

Study the Preference for Selection of Hotels by Customers with Reference To Jaipur City

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Abstract- This research paper emphasizes preference of customers while selecting a hotel in Jaipur city. Researcher has analysed that customer /guest has certain preferences /reasons while selecting a hotel. This study is based on Jaipur city. Through this study researcher has tried to find out the factors of differentiation which affect the behavior of the customers at the time of selecting a hotel. The researcher has tried to reveal the facts that for survival in the hotel industry the hoteliers have to differentiate themselves from others than only they will be able to attract the customers. For this purpose researcher has done the survey of 100 leisure tourists coming to hotels, and used chi square test to prove hypothesis that customers have certain preference while selecting a hotel.

Key Words: *Customer Preference; Differentiation; Hotel Industry; Leisure Tourists*

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's turbulent market environment, many businesses are facing increasing competition and they have to increase the quality of their products and services. In some businesses such as travel, tourism, catering and banking the delivery of high quality services to consumers is increasingly recognized as a key factor affecting the performance of the firm.¹ (Atilgan et al., 2003).

Every consumer has set of specific preferences and values which cannot be determined by the realm of economics. There is no doubt that they are dependent upon culture, education and individual taste etc. In this era the trend of world markets has been changed noticeably from agricultural to service Markets. All of the service providers are trying their best to improve their service quality in order to make customers satisfied with their services, especially the

hotel industry. Hotel operators now focus more on the quality standards in order to meet the basic needs and expectations of the customers. Once customers' requirements are clearly identified and understood, hotel operators are more likely to anticipate and fulfill their customers' needs and wants² (Juwaheer & Ross, 2003). For winning in the market it is not enough to draw attention on new customers. Hoteliers must concentrate on retaining existing customers implementing effective policies of customer satisfaction and loyalty. In hotel industry customer satisfaction is largely hooked upon quality of service³ (Gandolfo and Rosa, 2010).

The more satisfied the customers are, the more likely they are to return or prolong their hotel stay⁴ (Choi & Chu, 2001). In the hospitality industry, in-room Wi-Fi, flat screen televisions, and high thread counts are no longer considered luxurious. As technology evolves, guests become savvier, and hotels step up their services, many hoteliers are struggling to stand out in the crowded luxury market. These forces present both a challenge and an opportunity for luxury hotels. On one hand, they are faced with innovative competitors and always-increasing standards of service, design, and amenities. But on the other, they encourage experimentation, being bold and setting new standards of excellence⁵ (G, Roger Hill. 2012).

The primary objective of this research is to analyze in the present scenario, the preference of customers in selecting Hotels in the state of Rajasthan. Due to the huge investments and competition in the Hotel industry, it had become imperative for Hoteliers to seek newer and better ways of improving their profits. The problem was to seek answer to the question "what motivates and attracts customers to Hotels".

Combining the knowledge gathered from the analysis of data collected and the supportive secondary data available, the study aims to offer recommendations for improving sales of Hotels.

A. Research Objectives

1. Understanding the new trends in the Indian Hotel industry.
2. Studying the different types of Hotels in India.
3. Studying and analyzing the preference of customers in selecting Hotels.
4. To recommend changes based on the analysis of the data collected to improve the Hotel
5. Bookings.

B. Hypotheses

Ho: Customers have no specific reasons to prefer a Hotel.

Ha: Customers have specific reasons to prefer a Hotel.

Statement of problem: The primary objective of this research is to analyze in the present scenario, the preference of customers in selecting Hotels in Jaipur City. Due to the huge investments and competition in the Hotel industry, it had become imperative for Hoteliers to seek newer and better ways of improving their profits. The problem was to seek answer to the question —what motivates and attracts customers to Hotels.

Combining the knowledge gathered from the analysis of data collected and the supportive secondary data available, the study aims to offer recommendations for improving sales of Hotels.

C. Research Methodology: The present research makes an attempt to analyze the preference of consumers (tourist/guest) in selecting hotels. Having analyzed the issues and factors positively affecting the buyer behavior, Hotels can rectify its weaknesses and motivate its customers to increase their spending and start preferring their Hotel. The researcher will provide questionnaires to leisure tourist that come to Jaipur. The questions asked will help to understand services, characteristics that attract guest to a hotel. With the help of quantitative analysis the researcher will formulate the results. After all primary data is collected; chi-square analysis will be conducted to test the hypothesis

D. Sample size: Considering all the factors, the sample size selected was 50. The respondents were selected randomly with the help of stratified sampling. The participation was voluntary. The researcher has initially taken a sample of 60 but keeping in mind the incorrectly and illegibly filled in questionnaires, a sample of 50 was chosen for the

purpose of the present study. Primary information was collected by the administration of structured questionnaire to find out the preference of hotels and the reasons.

E. Scope of the Study: The study covers only customers coming to the State of Rajasthan.

F. Limitations of the Study: The study intends to cover respondents from Rajasthan only and may not give similar results when generalized to other regions. It should be noted that social, cultural, demographic and economic factors may vary for different geographic regions and consequently may differentiate the behavior of consumers & their preferences of other geographic locations in the country.

G. Data Analysis and Interpretation: Various tables, charts, figures, graphs and other statistical tools were made use of to systematically analyze and interpret the information gathered. A table of raw data was first prepared in an excel sheet to have a clear overall picture of the responses of the consumers. Descriptive statistical analysis was carried in the study using mean, percentage, and chi-square test (to test the hypothesis) for demographic and other characteristics. The research findings were tabulated and illustrated with the help of bar diagrams, pie charts and other graphical representation tools. Finally, an overall analysis was done to draw inferences about the various responses and the results of the analysis were than methodically juxtaposed to draw an effective conclusion about the objectives of the research study.

II. DATA ANALYSIS:

STATEMENT :1 Frequency of going on as tour in a year.

On the basis of the observed values (see Table:1) the researcher finds that more than 50 % respondents go on a tour once/twice in a year and more than 25% respondents don't have a fixed schedule of going on a tour (See Figure :2). Thus maximum respondents go on a tour only once/twice in a year.

STATEMENT: 2 Main reasons for staying in a hotel while on tour.

On the basis of the observed values (see Table:2) the researcher finds that 33- 34% respondents stay in a hotel for rest & relaxation & is the main reason for choosing a hotel. Thus hoteliers need to focus on rest & relaxation & should include this in their promotions to attract customers and can be an important differentiating factor. But how to do so is

upon the hoteliers to find. While 12% respondents stay for fun and 10% respondents have reasons like business, attend conferences, recreation & religious reasons for staying in the hotel. (see figure :3)

STATEMENT: 3 Factors/Reasons for attraction towards a tourist destination.

On the basis of the observed values (see table:3) the researcher finds that 36% respondents are attracted to a destination because of Culture & Heritage of a particular place. Thus display of historical connection/heritage look can be used by hoteliers to attract customers. 24% or nearly 1/4 of the respondents is attracted to a destination because of scenery and natural land-scape of a particular place. Arrangement of tourist visit to such places, information about the same & arrangement of commutation can be very important distinguishing features of hotel promotions. To differentiate the hoteliers need to provide as much information as possible and convert historical & cultural places into tourist attractions through smart promotions. (see figure;4)

STATEMENT: 4 Preference to stay in a particular hotel while on tour.

On the basis of the observed values (see table: 4.1) the researcher finds that maximum respondents have a preference to stay in a particular hotel. And thus the market is wide open to attract the customers. The hoteliers need to find –How can they be different and how can they enter the preference list of the customers/tourists (See Figure: 5). To analyze the above data & to test the null hypothesis that “customers don’t have a preference of a hotel” the researcher has also applied the Chi Square (χ^2) test as below-

$\chi^2 = \frac{O-E^2}{E}$, O= Observed frequency, E= Expected Frequency

Chi Square (χ^2) is applied as under-

Table value = 3.841(at 1 degree of freedom & 5% level of significance)

Since calculated value (see table 4.2) is more than the table value the hypothesis is rejected .i.e. Null hypothesis that customers don’t have a preference is rejected and the alternate hypothesis that customers have a preference in selecting a hotel is accepted. Thus the researcher concludes that customers do have a preference in selecting a hotel & the hotelier should try to find the reasons for this preference.

STATEMENT: 5 Type of hotel preferred to stay while on a tour.

On the basis of the observed value (see table: 5) the researcher finds that maximum respondents prefer budget hotel to stay. Resort is the least preferred type of hotel to stay in Jaipur, while all other types of hotels are almost equally preferred. (See figure: 6)

STATEMENT: 6 Relative importances of different factors in selecting/preferring hotel.

For the purpose of analysis & calculations for different factors of selecting/preferring a Hotel are numbered as below-

Factors	Number	Factors	Number
Low tariff	-1	Uniqueness	-5
Schemes and offers	-2	Personal touch	-6
Luxurious services	-3	Brand image of the hotel	-7
Location	-4	Staff service quality	-8

(See Table: 6.1)

Table of observed value:

To analyze the above data & to test the null hypothesis that “customers don’t have a preference of a hotel” the researcher has applied chi (χ^2) square test as below (See Table: 6.2)-

Calculated value of chi square (See Table: 6.3) = **81.20711**

Table value of chi square at 28 degrees of freedom and 5 % level of significance =**41.337**

Since calculated value is more than the table value the hypothesis is rejected .i.e. Null hypothesis that customers don’t have a preference is rejected and the alternate hypothesis that customers have a preference in selecting a hotel is accepted.

The reasons of this preference can be many and includes the factors above mentioned. The hoteliers need to take into consideration these factors and understand that some factors are more important than others. The hoteliers need to focus on building on the important factors and try to include these into their sales promotions & advertising.

STATEMENT: 7 Influencing factor for selection of a hotel.

On the basis of the observed values(see table:7) the researcher finds that maximum respondents i.e 24% feel that past experience with the hotel is one of the main factor which influences selection of a hotel. Whereas 20% respondents are influenced by brand popularity.(See figure :7)

Thus hoteliers should remember that they need to delight the customers /tourists coming to their hotels & they need to create a brand to attract customers.

So hoteliers need to create USP's & differentiating features to attract customers.

STATEMENT: 8 Importance of different items/Services in a hotel.

The Different Items are numbered for the purpose of analysis as below-

- A. Pleasant greeting and being helped by doorman 1
- B. Minimal waiting time in line at "check-in" 2
- C. Courteously greeted at front desk 3
- D. Reservation in order when I arrive 4
- E. Bell person promptly at my room after "check-in" 5
- F. Bell person telling me about hotel facilities 6
- G. Housekeeping services timely and efficient during your stay 7
- H. Using "special services"--wake-up calls, show or restaurant reservations, 7
- I. Babysitters, etc. 8

The data(see table:8) reveals mixed reactions from respondents and there is no clear cut importance of one big factor but still factors like housekeeping are quite important. Thus overall it's the combination of different factors that may attract different type of customers and hence hoteliers should try to provide a bouquet of services and definitely the biggest bouquet offered will attract maximum tourists/customers (See figure:8). The luxury of yesterday becomes the necessity of today and hence hoteliers should continuously upgrade themselves to provide best and innovative services to its customers. Today's customers are very service quality conscious and only quality services will win long term customers and recommendations.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above data analysis the researcher finds & concludes that Customers/tourists do have a

preference to stay in a particular hotel. There can be many reasons for customer's preference of a hotel and may include –

- A. Past experience of staying in a hotel, brand popularity, quality of services delivered, tariff, cultural and heritage factors.
- B. Rest and relaxation is the main factor for staying in hotel.
- C. Business reasons and attending conferences, seminars etc. are also a very big reason for staying in a hotel. Thus MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences& Exhibitions) tourism is spreading its wings in the Jaipur city.
- D. Culture & Heritage along with nature's beauty (scenery) are the main attractions of a tourist destination.
- E. Budget hotels are the most preferred type of hotel category.
- F. Most of the customers go on a tour only once/twice in a year and many don't have a fixed plan. Thus planned holidaying is still not very popular in India.
- G. Staff service quality, brand image of hotel & schemes and offers are important parameters in selection of a hotel.
- H. Services of all types have an effect on customers. All excellent and innovative services are welcome by the customers and may become a reason for preference of a hotel

Scope for further research

Researcher chose to observe the preference of guest only coming to Jaipur , which is a cultural and heritage site mainly because of restricted time . For further research a more wider approach should be adopted including more geographies , different kind of destinations as it would result in detailed analysis and more directed suggestions on how hotels can attract more guest. To get higher yield of responses a morepersonalized approach towards guest would be recommended.

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Figure1.1:

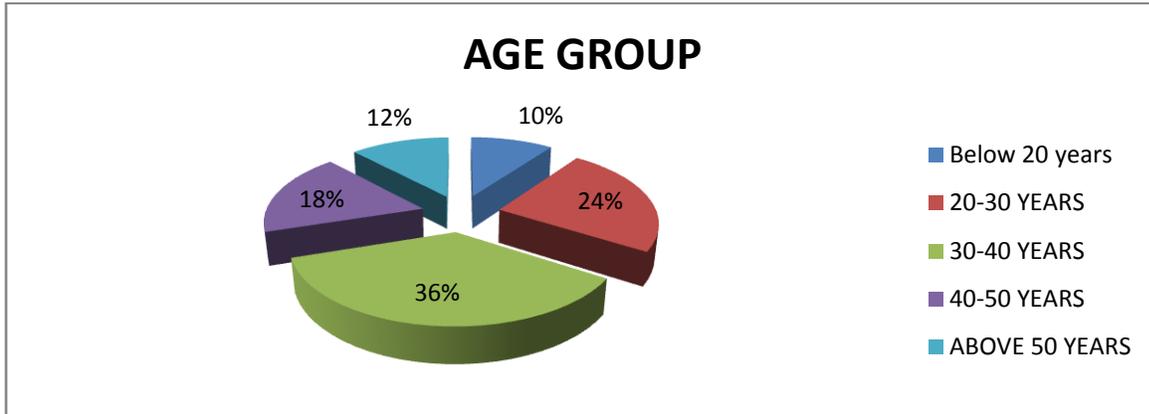


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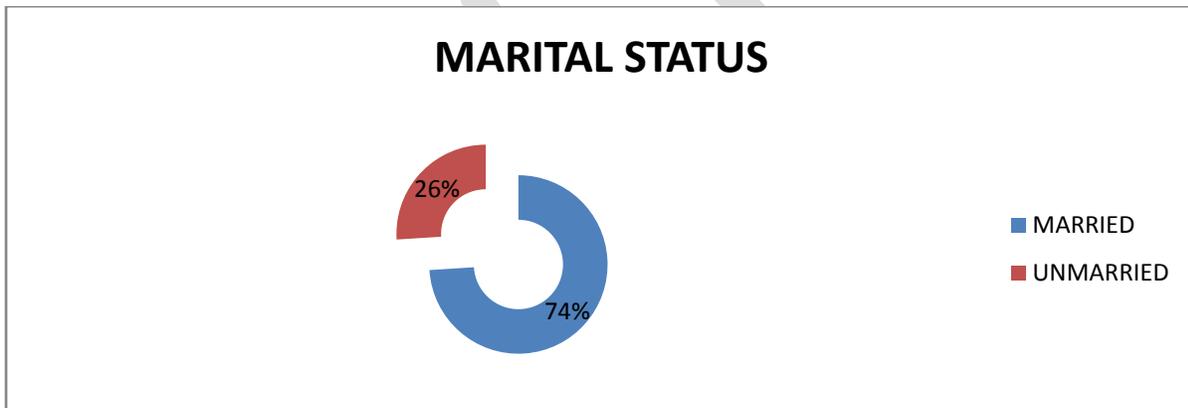


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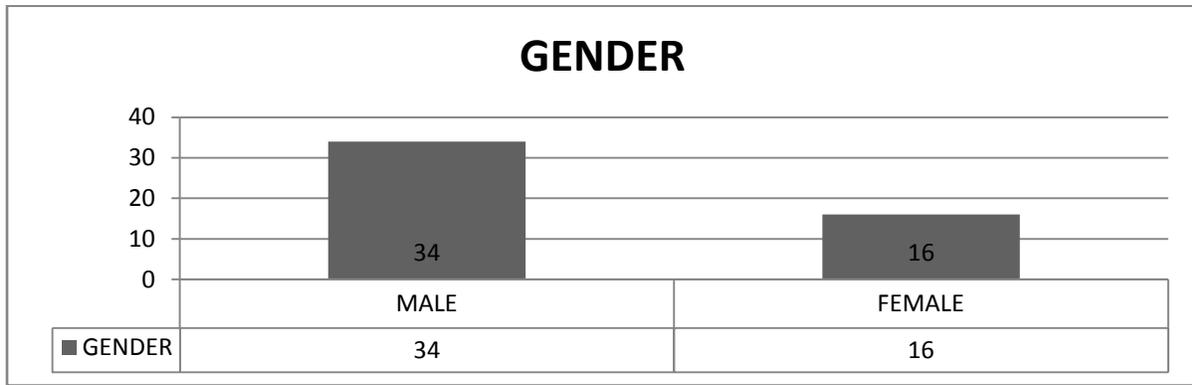


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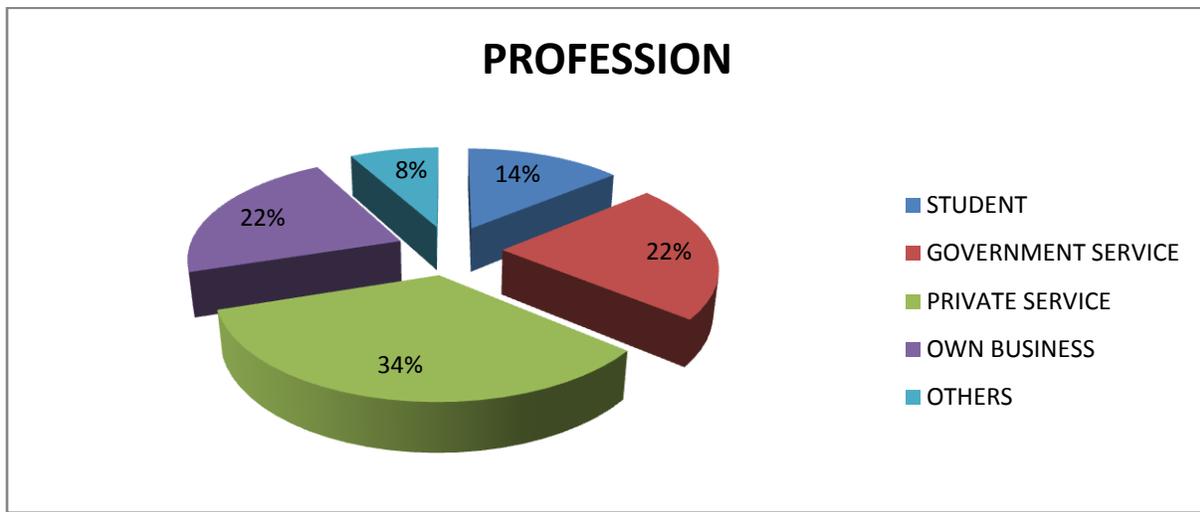


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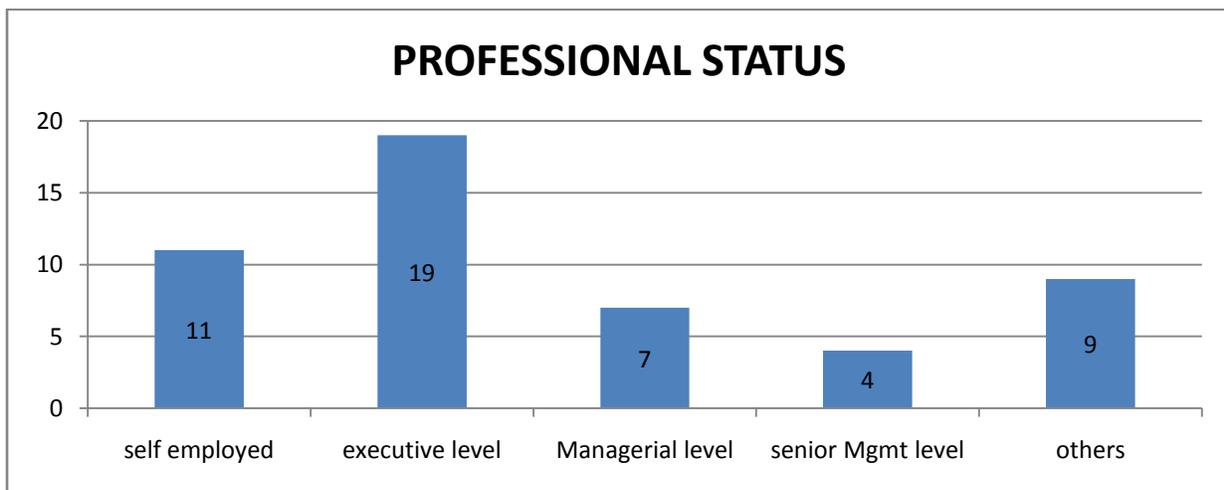


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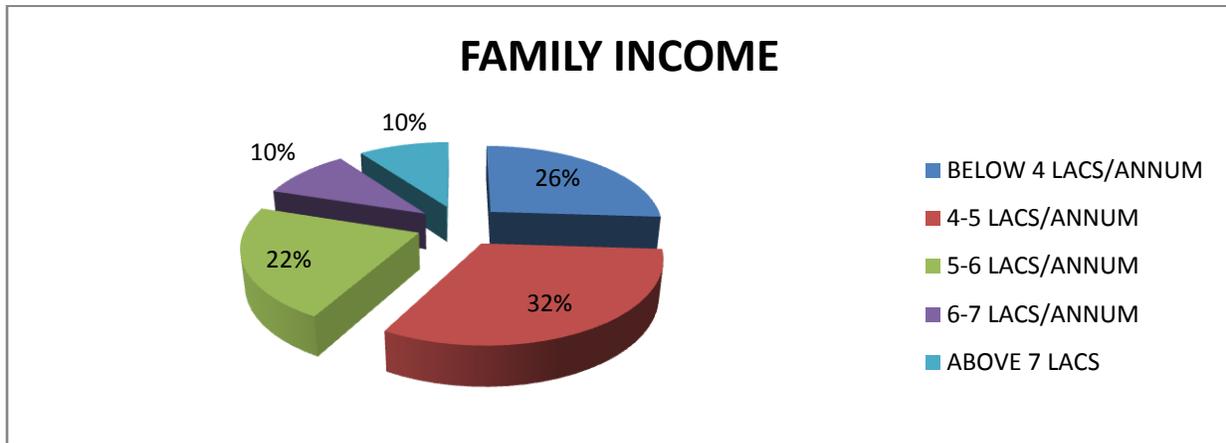


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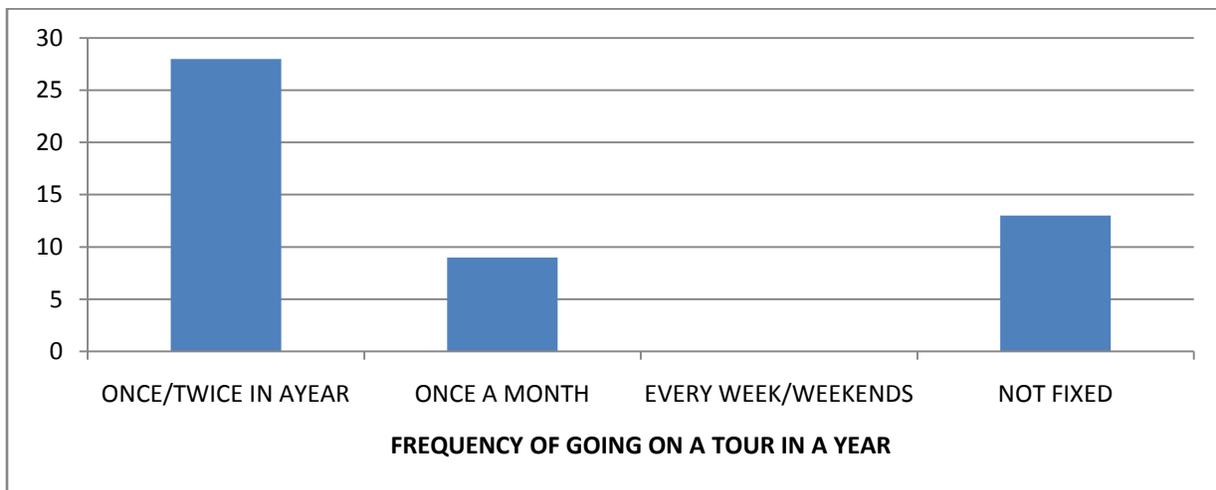


Figure:3

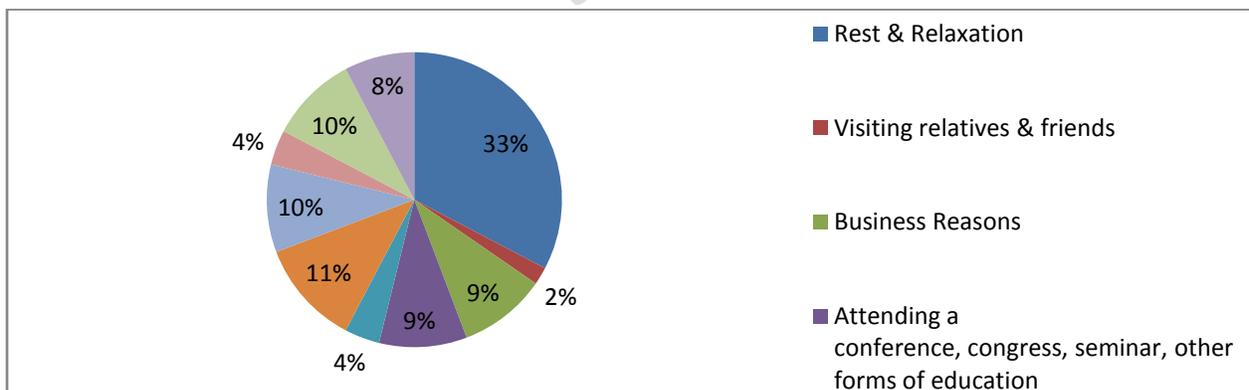


Figure: 4

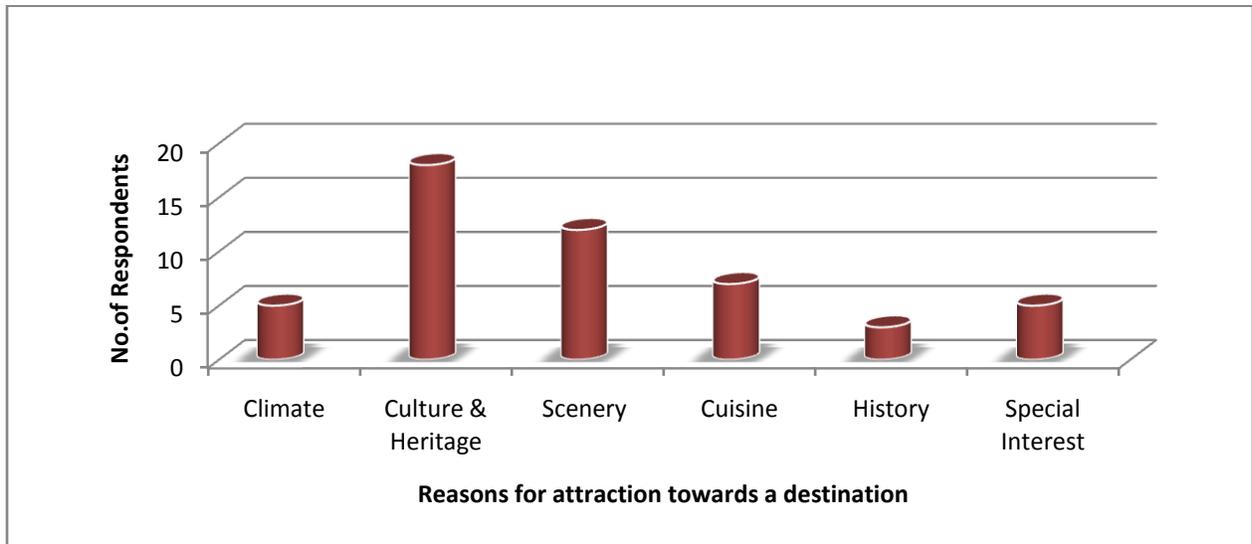


Figure: 5

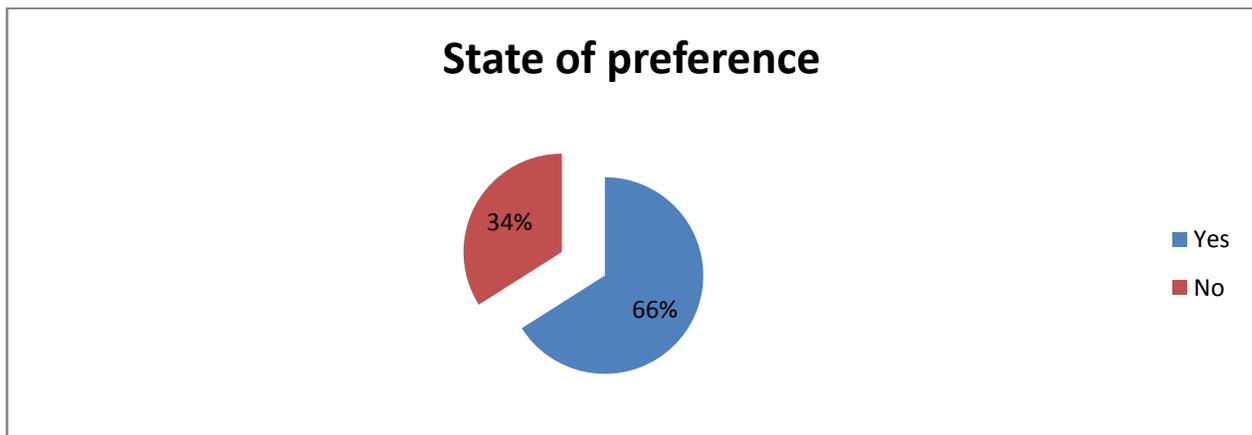


Figure: 6

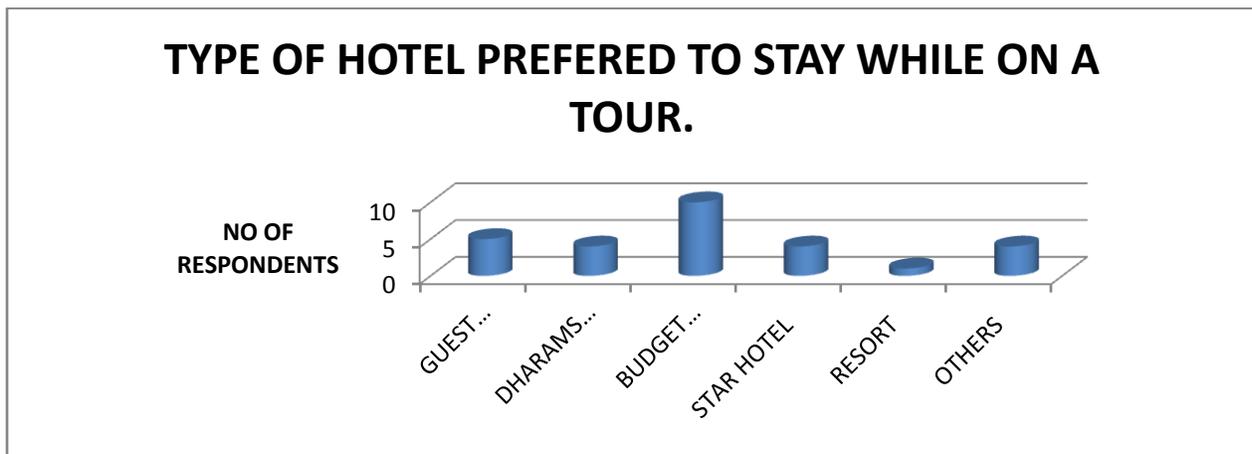


Figure: 7

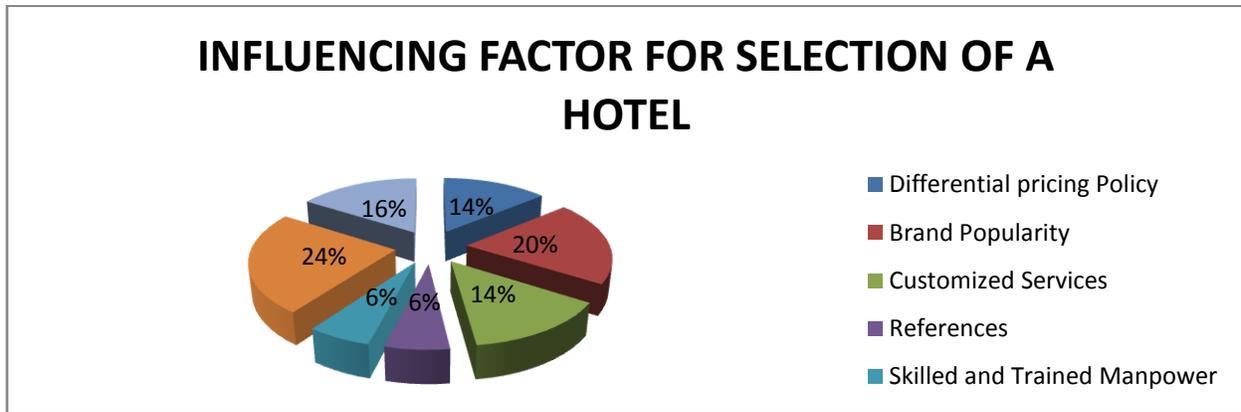


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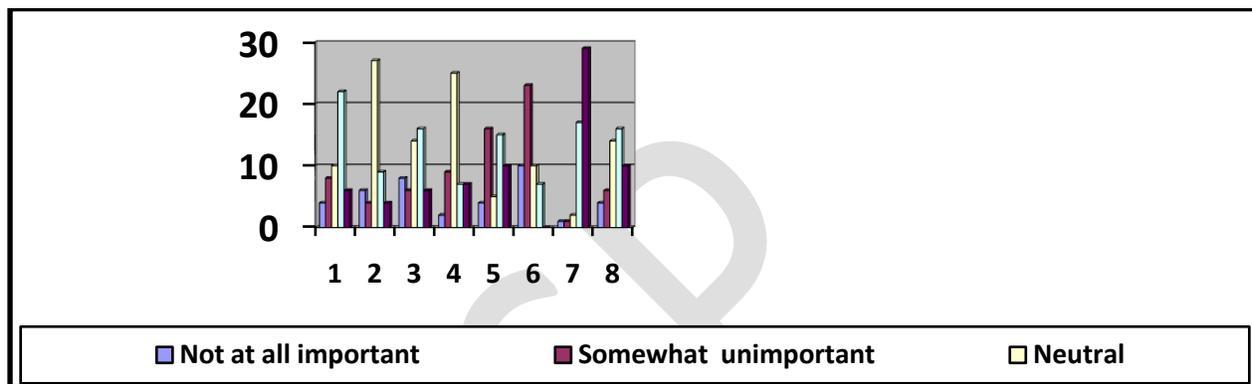


Table of Observed Values:

Table: 1

S.No.	Frequency	Observed value
1	Once/twice in a year	28
2	Once a month	9
3	Every week/weekends	0
4	Not fixed	13
	Total	50

Table: 2

S.No.	Reasons for staying in a hotel	Observed value
1	Rest & Relaxation	17
2	Visiting relatives & friends	01
3	Business Reasons	05
4	Attending a conference, congress, seminar, other forms of education	05
5	Culture	02
6	Fun	06
7	Sports & recreation	05
8	Health	02
9	Religious reasons	05
10	Others	04
	Total	50

Table: 3

Table -4.1

S.No.	Factors/Reasons	Observed value
1	Climate	5
2	Culture & Heritage	18
3	Scenery	12
4	Cuisine	7
5	History	3
6	Special Interest	5
Total		50

S.No.	State of preference	Observed value/No. of respondents
1	Yes	33
2	No	17
Total		50

Table: 4.2

O	E	O-E	O-E ²	O-E ² /E
33	25	8	64	2.56
17	25	-8	64	2.56
TOTAL				5.12

Table: 5

S. No.	Type of Hotel	No. of Respondents	S. No.	Type of Hotel	No. of Respondents
1	Guest House	5	4	Star Hotel	4
2	Dharma shala	4	5	Resort	1
3	Budget Hotel	10	6	Others	4
Total					28

Table: 6.1

Selection Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
	Importance								
Not at all important	5	8	9	6	3	2	5	3	41
Somewhat important	17	5	16	10	22	6	10	10	86
Important	18	9	10	16	12	17	14	10	106
Very important	7	20	7	9	10	13	9	16	91
Extremely important	3	8	8	9	3	12	12	21	76
Total	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	400

Table: 6.2 Table of expected value/frequency as per above formula-

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4
11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2
13.1	13.1	13.1	13.1	13.1	13.1	13.1	13.1

11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2	11.2
8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1

Table: 6.3

S.NO.	O	E	O-E	O-E ²	O-E ² /E
1	5	6.4	-1.4	1.96	0.30625
2	8	6.4	1.6	2.56	0.4
3	9	6.4	2.6	6.76	1.05625
4	6	6.4	-0.4	0.16	0.025
5	3	6.4	-3.4	11.56	1.80625
6	2	6.4	-4.4	19.36	3.025
7	5	6.4	-1.4	1.96	0.30625
8	3	6.4	-3.4	11.56	1.80625
9	17	11.2	5.8	33.64	3.003571
10	5	11.2	-6.2	38.44	3.432143
11	16	11.2	4.8	23.04	2.057143
12	10	11.2	-1.2	1.44	0.128571
13	22	11.2	10.8	116.64	10.41429
14	6	11.2	-5.2	27.04	2.414286
15	10	11.2	-1.2	1.44	0.128571
16	10	11.2	-1.2	1.44	0.128571
17	18	13.1	4.9	24.01	1.832824
18	9	13.1	-4.1	16.81	1.283206
19	10	13.1	-3.1	9.61	0.733588
20	16	13.1	2.9	8.41	0.641985
21	12	13.1	-1.1	1.21	0.092366
22	17	13.1	3.9	15.21	1.161069
23	14	13.1	0.9	0.81	0.061832
24	10	13.1	-3.1	9.61	0.733588
25	7	11.2	-4.2	17.64	1.575
26	20	11.2	8.8	77.44	6.914286
27	7	11.2	-4.2	17.64	1.575
28	9	11.2	-2.2	4.84	0.432143
29	10	11.2	-1.2	1.44	0.128571
30	13	11.2	1.8	3.24	0.289286
31	9	11.2	-2.2	4.84	0.432143
32	16	11.2	4.8	23.04	2.057143
33	3	8.1	-5.1	26.01	3.211111
34	8	8.1	-0.1	0.01	0.001235

35	8	8.1	-0.1	0.01	0.001235
36	9	8.1	0.9	0.81	0.1
37	3	8.1	-5.1	26.01	3.211111
38	12	8.1	3.9	15.21	1.877778
39	12	8.1	3.9	15.21	1.877778
40	21	8.1	12.9	166.41	20.54444
				TOTAL	81.20711

Table: 7

Influencing factors	No. of Respondents
Differential pricing Policy	7
Brand Popularity	10
Customized Services	7
References	3
Skilled and Trained Manpower	3
Past Experience with Hotel	12
Unique Themes	8
TOTAL	50

TABLE - 8

Hotel Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Level Of Importance								
Not at all important	4	6	8	2	4	10	1	4
Somewhat unimportant	8	4	6	9	16	23	1	6
Neutral	10	27	14	25	5	10	2	14
Somewhat important	22	9	16	7	15	7	17	16
Very important	6	4	6	7	10	0	29	10
Total	50							