
Examining Travel Motivations of International Tourists to Amritsar

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Abstract

To address the scarcity of research concerning the constituents of travel motivations of International tourists to the city of Amritsar in Punjab (India), the present study collected a data of 282 International tourists and used Dann's push-pull motivational typology. Factor analysis uncovered six travel motivations: *Escape from routine and relaxation, fulfilling spiritual needs knowledge seeking, destination attributes, accessibility and entertainment activities* to visit Amritsar. The findings reveal that the main motivation of the International tourists was the spectacular Golden Temple along with the cultural and historical attractions and the escape from routine for relaxation remained a major push motive. The findings also provides insights to the tourism authorities of Amritsar about various pull and push motivations and recommends that the service providers and the destination managers in this most visited place of Punjab must ensure tourists satisfaction in order to increase repeat visits and make it the most prized destination among the tourists all across the World.

Keywords: *Travel Motivations, Push and Pull factors, tourist satisfaction*

1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the most growing and diversifying phenomenon globally. The confluence between technology and globalisation along with unique tourist experiences of the tourists has led to the increased demand of tourism all over the world. World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC) forecasts that between 2022-2032, the global contribution to the economy through tourism will grow at an annual rate of 5.8% and the industry will generate 126 million additional jobs (Global Report, WTTC, 2022) and aims to bounce back to become one of the largest growing industry in the World. Seeing the potential of the tourism sector, it is not surprising that many countries across the globe have started recognising development for this sector and trying to perceive the intentions of travellers by understanding their needs and behaviour. Travel motivation remains one of the most studied themes by academicians and researchers in the tourism literature and is seen growing with many studies by the scholars such as Maslow (1943), Gray (1970), Dann (1977, 1981) and Crompton (1979). It has always been argued that "*What makes tourists travel*" and has been countered consistently that the tourists travel to a destination with certain motives or desires which are crucial to understand by the tourism business owners and the authorities planning for the development of tourism in the region. There are varied approaches to understand the behaviour of tourists but the fundamental determinant is to analyse and understand the motivations which are classified as the needs and wants influencing individual behaviour (Pearce and Caltabiano, 1983).

Literature posits that every travel away from home has a motive behind it (Mak, Wong & Chang, 2009). Diverse common broad perspectives on motivations have come across through various studies and Dann's, 1977 Push and Pull framework remains the most conspicuous contribution wherein Push factors emerge from within the individual or as called the intrinsic factors whereas Pull factors are extrinsic and emerge from the physical features and attributes

of a destination which attracts a tourist to choose a particular service or a product (Cha, Mclearry & Uysal, 1995). The present study focuses on the International tourists travel motivations to the city of Amritsar in Punjab (India) also known for the Golden temple (a centre of attention for Sikh pilgrimage and the most visited religious place in the World). Apart from pilgrimage, the city of Amritsar has a rich traditional and cultural history attached to it fascinating tourists from all over the country and world. Thus, the study tries to present a holistic approach to understand the travel motivations of International tourists visiting Amritsar and consequently, the study is expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting the factors that underline tourists visit to the city. The information from the results may be useful to the destination managers and service providers for the purpose of product marketing and development.

2. Literature Review:

Tourist Motivation: Motivation is best described as the aspiration from within the individual that induces for action (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1997). Dann (1981) in a study asserts that it is tourist's state of mind that intrinsically influences them to travel and explore new destinations. It always remains a concern in tourism research as to why and for what reasons people travel and researchers have cited several theories of motivation which are being used extensively in tourism literature. Literature on travel motivation reveals that it has been mostly studied based on two dimensions where the first one is the travellers own desire or internal force that pushes for a visit to a destination and the second one is the pull dimension where the traveller is attracted towards a destination because of its alluring features and when used together it is called as Push and pull factors of motivation (Yuan & McDonald, 1990). Further, there are several studies on travel motivation and naming few of them includes: : Gray's Sunlust and Wanderlust (1970) typology of tourists, Dann's (1977) Push and Pull theory, Optimal Arousal Theory (Iso-Aloha, 1980), Pearce (1988) Travel Career Ladder and many other shaped or modified versions.

2.1 Push and Pull Motivation

Most of the tourism studies related to travel motivation are based on push and pull theory developed by Dann, 1977 which describes the motivating factors leading people to travel and leave their home place. According to Dann, the push factors are those inherited in the people through their personality, social behaviour, learning from society, friends and family. These factors push the individuals to achieve what they desire for earning satisfaction out of it. Pull factors are external motivations which comes from destination features offered and situational conditions which impels a tourist to visit a destination (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Dann (1977) categorised the push and pull motives as: *anomie and ego-enhancement*. Anomie means the wish to transform or outstrip the feeling of isolation from everyday routine and ego-enhancement emanates from the need of recognition, which is gained through the status conferred by travel (Fodness, 1994).

Push motivations creates the reasons for travel decision making and hence satisfies the internal wants of the travellers (Niemelä, 2010). The fundamental motivations as per Dann, 1977 are the escape from routine and the feeling of prestige along with social interaction, relaxation and exploration of new things. A study of International tourists from (United States of America, United Kingdom and Australia) travelling to Thailand reveals that foreign land experience remained the most favourite push motivation followed by novel culture, routine escape and thrilling activities (Yiamjanya & Wongleedee, 2014). Another study of Taiwanese tourists retired from their service cites five push motivations (relaxation, ego enhancement,

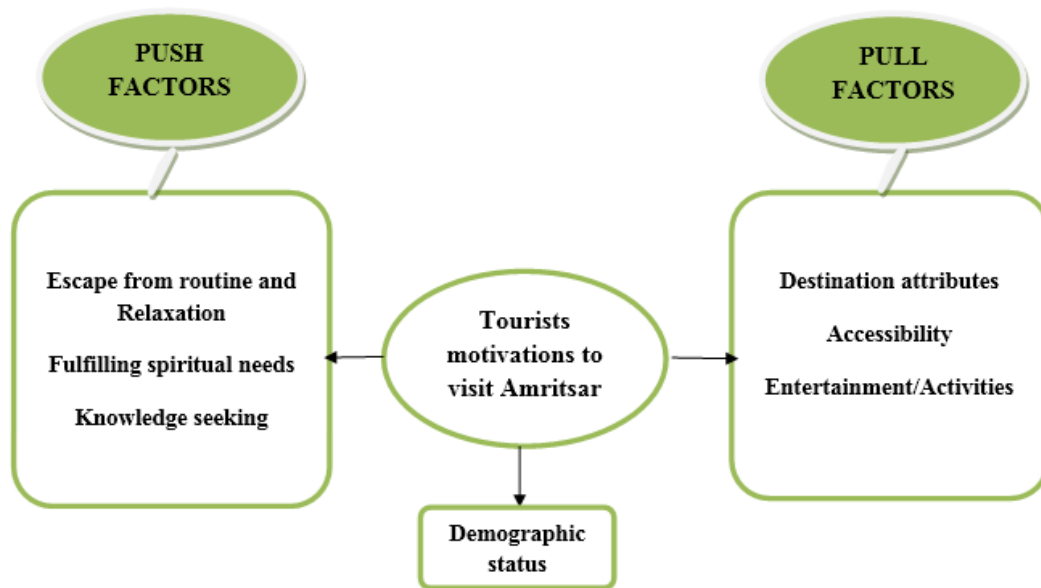
self esteem, knowledge seeking and social interaction) (Jang and Wu 2006). The Push and Pull motivations has been researched in various studies (Caber & Albayrak, 2016; Crompton, 1979; Lubbe, 1998; Mohammad & Som, 2010; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994; Yousefi & Marzuki, 2015) wherein factors such as novelty, escape from daily routine, fulfilment of spiritual needs, self-actualisation, relaxation and rest are cited for push motivations.

Pull motivations

Pull motivation for travelling generates from the attractions and places of interest (e.g., destination features like weather climate, sea etc.) (Dann,1977). According to Witt and Mountinho (1989) attractions of a destination are purely based upon three factors namely: (static, dynamic and current decision) where the static includes the accessibility, weather and climate, historical and cultural attractions and the natural landscape. Dynamic factors includes accommodation and gastronomic features, entertainment and festivities and the current decision includes marketing, planning and promotional strategies including the prices at the destination and the visitors place of origin.

Klenosky (2002) in a study titled: *The "Pull" of Tourism destination* explains that the pull factors are external or extrinsic in nature and includes attributes, appealing features of a place which in turn builds the image or perception of a destination and the image further determines the destination choice of the tourists (Shih,1986). Pull factors are the external motivations that arouse a tourist to visit a particular destination (Al- Haj Mohammad & Mat Som, 2010). A study on the push and pull motivations of the tourists to Thailand by Yiamjanya and Wongleedee (2014) states that culture of the destination and its cuisine are most important pull motivation which arouses them to visit Thailand. Further, the tourist place remains the most attractive pull motivation for the tourists and is admired for its alluring features and adequate planning for its development and growth must be ensured so that the tourists always remain excited to experience it (Yiamjanya and Wongleedee, 2014). Studies also indicate that a tourist place is also chosen because of certain other attributes which includes safety and security, entertainment, attitude of the local community towards tourists, infrastructure in terms of sightseeing, living and gastronomic facilities and good means of transportation (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991; Formica, 2000).

Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework of the study



Source: Developed from the literature

3. Research Methodology

Geographical setting: The research was conducted in Amritsar, the most visited place in the state of Punjab, India by the International and Domestic tourists and a World famous centre for Sikh pilgrimage (Golden Temple). Punjab is also the transit point and gateway for the tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir. Tourist arrivals in Amritsar remains highest in the state. Punjab is ranked at number one in terms of Foreign Tourist Visits in 2021 in India which was 308135 tourists (India tourism statistics, 2021).

Table: 1 Share of Top 10 States/UTs of India in Number of Foreign Tourist Visits in 2021

Rank	State/UT	Foreign Tourist Visits in 2021	
		Number	Percentage Share (%)
1	Punjab	308135	29.2
2	Maharashtra #	185643	17.6
3	Delhi #	100178	9.5
4	Karnataka	72487	6.9
5	Kerala	60487	5.7
6	Tamil Nadu	57622	5.5
7	Uttar Pradesh	44737	4.2
8	Madhya Pradesh	41601	3.9
9	West Bengal	34828	3.3
10	Rajasthan	34806	3.3
Total of Top 10		940524	89.2
Others		114118	10.8
Total		1054642	100.0

Source: State/ UT Tourism Departments (India Tourism Statistics, 2021)

Measurement and Sampling:

In this study, the participants were selected with a convenience sampling technique which is a quantitative research technique that the participants are volunteered for the study. The convenience sampling method is the easiest way of reaching the individuals who would like to participate in the questionnaire. This method also helps to collect the questionnaire data with the most convenient cost in a short period of time. The samples for the study were drawn from The Golden Temple site (the most visited by everyone) and surrounding nearby attractions like Jallianwala Bagh (a historical attraction, witness to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919). A self-administered questionnaire focused on demographic variables, push and pull motivation statements concerning the needs and wants of the tourists at destination were distributed for the survey. The study used quantitative method of analysis with convenience sampling method to select participants desirous for sharing their experiences.

Demographic questions included gender, age, occupation, nationality, length of stay at the destination and travel party. The questionnaire design was adapted from previous studies on travel motivations by the researcher's such as Dann (1977, 1981); Klenosky (2002), Uysal & Jurowski, 1994; Mohammad & Som, 2010; Yousefi & Marzuki, 2015). Push factors pertaining to tourists motivations for visiting Amritsar consisted of 16 statements with three dimensions and similarly 13 pull motivations with three dimensions comprising the external factors related with the tourist destination attributes were taken for the study. A five point

Likert scale was used to appraise push and pull motivations of the tourists with 5= strongly agree to 1= strongly disagree. Reliability was assessed and cronbach alpha was 0.8422. Three hundred fifty questionnaires were distributed among International tourists at two famous locations of Amritsar during May-July 2022, out of which 68 were returned and 282 responses formed the part of the analysis (response rate was 81%).

4. Research Findings:

Demographic profile of the respondents:

Table: 2 reveals that 65% were males and the rest females, 41% respondents were in the age group of 31-40 followed by 27% between the age group of 21-30 years, 24% in the bracket of 41-50, 5% were in 51-60 age group with 3% of them more than 60 years. Mostly 82% respondents were married and 34 % came from America followed by United Kingdom, 30%. When it comes to the number of visits 58% were first timers and interestingly 30% came for the second time. Tourists who came with family and friends occupied the highest percentage of 53% and repeat visit to Amritsar was mentioned by 76%, recommendation of the place to others constituted for 81% which is a fair good number to mark Amritsar an appealing destination for the International tourists.

Table: 2. Demographic Profile of Respondents (n=282)

Variables	Descriptions	Number	Percentage %
<i>Gender</i>	Male	184	65
	Female	98	35
<i>Age</i>	21 – 30	76	27
	31 – 40	116	41
	41 – 50	68	24
	51 – 60	14	5
	More than 60	8	3
<i>Marital Status</i>	Single	48	17
	Married	230	82
	Widowed	4	1
<i>Nationality</i>	America	96	34
	Africa	14	5
	United Kingdom	84	30
	Australia	56	19
	France	24	9
	Germany	8	3
	<i>Number of Visit</i>	First time	164
	Second time	86	30
	Third time	8	4
	More than 3 times	22	8
<i>Travel Company</i>	Family	82	30
	Family and friends	148	53
	Package Tour	32	11
	Others	16	6
<i>Would come to Amritsar as repeat visitors?</i>	Yes	214	76
	No	68	24

<i>Would recommend Amritsar as a destination to others?</i>	Yes	228	81
	No	54	19

Source: Developed for the study using data from the questionnaire survey

Analysis of Push and Pull factors:

Tables 3 and 4, respectively, rank the mean values of push and pull motive items from the highest to the lowest. In Table 2, five items recorded mean values above 4 while ten items were placed between the ranges of 3.46 to 3.98. The item *to travel to a new place that I have not visited before* recorded the highest mean value of 4.12, while item on *to increase my knowledge about a new place* scored the lowest mean value of 2.38. In Table 3, Visit to The Golden temple, Amritsar the site of new seven wonders’ obtained the highest mean value of 4.49. Other pull motivations like heritage and historical significance, local food, cultural events, price value. Entertainment, religious places, music, fun and entertainment, quality of the tourist place, accessibility and convenience of travel are also considered significant pull factors as they obtained high mean values. Outdoor activities were placed at the lowest range (mean=2.97).

Table: 3 Mean Values of Push Motive Items

SR NO.	Push factors	Ranking	Mean
1	To travel to a new place that I have not visited before	1	4.12
2	To experience new and different cultures or traditions	1	4.08
3	To appreciate natural environment	1	4.02
4	To explore cultural resources	1	4.01
5	To increase knowledge about a new tourist destination	1	4.01
6	To see the living style of people belonging to different cultures	2	3.98
7	To exchange custom and traditions	2	3.97
8	To reconnect with spirituality	2	3.94
9	To satisfy the desire to be at a different else	3	3.89
10	To meet new people in a foreign land	3	3.78
11	To participate in local activities	3	3.72
12	To sightsee touristic places	3	3.64
13	To physically relax and enjoy	4	3.62
14	To meet local people	4	3.59
15	To fulfil my curiosity of visiting a new country	4	3.46
16	To increase my knowledge about a new place	4	2.38

Source: Developed for the study using data from the questionnaire survey

Table: 4 Mean Values of Pull Motive Items

SR NO.	Pull factors	Ranking	Mean
1	Visit to The Golden Temple, Amritsar	1	4.49
2	Heritage and Historical significance	1	4.41
3	Local food	1	4.39
4	Cultural events	1	4.28
5	Price value	1	4.12

6	entertainment	2	3.98
7	Religious place	2	3.97
8	Local music and culture	3	3.94
9	Fun and entertainment	3	3.89
10	Quality of the tourist place	3	2.78
11	Accessibility	4	3.72
12	Convenience of travel	4	3.64
13	Outdoor activities	4	2.97

Source: Developed for the study using data from the questionnaire survey

Factor analysis of push and pull factors:

To identify motivational dimensions, principal component factor analysis was used to group the push and pull motive items with common characteristics. Three push motivational factors were analyzed using Varimax Rotation procedure to delineate the underlying dimensions associated with travel motivations. The same procedure was also applied to 14 pull motive items. All factors had an eigenvalue greater than one. The composite reliability test indicated that the reliability coefficients for push factors stood at 0.72 and 0.73 for pull factors.

Table 5 reports that the factor analysis of 16 push attributes results in three factor groupings, which accounted for 81.64 per cent of the variance. The factor groupings of push factors are: Escape from Routine and Relaxation, Fulfilling spiritual needs and knowledge seeking. Among the three factors, Escape from the routine and relaxation is the most important push motivation for the tourists to travel to Amritsar and explained 35.68 percent of the variance (Eigen value is 5.012). The second important push factor is fulfilling spiritual needs with a variance of 25.68 percent and (Eigen value=2.687). The results highlight that escape from routine and relaxation along with the spiritual need were the motivations or the intrinsic desires of the tourists which made them choose Amritsar as the destination to visit. The intrinsic factor that highly motivates tourists from the results of the study (*escape from the routine*) is identical to the conceptualization of Dann, G. (1977) study where *Anomie*, a travel motive is portrayed (a feeling of isolation obtained in everyday life and eagerness to move away from it).

Table: 5 Principal Components of Push Motive Items

Push factors		Factor loading	Eigen Value	Variance
Factor 1 →	<i>Escape from Routine and Relaxation</i>			
Statement ↓		↓		
1	Escaping from the routine	0.728	5.012	35.687
2	Getting away from crowds	0.657		
3	This is the time I can escape from stress in my daily life	0.663		
4	This is the time I can be away from the routine life	0.584		
5	I want to enjoy and make myself happy while travelling	0.537		
Factor 2 →	<i>Fulfilling spiritual needs</i>			
6	To relax spiritually	0.627	2.687	25.681

7	To have the chance to see Golden Temple (Amritsar)	0.568		
8	To seek spiritual comfort	0.725		
9	Getting closer to something sacred	0.691		
10	Visit to sacred places heals me spiritually	0.662		
Factor 3 →	<i>Knowledge seeking</i>			
11	I want to experience cultures that are different from mine	0.728	2.637	20.281
12	I want to see how other people live and their way of life	0.691		
13	I want to see something new and exciting	0.589		
14	I want to see something different that I don't normally see	0.718		
15	I want to travel and go somewhere with a different Environment	0.668		
16	I can fulfil my dream and self-curiosity about the country I want to visit	0.627		
	Total Variance explained		81.649	
	Total Scale Reliability Alpha		0.72	
	KMO		0.71	

Source: Developed for the study using data from the questionnaire survey

Results presented in the Table: 6 indicate that 13 pull attributes formed three factor groups which accounted for 77.23 percent of the variance. The factor groupings of pull factors include: destination attribute, accessibility and entertainment/activities. Out of the three factors the most important pull motivation came out to be the destination attributes for the tourists and explained 30.162 percent of the variance (Eigen value is 2.614) followed by accessibility and entertainment of the place. The most alluring destination attribute for visiting Amritsar is the Golden Temple and its image in the mindset of the tourists which remains an extrinsic pull factor and is similar to the results of the study undertaken by Klonsky (2002) where the image of the destination entices the travellers to visit.

Table: 6 Principal Components of Pull Motive Items

Pull factors		Factor loading	Eigen Value	Variance
Factor 1 →	Destination attributes			
Statement ↓		↓		
1	The Golden Temple, Amritsar being the World famous tourist destination	0.681	2.614	30.162

2	Historical significance	0.632		
3	Cultural events (festivals, music and dance)			
4	Local cuisine	0.622		
5	Religious site	0.524		
Factor 2 →	Accessibility		2.107	25.823
6	I travelled because of travel distance	0.725		
7	I travelled because of the convenience of travelling and ease of tour arrangement	0.611		
8	I travelled because of the quality of tourist places	0.627		
9	I travelled because of the reasonable price	0.630		
Factor 3 →	Entertainment/Activities		2.141	21.251
10	I travelled for a good source of entertainment at a tourist place	0.715		
11	I travelled to have fun and enjoyment	0.705		
12	I travelled to enjoy local music and culture	0.681		
13	I travelled because of good outdoor activity at a tourist place	0.624		
Total Variance Explained			77.236	
Total Scale Reliability Alpha			0.73	
KMO			0.77	

Source: Developed for the study using data from the questionnaire survey

5. Discussion:

In an increasingly demanding and competitive market, success of the destination is guided by a thorough analysis of tourist's motivations along with their loyalty and satisfaction (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). The study examined the motivations of International tourists and tries to provide a holistic approach towards the identification of antecedents of their visit to the city of Amritsar. The study contributes to the overall understanding of the intrinsic and extrinsic also called as *Push and Pull* motivations of the International tourists to Amritsar. The most appealing pull motivational feature is the Golden temple and other tourist attractions of Amritsar along with the desire to escape from the routine and relaxation which acts as the push motive for the International tourists. Results exhibit that most of the tourists wants to revisit Amritsar and would like to recommend others for a visit is consistent with the study of Prayag's 2009, where destination image is an important predictor towards the revisit intention during tourist's evaluation of destination image. Thus we can say that International tourists are fascinated by the pull motivations of the city due to its image, cultural attractions, food or cuisine, accessibility features and the entertainment facilities which are consistent with the

previous literature (Dann, 1977; Caber & Albayrak, 2016; Crompton, 1979; Lubbe, 1998; Mohammad & Som, 2010; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994). The information about the travel motivations of the tourists would be effective for estimating future travel trends to Amritsar

Limitations and Suggestions:

Although, the present study tries to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting the factors that underlie International tourists' visits to Amritsar but this study has certain limitations that need to be addressed in future research. First the study used the samples drawn only from The Golden temple site and therefore a bias in the study cannot be ruled out for not taking samples from the accommodation (hotels) where International tourists stayed or the International airport of Amritsar where a more decisive survey could have been conducted. Secondly, the other variables like the influence of demographics on push and pull motivations has not been the part of the study which can also suggest and improve future recommendations to the stakeholders. The study can be replicated with the domestic tourists belonging to different cultures and regions of the country as Amritsar witness a huge gathering of people from within India. Another study can be undertaken for measuring relationships among motivations, satisfaction, and revisit intention

Tourist motivation is a precursor to destination selection and hence an insight on destination choice features would go a long way making it conducive for the service providers, especially tour operators and travel agents in packaging tailored tours to prospective tourists planning their travel to one of the most visited place in the World (Amritsar).

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