



## **TOURIST SHOPPING ACTIVITIES IN SHIMLA: INTENTIONED, SPONTANEOUS, OR PRAGMATIC?**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Tourism and travel business is one of the leading, Eco responsive and non defiling industries in the planet, contributing towards the financial growth. Tourism is renowned internationally as an imperative apparatus of profitable growth and employment creation, chiefly in inaccessible and diffident areas. Tourism has the prospective to breed at an elevated rate and guarantee momentous expansion of the overall infrastructure of the destinations. Today, tourism in Himachal and especially Shimla is not restricted only to leisure tourism. The fresh regions like Eco Tourism, Therapeutic Tourism, Water Sports & Adventure Tourism, Heritage Tourism etc. are other tourism magnetisms, magnetizing tourists to Shimla from world over. Shopping is an essential tourist activity and its contribution and involvement to the financial system is noteworthy. For numerous tourists, no jaunt is comprehensive without having spent time in shopping and vacationers often believe they cannot go back home without buying a little. This research paper aspires at investigating the domestic and international tourists' perspicacity in their buying activities as projected, impulsive or sensible.*

**Keywords:** Tourism, Tourist's shopping activities, Tourist's, Shopping needs, Shopping Experience & Satisfaction

## **1. Introduction**

Tourism is an internationally significant "life-size industry", both in terms of its omnipresence scope and its financial value (Norman, 1998; "A Survey of Travel and Tourism",1998). Shopping is one of the most insidious leisure activities betrothed in by tourists (Choi, Chan, & Wu, 1999; Snepenger, Murphy, O'Connell, & Gregg, 2003). It carries a higher priority for some tourists than sightseeing, recreation or any other holiday activities (Reisinger & Waryzack, 1996). Due to its monetary, social and psychosomatic benefits, creation of comfortable yet exciting shopping districts in order to encourage customer craving to visit and extend their stay has become an imperative concern to establishments at tourist destinations (Jones, 1999; Lin, 2004; Yuksel, 2004). Reviewed literature suggests that clients are likely to be drawn to a shopping location offering a encouraging climate, a high potential for social communication, a perceived liberty from security concerns, and a huge assortment of actions and merchandise (Bloch, Ridgway, & Dawson, 1994). Overall store milieu has been suggested as a noteworthy construct shaping customers' thinking, emotion and acting. This is because customer's first thought is likely to be in part generated by the overall environment to which s/he is exposed to. Optimistic emotions evoked by shopping malls have been argued to manipulate several significant outcomes such as increased time spent in the store, augmented spending, amplified unplanned purchasing and bigger liking of the store. Thus, it is realistic to expect that management of the more encircling environment of a shopping region at tourist destinations should also persuade affective states and behaviors of shopping tourists. This research attempts to expand the comprehension of the temperament of tourist shopping behavior. More particularly, this study aims to explore the influences of the mechanism of Intentioned behavior, spontaneous behavior, and pragmatic consumption on tourists' intentions to shop/purchase in the tourism context.

## **2. Demographic Overview of Himachal Pradesh**

Tourism industry of Himachal Pradesh is a major locomotive for the financial growth of the state after horticulture. It has a multiplier effect on the employment generation, economic development and impetus for rural regeneration. Given the prospective of attracting tourists, the expansion of tourism is a palpable choice for the state of Himachal. Himachal is one of the most

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popular states with the focal points of the tourism industry. Himachal Pradesh is an enchanting part of the Indian Himalayas and is often referred to as the magical showcase of nature's splendors. Verdant green meadows and wide valleys set against imposing snow-clad mountains; limpid lakes, torrential rivers and gushing streams; fruit laden orchards and gentle terraces of corn and tea all characterize this state.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To recognize how the shopping at a tourist destination is affected.
2. To classify the weak points of shopping behaviors of the tourists.
3. To reduce the gap of expected and perceived shopping habits of the tourists.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

1. The Primary source of information would be through an elaborate questionnaire which would cover the tourists visiting Shimla.
2. The questionnaire would be handed over to international as well as domestic tourists of Shimla.
3. The first stage of this research would focus on the tourist habits therefore; the target would be approximately 100 international and 100 domestic tourists.
4. The collected data would be quantified and each question would be analyzed through data interpretation and linkages.

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

1. In view of the fact that the study is based on Shimla tourists, it may not be the same in other parts of the country. Hence it cannot be globalised for all tourists' behavior across the country.
2. This study also includes the young tourists who are in the age group of 18- 22 years. Therefore, there is a possibility that they would not have considered money and quality as a critical point while travelling out.

3. The international tourists were reluctant in letting us talk to their young ones so only a few young tourists are a part of this study. It is a possibility that the others may not feel the same.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Tourist shopping refers to the overall shopping tendency—the reason why tourists sling around for an assortment of purposeful and souvenir goods. Contrasting prearranged shopping at malls, tourist shopping is dissimilar at an area for all types of retailers, conquered by atmospheric divergence. This implies that colors, odor and noises from different and often small shops are intermingled at tourist destinations. This unstructured setting, collection, on-site business activities and different but responsive ambiance become a highly exclusive and attractive attraction for shopping and experiencing the authenticity of native customs and culture (Hsieh & Chang, in press, p. 1). Tourist flexibility of bargains, looking at exhibits, talking with other customers and shop assistants, socializing with associates, and browsing, increases enjoyable capabilities of shopping at a tourist destination. Paying an abbreviated price can cause tourists to feel arrogance, encouragement, and a sense of accomplishment (Cox, Cox, & Anderson, 2005).

Tourists shop for a mixture of commodities from handicrafts (Evans, 2000) to lavishness items (Park et al., 2010). For example, locally made handicrafts could be calculated a form of tourism magnetism and, at the same time, a cause of income for local artisans (Evans, 2000). Therefore, tourism shopping has a major impact on the progress of the retail segment in destination areas (Turner and Reisinger, 2001; Lin and Lin, 2006) and an essential monetary impact on host communities (Lin and Lin, 2006; Wong and Law, 2006).

According to the literature on tourists' shopping appetite, how much tourists pay out on shopping depends on their demographic and cultural background, their expedition style and thrust, trip typology (activities in which they are caught up with at the destination) and the assortment of shopping opportunities in the destination area (Littrell, 1996; Reisinger and Turner, 2002; Wang and Ryan, 1999).

The country of origin is considered a necessary predictor of shopping expenses and habits. Tourists' shopping behavior may be dissimilar not only according to their enriching or edifying background but also according to demographic characteristics such as age and gender. Using a

quantitative approach, Lehto et al. (2004) analyzed the association between tourists' shopping behaviors and preferences and their socio-demographic uniqueness. They found that age, gender as well as voyage style and travel motive were significant factors influencing tourists' shopping funds and the goods or services they acquire.

These findings were established also by Anderson and Littrell (1995) and Jansen-Verbeke (1987; 1990) who showed that women have a propensity to buy more than men. Michalko and Ratz (2006) also showed that female tourists are more probable than male tourists to shop while nomadic. However, no dissimilarity was found in terms of shopping expenses as part of the total travel budget. Copious other studies have recommended that female travelers have a tendency to be more trapped up in shopping tourism (Lehto et al., 2004; Moscardo, 2004; Carmichael and Smith, 2004). Guiry et al. (2006) have estimated a segmentation of shopping tourists based on their level of participation in shopping differentiating between: shopping enthusiasts, normal shoppers and shopping aversive. The study found that shopping enthusiasts are more probable to be female (Guiry et al., 2006).

Lawson (1991) found that not only age and gender but also matrimonial status and income as well as length of stay and type of accommodation were significant in predicting shopping habits. Moscardo (2004) also found that age, place of residence and travel party details are imperative factors in influential behavior for shopping tourism. Littrell et al. (1994) found that tourists' awareness of the magnitude of dissimilar activities at the destination (tourism styles and typologies) are also essential in predicting shopping behavior. For example, tourists who like to be occupied in different forms of metropolitan entertainment are more likely to be active shoppers. In contrast, those who prefer nature-based activities are less likely to spend a lot of time and money on shopping (Littrell et al., 1994). In spite of all these studies, the subject of shopping tourism is still less-researched region and there is primarily limited experimental research on tourist shopping behavior. In an attempt to fill this gap, the present study will examine the efficiency of demographic attributes (gender, age, education level, income level, and geological origin), travel attributes (number of pax in the party, type of lodging, length of stay, and frequency of visits), motivation attributes, activity attributes, and outlook attributes towards different forms of retail (bazaar, mall, arts and crafts center and airport outlets) as prophet variables for tourists' shopping behavior. Finding out more about what forecast tourist

shopping behavior could efficiently is vital in order to improve the planning, marketing and administration of both tourism and retail sectors (Oh et al., 2004).

### **Environmental effect and shopping behaviors at Shimla**

Astonishingly for a hill station, there are quite a few places one can go shopping in Shimla. From leisurely walk along the swarming Mall and browsing through an miscellaneous mix of stores, to shopping for junk jewellery and shawls at the Tibetan market, buying multi-coloured bangles at Lower Bazaar, roving all the way through the baffling lanes of Lakkar Bazaar whilst looking for timber ornamental items and stocking up on a little freshly made jams and preserves at Minchy's—one will rush back from the trip with loaded bags and lots of souvenirs for each person back at home.

Shimla in addition to being the capital of Himachal Pradesh is also known as the 'Queen of Hills'. Each year millions of citizens visit this place once known as 'Summer Capital' of India. Like Shimla, the state is sanctified with a usual scenic beauty, variety of cuisines and souvenirs and crafts made of wood. The paramount shopping areas in Shimla are the Lakkar Bazaar, The Mall and the State Emporium. The lower market and the Tibetan market are too well eminent shopping areas. Even though, one can get things from the streets and in local markets, but shopping from these markets will give the best deals and thus, they offer a realistic price for all the things offered there.

Tibetan Market is well acknowledged for the commodities like electronics and other decorative items. Lakkar bazaar is well-known because of the timber crafts and artefacts, which are obtainable there. The regular items like warm caps, hats and himachali shawls are found in the lower bazaar.

Shopping is an activity that is chiefly enjoyed by people, when they visit Shimla. A lot of people enjoy shopping when they go to visit any place. Shimla, being such a magnificent place, the possessions that one can get here will be exclusive and fine-looking as well. Shimla is a wonderful place to buy timber carvings and shawls. Other than these, weaved bags and clothes found in Shimla are significant buys. Shimla has a diversity of selected jewelleryes. Metal wares, rugs and carpets are also accessible extensively in Shimla.

## 1. Handmade artefacts

Handicrafts of Shimla are much admired. The handmade pieces are inimitable and are extensively found in Shimla, which people crave for. One can get the best products available from the Tibetan Market, Tibetan handicrafts centre and Himachal handloom of Shimla and also in the crafts center of Dalhousie, Shimla. The clannish Handmade artefacts found here are of Farahada and Chhiba, which are usually, coloured and printed fabrics.

## 2. Woolen Materials

The woollen clothing and capes are other eminent things, which can be bought from Shimla. Shimla, being a hill station, the demand of woollen supplies is very elevated and thus, the woollen clothes and capes found at Shimla are of very high-quality. One can get the finest quality woollen articles from the upper market known as The Mall in Shimla.

## 3. Wood Items and Traditional Artefacts

The timber stuff and the customary artefacts found in Lakkar bazaar are tremendously conventional and diverse. These old-fashioned artefacts are reachable at a very pragmatic cost and are broadly used to adorn homes.

## 4. Handmade recycled Paper and Wooden carved Tables

The local folks inhabiting Shimla are experts with the work of floor covering and they just do wonder by carving very attractive tables and different pieces of furniture. Their expertise in carving exquisite timber tables, used to decorate homes giving a little more antique feel. There are a lot of individuals, who have a leisure pursuit to beautify their homes and when they discover such art they cannot behold themselves. These imaginatively created enormous designs are obtainable at a very realistic price, which attract more clientele to buy them.

## 5. Vintage possessions and attractive Jewellerys

One can come across much stuff in the museum, which is extremely inimitable. A huge compilation of prehistoric handicrafts, jewellerys of the museum motivate the local jewellers to

create the most excellent designed jewellerys, at the similar time keeping in mind the option of the guests. One can obtain all these jewellerys from the market.

## 6. Himachali Hats and Handicrafts

The Himachali hats are very interesting attires, which are found only in Himachal. Coming to Himachal and not buying these will be disappointing. This is the best thing that you can gift your near and dear ones as a gift from Shimla. All these hats and handicrafts are almost found everywhere in Shimla, but you can get the best quality of them at the Government Emporium of Shimla. There are a large variety of shopping items, which are found in Shimla. Many shopping items like woven carpets, rugs, blankets, pahari caps are also found here in Shimla. Thus, you can find several things starting from a kinnauri muffler to all the old treasures in Shimla. Thus, Shimla displays its rich heritage and art by its handmade products.

### **Intentioned shopping behaviours**

Tourists when ever are out to a destination do have a list of the articles of what they are going to buy from the place they are visiting. It can be a small or a long list of the things which that place is famous for. This list can have items ranging from food articles, to shoes, to cloths or jewellery and even furnishings and upholstery. Out of 200 tourists (100 each, International and National) from the study 72 agreed that they plan shopping as a part of their vacation time and they come prepared to shop certain items. Interestingly most of the women participants come to buy cloths and wooden articles whereas most of the man participants buy fruits and local dry fruits. Preservatives like Jams and pickles are also in the list.

Inclination to buy from the list of the items already planed also includes famous food and bakery items. Tourists already know about a couple of shops offering delicious food dishes, local or otherwise also are in high demand. Woollen and wooden articles top the priority lists and are loved by almost all the tourists even if it's not intentioned to buy these items. Tourists take these articles as a part of take home gifts or souvenirs from the hill station like Shimla. Mostly this type of shopping is done by the domestic tourist and only small fractional part of international tourist participates in an activity like this.

### **Spontaneous shopping behaviours**

Impulsive or forced buying is quite common with the tourist when he buys without planning and just buys because he gets carried away with the looks or functionality of the product. Most of the times spontaneous buying happens when the customer relates the usage of the article he sees at the present time or even in future, thinking he would not be able to get it at his home town. Out of the total number of tourists participating in the study 86 tourists agreed that they buy a lot of things just by looking at them and without any planning. It's very interesting to notice that spontaneous buying is more popular than planned and visitors spend more money on such purchases than the intentioned buying.

In fact spontaneous buying goes hand in hand with the planned buying. In such kind of buying people were seen showing interest in items like semi precious jewellery, stoles, handbags and wooden decorative items. Only very less people agreed on buying items that are highly priced, under the spontaneous buying behaviour. Mostly visitors buy tit bits souvenirs and household functional and decorative items.

### **Pragmatic shopping behaviors**

Practical or realistic shopping behaviors are not common to see especially in domestic tourists visiting Shimla. This kind of shopping includes only buying what is needed for the survival at the destination of visit. Out of the total population in the study only 48 people agreed that they buy items only when they are needed and also what is needed. Out of these 48 people, 39 tourists were foreigners and they believed in only spending for the goods and items which are most in need. Domestic tourist gets carried away by the advertising strategies of the shop keeper but somehow international tourists keeps themselves not affected by these attractive strategies.

Pragmatic shopping behavior may be in favor of the tourist but it in turns affects the local market and the profit making business of the state. A non spending tourist is non exiting tourist and is of no much good for the state are the destination.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Shopping is one of the significant tourists' activities in addition visiting places of importance and amusement. It is also a major contributor for the economy. The present paper attempted to identify the factors attracting shopping behaviors of domestic and foreign tourists towards the state of Himachal and also examined the domestic and international tourists' shopping needs and choices in Shimla. This study has found that demographic attributes, voyage attributes, tourist activity attributes and fondness for certain types of retail could be successfully employed to predict tourists' reason to shop. We found that "planned shoppers" (tourists who spend 36 % or more of their travel budget on shopping) are more likely to be domestic and well aware of the local items and motivated to spend in shopping. They also tend to be less interested in visiting historical or cultural objectives at the destination or participate in cultural events. In terms of preferred type of retail, "planned shoppers" consider mall and local outlets to be very important.

The conclusion of this study could have significant implications on potential marketing to tourists of shopping centres and shopping festivals in the target places. For example, additional effort and possessions should be invested in informing realistic shoppers of shopping opportunities waiting for them at the tourism destination. In this sense, brochures featuring new or attractive malls or large shopping centres could be left in the lobbies or the rooms of hotels.

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