

# TOURISTS SHOPPING BEHAVIOR AND TRIP TYPOLOGY: A STUDY IN AN EMERGING DESTINATION OF INDIA

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**Abstract** *Research findings consistently identified the importance of inbound tourist's shopping activities as contributor to local economy. This paper analyses the shopping expenditure of domestic tourists in the Northeast India. Previous studies show the associations of tourists' trip typologies and demographic profiles, particularly, of the international tourists with shopping expenditures. A study was carried out in 2011 by employing a convenient method of sampling survey in Northeastern region of India comprising seven sister states to examine the association of trip typology, marital status and gender of domestic tourists with expenditure on shopping. The results indicate probable association of shopping expenditure with trip typology and gender while marital status does not seem to influence expenditure on shopping. Among tourists of different typologies, 'Rural and culture' tourists scaled high reflecting maximum expenditure on shopping while 'Nature and parks' tourists as well as 'Active outdoor' tourists incurred least on shopping. Gender-wise segmentation indicates female tourists as high spender than male counterparts. It is advisable to retailers in destination areas to orient their products offerings attractive to the female tourists visiting to enjoy rural & cultural tourists and also those come with family members for leisure purposes.*

**Keywords:** *Trip Typologies, Shopping, Tourist's Expenditure, Domestic Tourists*

## INTRODUCTION

The importance of shopping to the economy of the destination areas has been well documented in research findings. Shopping has been identified as most popular activity among tourists (Kent, 1983) or the second largest component of tourists expenditures (Li, 1999) and even some times posed as major attraction drawing tourists to buy (Kim and Littrell, 2001; Moscardo, 2004). But study on tourism shopping is still limited and in an exploratory stage (Meng, 2012). While a person might not travel for the purpose of shopping, many tourists shop while traveling (Kinley, 2012; Keown, 1989; Meng, 2012). Shopping is the primary means of generating tourism revenue and contribution to local economic development (Littrell, 2004, Jansen-Verbeke, 1998). Shopping expenditure forms a significant portion of tourists travel budget. Evidences show that there have been constant increases in the share of shopping expenditure to total trip budget. Kent (1983) reported that tourist's expenditure on shopping formed 18% of the total expenditure of tourists and Lleave (2005) found that this segment of expenditure constitutes more than 25% (\$24.05) of the total budget. In another study conducted by Law and Au (2000) explored that tourist's expenditure on shopping ranges from 33%

to 56% of the total travel spending. Tourists indulge on shopping for two basic reasons of utility and pleasure (Yuan, 2013). Different motivations and trip-related characteristics are associated with the decision regarding participation in shopping and level of expenditure (Alegre 2012; Oh, 2004). Tourist's expenditure on shopping is influenced by travel motivation which in turn, influenced shopping center attributes (Kinley, 2012). Tourist shopping intention and actual purchase behavior are also influenced by indicators like planned behavior, impulsive behavior, and experiential consumption factors (Meng, 2012). The amount spent on shopping by tourists at festivals also has association whether they are new comer and repeated comer. New tourists spend less than 30% of the total tourists spending at the festivals (Damonte. 2013). As evidenced, tourists shopping activities have cascading impact on the local economy. destination marketers are showing increasingly interest in matching shopping facilities along with destination positioning. But shopping behaviour of tourists may not remain uniform over the periods and across the destinations. In particular, it may be different between domestic and inbound (e.g., foreign) tourists. Despite increased interest shown by researchers on shopping activities, there is limited empirical research on domestic tourists' shopping behaviour even though such

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studies may provide insights about how domestic tourists behave while shopping, and such information may add impetus in efforts to lure and make the tourists to go for shopping. Brookman (1998) expeditied that international tourists are very lucrative for retailers as about 85% of them rate shopping as number one activity. On the other hand Menente(2000) reported that the total tourism consumption in Italy in 1997 was € 67.8 billion of which 38.6% was spent by International tourists and 61.4% by domestic tourists. Thus there is a case for analysing domestic tourists' influence in shopping in the Indian context also.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

As tourist activity, shopping deserves good attention from both the researchers and destination marketers (Lehto, 2004). The associations of demographic characteristics, trip typologies, opportunities to shop etc., with shopping behaviour have been well documented. There are associations between tourist preferences and trip typologies with spending on shopping (Lehto, 2004; Hobson, 1996; Oh, 2004). Travel motivation is found to be an important contributing determinant of expenditure on shopping (Yuan, 2013; Alegre 2012; Kinley, 2012; Anderson, 2010). Tourist's involvement in shopping is also not uniform across tourists of different typologies (Kincade, 2001; Gursoy, 2003; Littrell, 2004). Tourist shopping intention and actual purchase behavior are influenced by various indicators, including planned behavior, impulsive behavior, and experiential consumption factors (Meng, 2012). 'Opportunity to shop' in the destination areas also play key role in motivating tourists to get involved on shopping (Lehto l, 2004; Snepenger, 2003; Suh, 2005).

Demographic characteristics of tourists like gender, age, employment and marital status are identified as significant factors influencing the amount of money spent on shopping and the items that they preferred to buy (Oh, 2004; Anderson 1995; Anderson 1996; Kim, 2001; Littrell, 1994). Researchers also explored the role of 'price differences' between place of origin and destination visited in tourist's involvement on shopping (Timothy, 1995; Keown, 1989). Some researchers confirmed the stimulating influence of tourists' cultural background on shopping activity (Telfer, 2000; Mok, 2000; Jansen-Verbeke, 1991; Kim, 2001) and even attitudes that tourists hold towards other cultures may influence their travel experience including souvenir purchase intentions. Brinda (2013) studied the influence of perceived authenticity of cultural event and their product on shopping expenditure and found that tourists are more likely to spend more if they perceive product as authentic. Realizing tourists' propensity to shop, some destination marketers have started to blend it with destination image (Gets, 1994, Kent, 1983).

This study departs from previous studies in the sense that shopping behaviour was examined among the domestic tourists rather than inbound or international tourists. The current study examines the tourist's shopping behaviours in Northeastern region of India. Northeast India consisted of seven states of India namely, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura. The region has got its own identity due to its unmatched physical, economic and socio-cultural characteristics. This region of India is credited with unique and unspoiled natural beauty with abundant varieties of flora and fauna, melodious folk music and dance, indigenous festivals, delicious local dishes, and craftworks. Tourism resources of this part of India have become popular destinations for domestic tourists originated from different parts of the country. Besides, the number of foreign tourists visit to this part of India cannot be underestimated. According to the statistics released by Department of Tourism, Government of India, in the year 2012, the number of domestic tourists visiting all states of India was estimated to be 104,50,47,536 that registers a growth rate of 9.59 percent. The number of domestic tourists visiting to all the seven states were estimated to be 59,20,395. A part from domestic tourists, 39,813 foreign tourists visited the Northeast India in 2012. Thus, the number domestic tourist visiting this part of the country is not discouraging.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Previous studies carried out across different countries show the associations of demographic or other attributes like age, gender, marital status, trip typology, travel motivations, cultural background, price differences, opportunity to shop etc, with shopping behaviours and preferences towards shopping (Oh, 2004; Anderson 1995; Anderson 1996; Kim, 2001; Littrell, 1994; Timothy, 1995; Keown, 1989; Telfer, 2000; Mok, 2000; Jansen-Verbeke, 1991; Kim, 2001). These studies were conducted among international tourists. However, the authors are not aware of any study in India covering such aspects. The current study attempts to examine the association of trip typologies, marital status and gender with shopping behaviour among domestic tourists with a sample of travelers originated from within India who have visited Northeast India. The objectives of this paper are:

1. To see the association of trip typologies with the amount spent on shopping,
2. To see the association of gender and marital status of domestic tourists with the amount spent on shopping, and
3. To give opinion for possible managerial implications so that retailers may orient the products offerings attractive to tourists.

## METHODOLOGY ADOPTED FOR THE STUDY

In order to provide a better understanding of tourists' needs and motivations, researchers have developed several tourist typologies using different parameters (Dey, 2006). Littrell (1994) developed trip typology on the basis of tourists travel style. Accordingly, four types of travelers were identified: people-oriented visitors, history and park visitors, urban entertainment profile and active outdoor profile. In another study, Yu (2003) developed trip typologies based on travel experience and behaviours. Trip typologies developed include the social & cultural tourists, spectator & recreational tourists and outdoor tourists. Again to augment the profiles of senior travellers by comparing and contrasting on shopping variables, Littrell (2004) factored trip typology into outdoors, cultural, sports and entertainment tourists. In that study, typologies were developed based on travel activities. In another study, Oh (2004) took the basis of trip typology as experiences sought by tourists during trips and accordingly seven typologies were generated to describe experience factors. These include active outdoor, history and park, social with friends, urban entertainment, escape and people, intimacy and romance and relaxed with family groups. Considering the nature and feature of the destinations of Northeast India, in the current study typologies are developed on the basis of experiences tourists sought during trips. Accordingly, four travelers are identified which include rural and cultural oriented, nature and parks oriented, active outdoor oriented and relax with family group. These segments of tourists have been drawn from the study of Oh (2004). 'Nature and Park' tourists are those who come to enjoy the flora, fauna, and other natural resources. This segment comes particularly to visit parks and sanctuaries. The tourists visiting rural areas of the region to see the culture, belief, life style, culinary art etc. are classified as 'Rural and cultural' tourists. Again, 'Active outdoor tourists' represents the segment who come to participate in sports, adventure activities etc. and finally many tourists come with family members just for leisure purposes and to have a break from their routine life, they are assumed as 'Relaxed with family members'.

The reason behind choosing Northeast India was that the region is an emerging destination particularly for enjoying flora, fauna, culture, religion, leisure, natural beauty and relaxation with family members. The region is famous among national tourists and has been becoming popular destination among international tourists.

Using a visitor exit-survey, a total of 650 domestic/national tourists visiting the Northeast India were interviewed of which 407 questionnaires were finally accepted for analyses. The criterion for rejection of rest of the questionnaires was non-spending on shopping. The survey was a self-administered

one and respondents who were just finishing their visit were interviewed. Data were collected by employing a convenient sampling survey. The convenient sample consisted of non-resident to the region that were visiting for leisure, religion, culture, history, outdoor activities, and to have relaxed time with families. Only one person of a family was interviewed in two exit points - viz. Shillong and Guwahati. The respondents were interviewed personally and they were requested to score in a 10-point Likert-type interval scale indicating lowest scale '1' as least expenditure and highest scale '10' as maximum expenditure. The survey was conducted during November and December, 2011. The data were collected by distributing a self-administered structured questionnaire. The instrument was used to collect specific data on trips characteristics such as purposes of visit, destinations visited, information sources, use of tour operator and travelers socio-demographic factors. One way ANOVA tests were conducted to test the relationship of Trip typology and age with the level of expenditure on shopping. Further, to test the association of expenditure on shopping with gender and marital status, Independent Sample T-test was performed.

The break-up of respondents on the basis travel motivations include 75 'Rural and cultural' tourists, 137 'Nature and parks tourists', 114 'Active outdoor tourists' and 81 'Relaxed with families tourists'. Gender-wise the respondents included 224 male tourists and 184 female tourists. In terms of marital status, majority of the respondents are married (232).

## DISCUSSION ON OUTCOMES

The findings of the study are explained in the next section.

### A. Trip Typology and Shopping Expenditure

Domestic tourists' expenditure on shopping was examined in relation to trip typology and as well as age, gender and marital status. Here a null hypothesis that tourists' average shopping expenditure remains equal irrespective to their affiliation to type of experience is tested at the significance level ( $\alpha=.05$ ).

One way ANOVA test returned a  $p$  value of .000 (see Table-I). This implies that the null hypothesis is rejected and trip typologies are found to be significantly related with the amount of tourists' shopping expenditure.

The test result shows that 'Nature and parks' tourists as well as 'Active outdoor' tourists incur smaller amount on shopping while 'Rural and cultural' tourists and 'Relaxation with family' tourists incur the maximum amount on shopping. In order to explore the groups showing significant differences, we conducted the levene's test of homogeneity

**Table I: Shopping and Trip Typologies**

ANOVA					
Shopping	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1064.833	3	354.944	101.332	.000
Within Groups	1411.620	403	3.503		
Total	2476.452	406			

**Table II: Descriptive values**

Trip typologies	N	Mean	S.D.	95% confidence interval for mean	
				Lower	Upper
Rural entertainment	75	6.56	1.981	6.10	7.02
Nature and parks	137	3.22	1.881	2.90	3.54
Active outdoor	114	2.95	1.739	2.62	3.27
Relaxed with family members	81	6.27	1.930	5.84	6.70
Total	407	4.37	2.470	4.13	4.61

of variances. The Levene's statistics table of homogeneity derived the  $p$  value as .229 and hence Bonferroni's multiple comparison table was adopted for further investigation. This multiple comparison table (annexure-i) indicates the existence of significant differences across tourist groups. The differences among tourists of different trip typology in relation with expenditure incurred on shopping are apparent (see Table-II). The mean values reproduced in the descriptive Table-II show that 'Rural and cultural' tourists are the high spending category tourists on shopping (mean-6.56) followed by 'Relax with family members' tourists (mean 6.27); 'Nature and park' tourists (mean 3.22) and 'Active outdoor' tourists (mean 2.95). The multiple comparison table (see Annexure-i) exhibits the pair of groups with significant differences. Accordingly, differences in the extents of money spent are apparent between 'Rural and cultural' tourists and 'Nature and park'; between 'Rural and cultural' tourists and 'Active outdoor' tourists; between 'Relax with family member' tourists and 'Nature and park' tourists; and between 'Relax with family member' and 'Active outdoor' tourists.

## B. Gender and Shopping Expenditure

Gender-wise classification of the sample shows 224 male and 183 female tourists. The independent sample  $t$ -test conducted to test the influence of gender on shopping expenditure, results of which are reproduced in the Table-III. It shows the association of gender with shopping expenditure. The Independent sample  $t$ -test returned a  $p$  value of .008 at  $\alpha = 0.05$  indicating the null hypothesis that the average expenditure on shopping between male and female tourists is same has been rejected comfortably. The group statistics

table (see annexure-ii) shows the mean value of male as 3.2 as against 3.8 of female tourists. Thus, female tourists scored higher mean (though marginal, but significant at  $\alpha = .05$ ) than the male counterparts. This result is consistent with other such studies involving gender of tourists and their souvenir purchasing behaviour (e.g., Kim and Littrell, 2001; Suh and McAvoy, 2005).

## C. Marital Status and Shopping Expenditure

The profile of sample classified on the basis of their marital status includes 232 married tourists while 175 tourists surveyed are single. The analysis of the responses shows that the influence of marital status on shopping expenditure is not significant. The independent samples test conducted derived the  $p$  value of .125 at 95% levels of confidence. Although the data reproduced in the Table-IV shows that the mean value of married tourists (3.6) is more than the mean value of unmarried tourists (3.2) but the difference is not significant as indicated by the  $t$ -test (see Table-IV). The result of the current study about association of marital status with regard to expenditure on shopping is inconsistent with previous studies. As seen that married women has the highest involvement level in making shopping expenditure (Zalatan, 1998). Kim and Littrell (2001) discovered the existence of association between marital status and shopping intentions, this characteristic was not found to prevail in predicting shopping expenditure of tourists in current study. Thus, taken the marital status as independent variable, domestic tourists cannot be segmented for amount spent on shopping.

**Table III: Shopping and Gender**

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
Shopping	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.000	.986	-2.660	405	.008	-.6297	.23672	-1.09506	-.16436
Equal variances not assumed			-2.667	392.45	.008	-.6297	.23614	-1.09396	-.16436

**Table IV: Shopping and Marital Status**

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
Shopping	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.799	.372	1.538	405	.125	.3680	.23923	-.10233	.83824
Equal variances not assumed			1.545	380.925	.123	.3680	.23814	-.10029	.83620

## CONCLUSION

This study was designed to contribute scholarly and applied understanding by destination marketers of what influences domestic tourists when they intend to shop while travelling. The first objective intended to find out whether there is association of trip typologies with the amount spent on shopping. The analysis of primary data shows that the extent of money spent on shopping significantly differs across various segments of tourists. Relation exists between certain categories of trip typology and shopping expenditure. 'Rural and cultural' tourists spend maximum amount on shopping. They are the tourists visiting the region to have a look on the life style of local people and their cultural belief who are mainly tribes. The next highest spenders are 'relaxed with family members' tourists'. On the contrary, 'nature and parks' tourists as well as 'active outdoor' tourists spend comparatively smaller amount on shopping while on tour to tourism sites of Northeast India. Further, spending behaviour of tourists in shopping is significantly gender sensitive. Female tourists incur more than their male counterparts. The findings of the current study confirm the reports of previous studies about the existence of relationship between gender and expenditure on shopping.

## LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The current study results are not free from limitations. The data used in this study were collected in 2011 and hence questionable. There may be change in behaviours of tourists during a period of 3years (i.e., 2011-2014) gap. This necessitates that caution should be used in any generalization

of the findings to other areas, populations and activities. Further, the data were collected from domestic tourists of India and hence the involvement of tourists from other countries may not hold same findings.

## MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

Destination marketers and local vendors while concentrating on decision-making process have to consider the actual vacation activities in which particular types of tourists get involved and types of tourists visiting. Trip typology profile and gender provide more linkage with expenditure on shopping and this can be used as a useful underlying factor to influence travelers to shop. Destination managers can target the 'Rural and cultural' and 'Relaxed with families' tourists as they incur highest amount on shopping. Besides, retailers may orient their products offerings attractive to the female tourists coming to enjoy rural and cultural resources as well as leisure purposes.

## SCOPE FOR FUTURE STUDY

As majority of the tourists visiting the regions is 'Nature and parks' tourists but they spend less on shopping. Future study may concentrate on exploring the reasons behind such behaviour and thus may provide ways to configure products they intend to buy. A limitation of this study is that the data were not collected on specific shopping items, as a whole data were collected. In future research, tourists' expenditure on shopping can be measured on specific items. Finally, in the current study, seven states are taken together as one

region; in future research, each state may be considered individually to measure tourists' expenditure on shopping.

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