

ARE THERE 'HYGIENE-MOTIVATION' FACTORS IN THE CHOICE OF INDIA AS A TOURIST DESTINATION? A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING APPROACH

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Abstract

This study examines the role of motivational factors in the selection of India as a travel destination, using Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation (Hygiene-Motivation model) as a theoretical foundation. By examining how stereotypes about India influence tourists' decision making, this study categorises motivational factors into hygiene and motivation categories and examines their influence on destination choice. A survey conducted at the Romanian Tourism Fair in February 2019 with 729 participants forms the basis for this analysis. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was applied to assess the relationships between these factors. The study reveals two main types of factors that influence tourists: Hygiene factors (e.g. accessibility, comfort, food and overall quality of services) and motivational factors (e.g. cultural richness, scenic beauty and local traditions). The study shows that stereotypes about India play a crucial role in shaping tourists' priorities — those who have negative stereotypes are more likely to focus on hygiene factors, such as ensuring that basic service expectations are met. In addition, while motivational factors still play an important role, elements such as natural beauty and cultural experiences take centre stage in the travel decision.

Keywords: stereotypes in tourism, Hygiene-motivation theory, destination choice, India, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

JEL Classification: Z30, C10, D91

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1. Introduction

This study offers a new perspective on the role of motivational factors in the choice of a travel destination. Numerous studies over time have identified and categorised motivational factors (Nicholson and Pearce, 2001; Van Zyl and Botha, 2003; Lim, Kim and Lee, 2016) depending on the type of motivational stimulus.

The present approach is based on the two-factor theory of motivation (hygiene theory) (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman, 1959) and attempts to understand how the motivational factors affect the choice of a travel destination. We assume that the respective factors do not have the same motivational potential. Some of them rather represent requirements that are considered mandatory to continue the motivational process and others have a real influence on the choice of a destination. In other words, some aspects of travel must fulfil an expected level of quality in order for the destination decision process to continue. If these factors are below the level expected by the tourist, it becomes less likely that the trip will be taken. This category includes, for example, travelling conditions, accommodation and food. While it is not impossible to take a trip just for a "cheap" plane ticket or to try out a particular cuisine, this is unlikely to be the case when travelling long distances, such as to India. The second category of factors is truly motivating and represents the real reasons why tourists travel to a particular destination.

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The paper includes a literature review section that discusses the role of stereotypes in tourism, the important factors in choosing a destination and the attractiveness of a destination, dimensions that form the basis for the proposed model. The paper continues with the methodology, results and discussion section and ends with the conclusions, limitations and practical implications section.

2. Literature review and hypotheses

This section deals with important aspects of destination choice such as stereotypes, motivational factors and the attractiveness of destinations.

2.1 Stereotypes

The study of stereotypes is an essential concept in tourism research as a person's cognitive evaluation can lead to subsequent emotions and behaviours that are important for sustainable tourism development (Anderson et al., 2015).

The results showed that international stereotypes had a direct effect on cognitive and affective image and an indirect effect on travel intention; moreover, the effects of stereotypes were equally strong among visitors and non-visitors to a particular destination (Chen et al., 2016). In addition to the image of the destination, tourists' stereotypes also influence relationships between hosts and guests (Tse and Tung, 2020).

Country stereotypes, i.e. socially shared beliefs and judgements about the typical characteristics of a particular country, play an important role in international tourism (Herz and Diamantopoulos, 2013). As with all stereotypes, country stereotypes are by definition subjective perceptions, as they represent "distinctive characteristics ascribed to a country and its inhabitants by a group or groups of outsiders" (Lehtonen, 2005, p. 62). However, the subjective nature of stereotypes does not make them any less influential in decision-making processes. Empirical studies linking country stereotypes to the evaluation of products and brands from these countries show that stereotypical beliefs are automatically formed at the country level (Martin et al., 2011) and subsequently influence overall impressions and guide reactions to products, brands and services (Herz and Diamantopoulos, 2013). The link between country stereotypes and affective reactions to these stereotypes contributes to a better understanding of the role that emotions play in tourists' behaviour (Micevski, Diamantopoulos and Erdbruegger, 2021).

Tung, King and Tse (2020) show that destination management organisations should manage both positive and negative stereotypes of tourists, suggesting that stereotypes can influence how tourists evaluate the factors that determine destination choice. These factors are presented below.

2.2 Factors influencing the choice of a destination

Since motivation can be considered as one of the most important aspects of a set of variables that explain tourists' behaviour, psychological studies on tourists mainly focus on their motivations (Devesa et al., 2010), with the process of choosing a destination being inextricably linked to the motivation to travel (Lim, Kim and Lee, 2016).

Lim, Kim and Lee (2016) showed that the motivations of tourists visiting a destination for the first time are as follows: "relaxation and recreation", "novelty", "self-exploration" and "accessibility" and the motivations of tourists returning were 'experience and sightseeing', "travelling comfort", 'self-exploration' and 'accessibility'.

Many studies on event tourism have focussed on motivation (Bowen and Daniels, 2005; Park et al., 2009, among many others). Most of these studies have built their theoretical framework on two main theories:

1. The push-pull theory (Dann, 1977; 1981) states that people are motivated to travel by push factors (e.g. their emotional needs) and pull factors (e.g. the offer of a particular destination). The theory was later developed further by Crompton (1979), who proved that push factors not only determine when a person decides to travel, as claimed by Dann (1977), but also where they travel.
2. The search and escape theory (Iso-Ahola, 1982), derived from the leisure desire theory (Iso-Ahola, 1980; 1983), states that people travel away from home to escape a stressful or boring life and to seek personal rewards and relaxation. Iso-Ahola (1990) also argued that the two motives are not mutually

exclusive, as it is possible for a person to be driven by both motives simultaneously. He identified two dimensions for each of the two factors: the personal (psychological) dimension and the interpersonal (social) dimension (Iso-Ahola, 1990). In other words, a person may engage in tourism activities simultaneously for reasons of cultural enrichment (psychological dimension) and socialisation (social dimension). In another register, Crompton (2003) shows that the motivational hygiene factors identified by Herzberg as influencing job satisfaction (Emilian et al., 2004) can contribute to understanding the satisfaction of visitors to an event. Hygiene attributes would refer to the general infrastructure elements that form the platform or foundation on which a meaningful event develops and which are a necessary but not sufficient condition for visitor satisfaction. Satisfaction only results from the visitor's interaction with the motivating attributes that characterise the event and attract people.

In view of the motivational factors identified in numerous studies on the one hand and the theory of hygiene motivation on the other, we suggest grouping the factors that motivate the choice of a destination into primary "hygiene factors" (accessibility or flight duration, comfort of accommodation, varied, specific food, variety of tourist services, local guides, i.e., tourist attractions, etc.). i.e. tourist support and favourable prices in relation to the services), which in themselves do not have the potential to motivate the choice of a destination, but which could discourage the choice if they do not meet the level expected by the tourist, and motivating factors, which in themselves have the power to lead to the choice of a destination. Based on the theories presented above, these factors have been categorised into main motivating factors (beauty of the landscape, cultural visits, local traditions and customs, calendar of events) and supporting motivating factors (entertainment options, nightlife, interaction with the local community, the possibility to practise some sports).

Based on the analysis, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H1: There is a direct and positive relationship between stereotypes about India and the factors that influence the decision to travel to India as a tourist.

Considering the grouping of factors into the two categories (hygiene and motivation), hypothesis H1 is divided as follows:

H1a: Stereotypes directly influence the primary "hygiene" factors for choosing to travel to India.

H1b: Stereotypes directly influence the main motivating factors for choosing to travel to India.

H1c: Stereotypes directly influence the supporting motivating factors for choosing to travel to India.

2.3 The attractiveness of a destination

The image of a destination has been extensively analysed in the literature since 1970 (Dogra and Karri, 2021). Image is a competitive factor that is influenced by both the intended and unintended actions of actors operating in a particular destination, as well as environmental elements beyond the control of these actors (Kock, Josiassen and Assaf, 2016). The choice of destination is influenced by the perception of the offer and not by the actual offer. Country images serve as schemas that influence the patterns of processing information about the country, allow conclusions to be drawn about the nature of the country's products and subsequently guide individuals' evaluations and behavioural responses to these products (Laroche et al., 2005). These schemas contain stereotypical beliefs about the characteristics of a country and these beliefs are generalised to a specific population/country (Finkel and Baumeister, 2019).

Considering the factors that influence the choice of a destination and the attractiveness of that destination, we formulate the following hypotheses:

H2: There is a direct relationship between the primary "hygiene" factors influencing the choice of a trip to India and the attractiveness of a destination in India.

H3: There is a direct relationship between the main motivating factors for choosing a trip to India and the attractiveness of a destination in India.

H4: There is a direct relationship between the supporting motivating factors for choosing a trip to India and the attractiveness of a destination in India.

Considering these hypotheses, the conceptual model to be tested can be represented as follows (Figure 1):

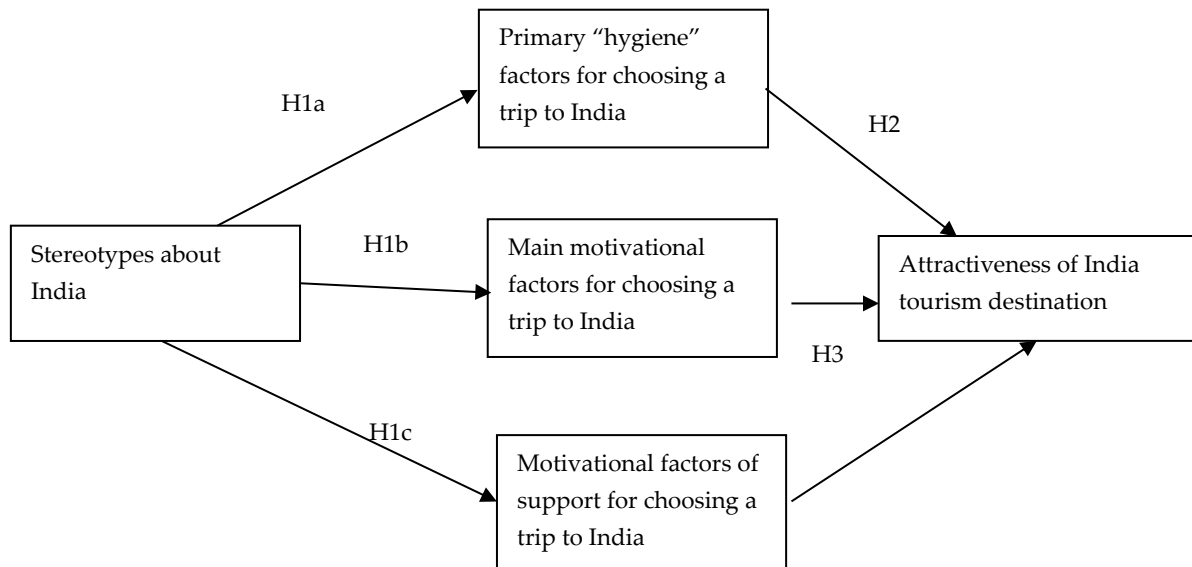


Fig. no.1. The conceptual model

Source: Developed by author

3. Methodology

The study was conducted on a sample of 729 visitors to the Romanian Tourism Fair in February 2019. The data was collected by students from the Faculty of Business and Tourism who were present at the tourism fair, interacted with the visitors and supervised them in the self-completion of the questionnaire. The students were trained on the research purpose, objectives and sample selection criteria. The data was transferred from the paper medium to an Excel database between 27 and 30 May 2019. Excel was used for data management, while structural equation modelling (SEM) using Warp PLS 5.0 software was developed for data analysis. Structural equation modelling aims to estimate the dependency relationships between a set of constructs included in a model (Malhotra, Nunan and Birks, p. 796). A purposive sample was used to select the participants. The structure of the sample was as follows:

Table 1. The sample structure

Variables of the sample		Number of respondents	Percent
Age	18-25 years	140	19,2%
	26-35 years	180	24,7%
	36-45 years	165	22,6%
	46-55 years	161	22,1%
	56-65 years	57	7,8%
	Over 65 years	26	3,6%
Gender	Male	352	48,3%
	Female	377	51,7%
Education	Middle school	34	4,7%
	High school	241	33,1%
	University	354	48,6%
	Postgraduate studies	100	13,7%
Total		729	100%

Source: Self-developed based on Excel calculation

The latent variables used to define the model are reflective, being presented in Table 2. Each latent variable comprises several items measured by using Likert scale (ranging from 1-Strongly disagree to 5 Strongly agree) and semantic differential (1-Not at all important to 5-Very important). In order to assess the scale reliability, Cronbach Alpha and composite reliability were evaluated. As the values are greater than 0.7, it results the construct is reliable (Malhotra, Nunan and Birks, 2017).

Table 2. The latent variables

Latent variable	Item	Cronbach Alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Stereotypes about India	India is a poor country	0.754	0.860	0.674
	It is dangerous to travel to India			
	India does not have a national sport			
	It's a rainy climate all the time			
	India confronts with dangerous diseases			
Primary "hygiene" factors for choosing a trip to India	Accessibility (flight duration)	0.819	0.870	0.532
	The comfort of accommodation			
	Diverse and specific food			
	Tourism services diversity			
	Local guides (tourist assistance)			
Advantageous price in relation to services				
Main motivating factors for choosing a trip to India	The beauty of the landscape	0.814	0.879	0.647
	The cultural visits			
	Local traditions and habits			
	The calendar of events			
Supporting motivating factors for choosing a trip to India	Entertainment opportunities	0.807	0.874	0.637
	Nighttime recreation			
	Interaction with the local community			
	The possibility of practicing sports			
Attractiveness of India tourism destination	India is a fascinating land	0.754	0.860	0.674
	Attractiveness of a holiday in India			
	India is a country of contrasts			

Source: Self-developed based on Warp PLS calculations

4. Results and discussion

To test the conceptual model, the structural equation modeling approach was used, with WarpPLs 5.0 software. The relationships between the latent variables are shown in Fig. 2, which shows the path coefficients (β) and significance level (p).

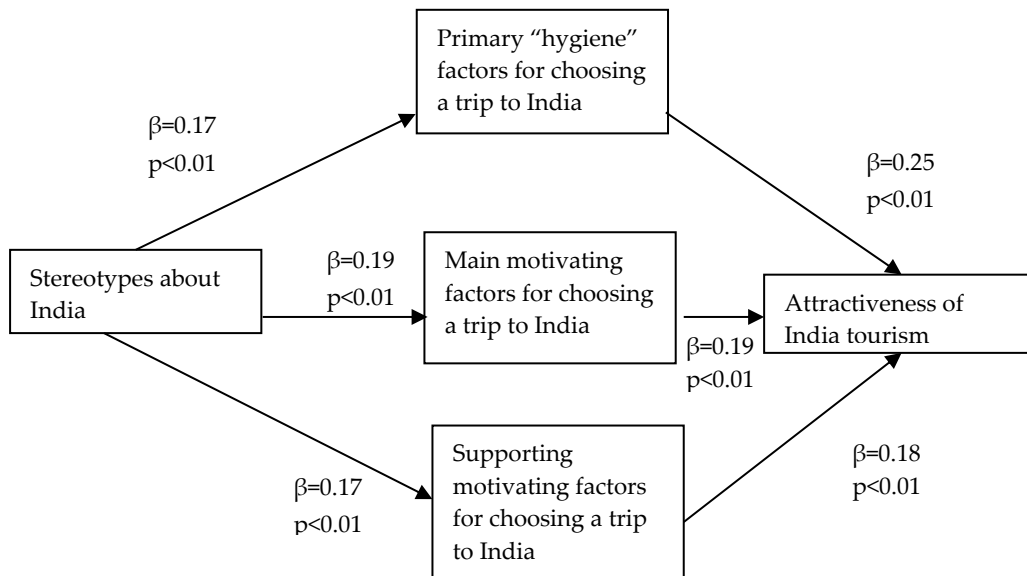


Fig. no. 2. The resulted model

Source: Self-developed based on Warp PLS calculations

Regarding the relationship between stereotypes about India and the primary "hygiene" factors for choosing this country for tourism purposes, there is a positive direct relationship of weak strength, as $\beta=0.17$ $p < 0.01$. Therefore, H1a is accepted, i.e., stereotypes about India lead tourists to attach great importance to the basic conditions for travelling to India (accommodation, transport). The more tourists are concerned about India due to stereotypes, the more they pay attention to the primary factors and check whether they fulfil the minimum standards.

Stereotypes about India positively influence both the primary motivating factors ($\beta=0.19$, $p < 0.01$) and the supporting motivating factors for the decision to travel to India ($\beta=0.17$ $p < 0.01$), although the influence is weak in each of these cases. Thus, as tourists have preconceptions about India, they are more inclined to attach importance to the primary motivating factors such as the beauty of the landscapes, cultural destinations and local traditions.

Similarly, the supporting motivational factors are more important as tourists are influenced by stereotypes and focus their interest on issues such as entertainment options, interaction with the local community and opportunities to practise sports. It can be concluded that hypotheses H1b and H1c are accepted. Of the three factors, stereotypes have a greater influence on the primary motivating factors as they play a key role in choosing a destination, but the differences compared to the primary factors and the supporting motivating factors are very small.

The primary "hygiene" factors influence the attractiveness of India as a travel destination, and this relationship is rather medium ($\beta=0.25$, $p < 0.01$). As the primary conditions (price-quality ratio, accommodation, transport connectivity, food variety) are met, tourists are more inclined to choose India. Therefore, hypothesis H2 is accepted.

There is a direct, positive relationship between the most important motivating factors for choosing to travel to India and the attractiveness of this destination ($\beta=0.17$ $p < 0.01$), even if the strength between the two variables is low. These factors (landscapes, traditions, cultural heritage) make India a special destination. To the extent that people attach more importance to the most important motivating factors, the attractiveness of India increases. To summarise, hypothesis H3 is accepted.

The supporting motivational factors influence the attractiveness of India, but this influence is rather weak because the path coefficient $\beta=0.18$ ($p < 0.01$). The activities that can accompany the main purpose of travelling to India, such as entertainment, doing sports, meeting new people, influence the attractiveness of this destination. From this it can be concluded that hypothesis H4 is supported.

Comparing the three categories of factors, the primary "hygiene" factors have the greatest influence on the attractiveness of India as a travel destination. The stereotypes could lead tourists to develop concerns about the possibility of satisfying their basic needs while travelling to India and therefore pay more attention to this category of factors. The primary motivating factors and the supporting motivating factors have almost the same intensity of influence on the choice of India as a travel destination. So, as India could be a controversial destination, tourists pay more attention to the primary factors to satisfy their basic needs and only then to the factors that emphasise the special features of this country.

5. Conclusions, practical implications and limitations

The current research has revealed some differences between the factors that lead tourists to choose India as a travel destination. Based on Herzberg's bifactorial model of motivation, two important groups of factors were highlighted that can influence the choice of a travel destination and correspond to the two categories of factors found in the hygiene motivation model.

The hygiene factors in choosing a destination refer to the accessibility of the flight, accommodation and catering, tourist assistance and other 'basic' services, aspects that could lead tourists not to choose the destination in question if they perceive their quality to be below a level considered appropriate. The perception tourists have of these aspects is influenced by the stereotypes they associate with India.

In the category of motivating factors, two subsets of factors were identified, labelled as main factors (nature, culture, traditions and events) and support factors (entertainment options, night-time recreation, interaction with the local community, the opportunity to play sports).

The results show that the hygiene factors have the greatest influence on the choice of India as a holiday destination.

The study thus highlights the fact that some destinations, which are also associated with negative stereotypes, are analysed and selected by tourists according to a motivational model that is somewhat different from the models that apply to tourist motivation in general.

For destination marketers and tourist boards, these findings emphasise the importance of addressing and potentially counteracting negative stereotypes by focusing on improving and highlighting hygiene-related aspects of the tourist experience. Providing clear and credible information about the quality and safety of basic services (such as accommodation, catering and travel infrastructure) can help to reduce tourists' hesitation. In addition, showcasing India's cultural and natural attractions can appeal to motivated tourists and emphasise that India's appeal goes beyond hygiene factors and offers unique and memorable experiences. For destinations with mixed or controversial reputations, promoting a balance between hygiene and motivational aspects can better fulfil tourists' expectations and increase overall appeal.

While this study provides valuable insights, it is limited by the fact that it focuses on a single destination (India) and the sample consists of Romanian tourists only. Therefore, the results may not be fully transferable to tourists from other countries or other destinations. In addition, the study does not take into account possible changes in tourists' motivation after the pandemic, where hygiene factors may have become even more important due to increased health and safety concerns. Future research could extend this model to other culturally rich but stereotypical destinations and investigate whether hygiene factors have a greater influence on tourists' decision-making after a pandemic. Such studies could refine the application of the hygiene motivation model in global tourism and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how different groups of tourists make their travel decisions.

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