0.162

The Table.6 depicts that, the *p*-value of Leven’s test is 0.018 which is lesser than 0.05. So, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected. Hence, there is a relationship between the gender of the students and their consideration for tourism is learning. Majority of the female students (80%) are considering tourism activities will help to learn new things. For null hypotheses ($H_{02}, H_{03}, H_{05}, H_{06}$) the *p*-value of Leven’s test is 0.340, 0.722, 0.744 and 0.162 respectively which are all greater than 0.05. So, these null hypotheses are accepted, and all the students are considering recreation, budget, making new friends and availability of time in a same manner. The *p*-value is 0.025 for the fourth null hypothesis which is lesser than 0.05. So, it is (H_{04}) rejected. Therefore, there is a relationship between the gender of the students and their consideration towards tourism is involving in fun activities. Most of the female students are willing to involve in fun activities in tourism places.

4.6 IMPACT OF ATTITUDE, SUBJECTIVE NORMS AND PERCEIVED BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL ON DECIDING TRAVEL DESTINATION

To find out the impact of various constructs on the intention of the students and the behaviour in deciding the travel destination the researcher used multiple regression analysis. The factors in attitude are denoted as A_1, A_2, A_3, A_4, A_5 and A_6 . The factors in subjective norms are denoted as S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4, S_5 and S_6 whereas the factors in perceived behavioural control are denoted as P_1, P_2, P_3, P_4, P_5 and P_6 . The meaning for all these factors is given in the above correlation tables.

Table.7. Relationship between the factors influence the attitude of the students regarding intention to visit a place

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
(Constant)	-0.01	0.01	0.00	-1.2	0.230
Recreation	0.17	0.00	0.25	97.34	0.000
Learning	0.16	0.00	0.26	99.69	0.000
Finance	0.16	0.00	0.28	112.87	0.000

Fun	0.17	0.00	0.27	107.78	0.000
New Friend	0.17	0.00	0.29	119.06	0.000
Time	0.17	0.00	0.28	114.54	0.000

The Table.7 depicts that the students’ attitude towards travel destination is highly influenced by the availability of recreation facility, fun activities and making new friends. So, the students expect more recreation facility (A_1 -0.17) in their travel destination and they feel tourism a fun activity (A_4 - 0.17). Also students want to meeting new people and maintain friendship (A_5 -0.17) with them through tourism activities. The college students not consider much about the learning aspect (A_2 -0.16) and their financial ability (A_3 -0.16) while selecting travel destination.

Table.8. Relationship between the factors influence the subjective norms regarding the intention to visit a place

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
(Constant)	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.85	0.399
Parent	0.17	0.00	0.29	109.55	0.000
Friends	0.16	0.00	0.23	94.96	0.000
Siblings	0.17	0.00	0.26	102.4	0.000
TIP	0.17	0.00	0.26	92.14	0.000
Agencies	0.17	0.00	0.25	88.23	0.000
Govt	0.16	0.00	0.25	94.05	0.000

From Table.8, Students are highly rely on the tour operators (S_5 -0.17) and tourism information providers (S_4 -0.17) to deciding their travel destination. This shows that the tour operators or tour agencies can influence the intension of the student by designing the tour packages with minimum cost.

Table.9. Relationship between the factors influence the perceived behavioural control of the students regarding their intention to visit a place

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
(Constant)	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.67	0.5
Needs	0.16	0.00	0.24	79.81	0.0
Wants	0.16	0.00	0.25	84.99	0.0
Time Available	0.16	0.00	0.24	87.55	0.0
Budget	0.17	0.00	0.25	85.12	0.0
Info	0.17	0.00	0.25	83.46	0.0
Knowledge	0.17	0.00	0.27	104.87	0.0

It is inferred from Table.9 that the perceived behavioural control of college students is heavily influenced by the availability of budget for tourism activities (P_4 - 0.17) and the information they gathered about the place (P_5 - 0.17). The other factors are also having impact in the attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control respectively. Out of all the factors that are considered in this research the factors like $A_1, A_4, A_5, S_4, S_5, P_4, P_5$ have major impact. The intention of the college students to decide the travel destination is influenced by their attitude (0.42),

subjective norms (0.02) and perceived behavioural control (0.27). The R2 value for the study is 0.27 and it shows that 27% of dependent variable (intention) is explained by the independent variables (attitude, perceived behavioural control and subjective norms). But the subjective norms are not having significant impact with the intention to visit because the significance value is 0.715, which is greater than 0.05. The students will visit the place once the intention is framed (0.67) and the perceived behavioural control (0.65) is also having impact in the behaviour of college students to visit the selected place.

5. DISCUSSION

The research study shows that the factors, attitude and perceived behavioural control are having impact in the intention of the students to visit a particular place and the intention is having impact in the actual behaviour of the students. The subjective norm is not having an impact in the intention of the college students to decide their travel destinations. When compared with the perceived behavioural control the attitude of the students plays a major role in forming the intention to visit a particular place. The students are expecting more fun activities in tourism places moreover they want to meet new people and maintain friendly relationship with them. This shows that the college students wants to interact with the society, through which they try to learn new things.

Even though the college students are expecting more fun activities and good recreational facilities in the tour locations they consider the budget also. It shows that they are not interested to spend the money unnecessarily. Before deciding the location they are willing to gather the information about various places and then select the place that provide more value to them. If educational institutions provide the relevant information to the students, then it will influence their intention to visit the particular place.

Almost all the students are willing to travel in the summer vacation time along with their friends or the family. Also students are ready to participate in tours, if it is organised by their educational institutions during the summer vacation. In general, the college students are having 40 days to 50 days vacations during May and June of every year. Majority of the students wants to relax themselves during these days. Colleges can utilise the vacation time for organising educational tours to their students. This approach will never affect the academic schedule of the colleges. In addition, this will also help the faculty members to refresh themselves from their routine work.

6. CONCLUSION

From the collected data it is found that the behavioural intention of college students to decide a travel destination is highly influenced by their attitude followed by their perceived behavioural control. The subjective norms are having least impact in their decision to visit a place. The college students prefer tourism to enjoy a lot. So, they expect recreation facilities and good amount of fun activities in their travel destination and that influence their attitude. Information shared by the educational institutions regarding the tourism places may influence the intention of the students to visit the places. Majority of the students are willing to participate in the tour along with their

friends. Also they are ready to accept the tour programs organised by their institutions. So, educational institutions can plan the educational tours during the summer vacation. This is not only helping the students to relax themselves but also the faculty members. This research is focused on the travel destination decision among the college students of Virudhunagar District only. So the results are applicable to Virudhunagar District only. Further research can focus with the college students of entire Tamilnadu state.

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