

EVALUATION OF TOURIST PREFERENCES FOR MUMBAI AS A TOURIST DESTINATION: USING A CONJOINT ANALYSIS APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates tourist preferences for Mumbai, aiming to understand the factors influencing tourist decisions. Through a literature review, the research highlights the importance of cultural, historical, and entertainment offerings that attract millions of tourists annually. Using conjoint analysis, the study identifies key attributes like entertainment, transport systems, and culinary offerings as influential in shaping the overall tourist experience. Results show tourists prioritize outdoor activities and efficient public transport, particularly metro services, for convenience and reliability. The preference for local cuisine, especially Indian dishes, further reflects the importance of authentic experiences. The study's findings provide valuable insights for destination managers and marketers to enhance tourist satisfaction by focusing on entertainment and cultural experiences. The research concludes with practical recommendations for improving transportation infrastructure and local attractions to boost Mumbai's competitiveness as a tourism destination.

Keywords: Tourist preferences, Mumbai, Destination management, conjoint analysis, Indian cuisine, Public transport, Cultural experiences.

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is an important component of economic development, contributing significantly to job creation, foreign exchange earnings, and regional growth (Ministry of Tourism, 2023). As global travel continues to expand, understanding tourist preferences has become increasingly essential for enhancing visitor experiences and optimizing destination management strategies (Buhalis, 2000). This study focuses on evaluating tourist preferences for destinations in Mumbai, a city renowned for its vibrant culture, rich history, and diverse entertainment options (Smith, 2009). Mumbai, often referred to as the financial capital of India, attracts millions of domestic and international tourists each year, drawn by its iconic landmarks, bustling markets, and lively nightlife (Ministry of Tourism, 2023). Key attractions

such as the Gateway of India, Marine Drive, and Bollywood-themed nightlife emerge as major draws for visitors, showcasing the city's multifaceted appeal (Gartner, 1993). By examining factors that influence tourist choices, the research aims to provide valuable insights into consumer decision-making processes within the tourism sector (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). The literature highlights the significance of various attributes, including entertainment options, culinary offerings, accessibility, and cultural experiences, that shape tourist experiences (Gartner, 1993).

Tourism in India is a cornerstone of the nation's economic structure, contributing approximately 7.5% to the GDP and playing a critical role in job creation across various sectors. As of 2019, the industry supported over 80 million jobs, which accounted for about 10% of the total employment in the country (Ministry of Tourism, 2023). The sector's vast employment potential spans both direct roles in hospitality, transportation, food services, and retail, as well as indirect roles in sectors such as construction, manufacturing, and agriculture, which support tourism-related infrastructure and services. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) projected that India would generate \$460 billion from tourism by 2028, which underscores the sector's importance in the national economy (WTTC, 2022). India's wide array of attractions, including its 38 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, bustling metropolitan cities, spiritual centers, and pristine natural landscapes, further enhances its appeal as a top global tourism destination (UNESCO, 2023). With the government prioritizing tourism through initiatives like Incredible India and the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, the sector has seen consistent growth, even as it continues to recover from the global pandemic's impact (Government of India, 2022). Additionally, the expansion of infrastructure, such as the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) scheme to improve regional air connectivity, has made tourism more accessible, especially to remote destinations, further boosting domestic travel and employment opportunities (Ministry of Civil Aviation, 2023).

The flow of tourists within India is particularly robust. Internationally, India attracted over 10 million foreign visitors annually before the pandemic, driven by attractions like the Taj Mahal, Kerala's backwaters, Rajasthan's palaces, and cosmopolitan hubs such as Delhi and Mumbai. These visitors contribute significantly to local economies through spending on accommodation, dining, shopping, and cultural experiences (Ministry of Tourism, 2020). In terms of domestic tourism, India recorded over 2 billion tourist visits in 2019, highlighting the strong travel culture among its citizens (Government of India, 2020). Domestic tourism is fueled by a combination of religious pilgrimages, leisure travel, and regional exploration. Key religious sites like Varanasi, Rishikesh, and Tirupati attract millions of pilgrims annually, while leisure destinations such as Goa, Himachal Pradesh, and Udaipur remain popular among both domestic and international tourists. Mumbai, as a major tourism hub, stands out due to its blend of historical landmarks, entertainment venues, and modern infrastructure, attracting millions of visitors each year. The tourism sector in Maharashtra, especially in cities like Mumbai, significantly contributes to regional GDP and employment, with over 1.2 million people directly employed in tourism-related jobs (Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation, 2021). These statistics demonstrate the critical role tourism plays in driving local economies and supporting employment. As India continues to invest in tourism infrastructure and marketing, both international and domestic tourist numbers are expected to grow, solidifying tourism's role as a major economic contributor.

Mumbai, as one of India's largest and most economically significant cities, plays a critical role in the nation's tourism sector, making it an ideal area for research into tourist

preferences. Known for its vibrant cultural heritage, historical significance, and modern infrastructure, Mumbai attracts millions of both domestic and international tourists each year. In 2019, the city received 4.9 million international tourists, contributing significantly to India's foreign exchange earnings and positioning Mumbai among the top destinations for international travellers in the country (Ministry of Tourism, 2020; World Travel & Tourism Council, 2022). Domestically, Mumbai is a key destination, drawing millions of visitors from across India. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, domestic tourism in Mumbai saw over 20 million tourists annually, who visited the city's historical landmarks, entertainment hubs, and cultural experiences. The city's position as a financial, cultural, and entertainment hub further enhances its significance within India's tourism landscape, contributing significantly to both GDP and employment. Mumbai is estimated to account for 30% of the total foreign exchange earnings from tourism in India, underlining its economic importance (Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation, 2021).

The city's diverse offerings make it an ideal location for studying tourist preferences through methods such as conjoint analysis, which provides insights into how tourists prioritize factors like entertainment, historical attractions, and accessibility. Attractions like the Gateway of India, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, and Mumbai's thriving entertainment industry, including Bollywood, draw leisure and business travelers alike (Lonely Planet, 2021). These offerings cater to a wide array of interests, from cultural and historical tourism to entertainment and shopping, making Mumbai a prime case for examining the factors that contribute to destination choice and tourist satisfaction. In addition to its attractions, Mumbai's well-developed infrastructure further supports its tourism industry. The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport handled over 48 million passengers annually pre-pandemic, positioning Mumbai as a primary entry point for international tourists (Airports Authority of India, 2020). Its extensive public transport system, including rail and metro, provides efficient solutions for navigating the city, making access to tourist destinations easier for visitors. These factors collectively highlight the importance of Mumbai in India's tourism landscape and support its selection as a critical research area for studying tourist preferences and behaviour (Ministry of Tourism, 2020; WTTC, 2022).

According to Dellaert, et al. (1998) the decisions that tourists make are complex and multi-faceted, with the choices for various elements being interrelated and evolving in a decision-making process over time. The majority of studies that investigate tourists' travel choices focus on the key element in the travel decision-making process, which is the choice of tourist destination. The decision-making process is impacted by several psychological (internal) and non-psychological (external) factors and consists of a number of different stages that are marked by specific actions. Sirakaya and Woodside (2005) provided a comprehensive qualitative review of the tourist decision-making literature, and integrated the main conceptual and empirical work that has been reported in the tourism literature.

The destination should be described since many studies on the choice of tourist destination showed differences between different ways of describing a tourist destination. Destinations are usually thought of as clear-cut places on Earth, like a country, an island, or a town (Hall, 2000). Some researchers saw the destination as a brand or a product (Kozak, 2002; McIntosh & Goeldner, 1990; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). For example, Van Raaij (1986) saw the travel location as a product that is both "given" and "made." The word "given" refers to things that are naturally found in tourist spots, like the weather, scenery, beaches, mountains, historic buildings, and so on. The "man-made" part, on the other hand, includes things like hotels,

package trips, transportation, and sports and recreation facilities that can be changed to fit customer needs, as long as they don't go over budget. Kim (1998:340) said, "A destination can be seen as a uniquely complex product of the tourism industry. It includes, among other things, a place's climate, the infrastructure and superstructure, services, and its natural and cultural features."

Identifying the elements that affect people's destination preference is crucial to creating effective marketing campaigns. A person's choice of destination can be influenced by a number of characteristics, including age, income, gender, personality, education, cost, distance, country, risk, and motivation. Among these variables, travel motivation has been the subject of extensive research in the literature on tourism for many years. Given that motivation is a dynamic concept, it might differ among individuals, between market segments, between destinations, and between decision-making processes (Uysal & Hagan, 1993). Therefore, it should come as no surprise that many empirical studies have included the idea of motivation as a component of market segmentation in the tourist industry (Kozak, 2002; Yavuz, Baloglu, & Uysal, 1998).

Tourist preferences are crucial for the tourism industry, informing the development of targeted marketing strategies and tailored tourism products that enhance visitor satisfaction. These preferences are shaped by a complex interplay of demographic, socio-economic, psychological, and external factors. Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, and family status significantly influence preferences. For instance, younger tourists often seek adventure and nightlife, while older tourists may prefer cultural experiences and relaxation (Jang & Wu, 2006). Family status also plays a crucial role; families with children often look for destinations with family-friendly amenities and activities (Nickerson & Jurowski, 2001). Socio-economic factors, including income level and social class, determine the affordability and type of travel experiences tourists can access. Higher income groups tend to opt for luxury destinations and premium experiences, while budget constraints limit travel options for middle and lower-income groups (Dwyer, Forsyth, & Rao, 2000). Cultural background also influences the types of experiences tourists seek, with Western tourists often prioritizing adventure and independence, whereas those from collectivist cultures might prefer group travel and family-oriented activities (Pizam & Sussmann, 1995).

Psychological factors such as motivations, personality traits, perceptions, and attitudes play a crucial role in shaping tourist preferences. Crompton's (1979) push and pull model categorizes motivations into internal desires and external destination attributes, providing valuable insights into these influences. Push factors include the need for escape, relaxation, adventure, and social interaction, while pull factors are appealing attributes of a destination, such as natural scenery, cultural heritage, and recreational activities (Dann, 1981). Plog's (2001) allocentric-psychocentric continuum, which places tourists on a spectrum based on their travel preferences, highlights the role of personality in travel choices. Allocentric tourists seek novel and adventurous experiences, preferring less-commercialized and exotic destinations, while psychocentric tourists prefer familiar, safe, and well-developed destinations. Additionally, external influences such as marketing, word-of-mouth, and media exposure significantly impact tourist preferences. Effective marketing campaigns and positive reviews shape tourists' perceptions and destination choices (Gretzel, 2011). Social media has emerged as a powerful tool in this regard, providing platforms for peer-generated content and real-time feedback, which influences various stages of travel planning, including destination selection, itinerary planning, and post-trip sharing of experiences (Leung, et al. 2013).

Cultural factors play a significant role in shaping tourist preferences. Tourists often seek destinations that offer cultural enrichment, including historical sites, local traditions, art, music, and festivals. According to Swarbrooke and Horner (2007), cultural motivations such as the desire to learn about different ways of life and to experience cultural heritage are powerful determinants of destination choice. Cultural authenticity is a major draw for tourists, particularly those interested in heritage tourism. Destinations that preserve and showcase their cultural heritage tend to attract more culturally inclined tourists. McKercher and du Cros (2002) argue that cultural tourism can lead to deeper engagement and appreciation of the host culture, providing a more meaningful travel experience.

Social influences include the impact of family, friends, and social networks on travel decisions. Group dynamics, peer recommendations, and family preferences often guide the choice of destination. Studies show that social media and online reviews have become critical in shaping tourist perceptions and preferences, with platforms like TripAdvisor and Instagram playing pivotal roles in modern travel planning (Sigala, 2011). The rise of social media has transformed how tourists gather information and make decisions. Online reviews, user-generated content and social media influencers significantly affect tourist preferences. Xiang and Gretzel (2010) highlight that social media platforms provide tourists with real-time, peer-generated information that can influence their travel choices and expectations.

Economic factors, such as income levels, travel costs, and perceived value for money, heavily influence tourist preferences. Budget constraints often dictate the choice of destination, type of accommodation, and length of stay. Destinations offering good value for money tend to be preferred by budget-conscious travelers (Dwyer, Forsyth, & Rao, 2000). The economic landscape of the travel industry is also influenced by macroeconomic factors such as exchange rates, economic stability, and the cost of living in destination countries. Goh and Law (2002) assert that favourable exchange rates and economic conditions can boost inbound tourism, while economic downturns can significantly reduce travel demand.

Conjoint Analysis

Conjoint analysis is widely recognized as a powerful statistical technique used to assess consumer preferences by evaluating how individuals rate or rank a set of predefined options characterized by different levels of attributes (Green & Rao, 1971; Louviere, 1988). The methodology provides insights into how people combine these attributes to make decisions, making it particularly useful for understanding complex consumer behavior in fields like tourism (Orme, 2006). In this context, conjoint analysis allows researchers to simulate real-world scenarios where respondents evaluate combinations of product or service attributes, offering a realistic picture of consumer preferences (Green & Srinivasan, 1978). For example, when applied to the tourism sector, this method helps in understanding the influence of various attributes such as entertainment, transport, and accommodation on tourists' destination choices (Green, Krieger, & Wind, 2001). The findings of these analyses can inform destination managers on how to optimize their offerings to enhance tourist experiences, such as prioritizing efficient transport systems and local culinary offerings (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). Studies utilizing conjoint analysis, such as one focusing on Dutch tourists' preferences for activity packages, found that activity choices were largely independent of the time of day, providing insights into broader trends in tourist decision-making (Dellaert, et al. 1995).

Various applications of conjoint analysis in tourism and hospitality have highlighted the importance of key attributes like novelty and value for money. For instance, novelty-seeking is

identified as a significant factor influencing tourist behavior, with tourists often seeking new and unique experiences compared to past travels (Lee & Crompton, 1992). In another study, conjoint analysis was applied to evaluate preferences in luxury hotel services, where the physical environment emerged as a critical determinant of satisfaction, especially among business travelers (Mattila, 1999). Similarly, in an analysis of tourist preferences in Uttar Pradesh, "value for money" was the most significant factor, followed by security and the availability of information (Tripathi & Siddiqui, 2010). These studies emphasize the adaptability of conjoint analysis in exploring a wide range of consumer preferences across different settings and how such insights can be leveraged to improve service offerings and marketing strategies in the tourism industry.

Identification of the Possible Attributes for the Study

A set of 13 possible attributes were identified after conducting extensive literature review. The attributes along with the levels have been listed below Table 1:

1. Local commute – Local Train, bus or metro.
2. Hygiene – Cleanliness, pollution-free.
3. Vacation activities – Adventure sports, nature walks.
4. Value for money – Price, quality of service.
5. Entertainment – Malls, nightlife.
6. Mode of transport from source to destination – Air, rail and road
7. Tourist attractions – Temples, forts and beaches.
8. Local culture – Food, music, festivals.
9. Duration of Visit – Weekend package, long holidays.
10. Travel companion – Friends, family, solo trip.
11. Nature of visit – Business, Leisure.
12. Surroundings – Peace and quiet, crowd.
13. Food options – Local delicacies, famous restaurants.

Construct Definition

Table 1 DEFINITIONS OF CONSTRUCTS		
Construct	Definition	References
Local commute	Local commute refers to the transportation options tourists use within a specific area, such as buses, trains, trams, taxis, or bikes, to move around a city or region. These systems help improve accessibility, mobility, and overall travel experience	Siddiqui, Masood (2010)
Hygiene	Hygiene refers to maintaining cleanliness and health standards in hotels and other tourist facilities to ensure a safe environment for guests. This includes frequent cleaning of rooms, common areas, and equipment, along with proper food handling practices. High hygiene standards are crucial to prevent the spread of diseases and create a positive guest experience	Siddiqui, Masood (2010)
Vacation activities	"Vacation activities" refer to a variety of leisure pursuits that travellers engage in while on holiday. These can range from outdoor adventures like hiking, skiing, or sightseeing to more relaxed options like beach lounging, shopping, and dining at local restaurants. The selection of activities often depends on the destination's offerings and the tourist's preferences, shaping their overall travel experience	Britannica, 2024; Siddiqui, Masood, 2010
Value for money	"Value for money" refers to the perception that a product or service	UNWTO-2023;

	delivers a high level of quality, satisfaction, or benefits relative to its cost. Tourists evaluate whether their overall experience, including accommodation, activities, and services, justifies the expenses they incurred. This concept plays a critical role in determining satisfaction, loyalty, and destination choice among travellers. It reflects a balance between what visitors pay and what they receive in terms of experiences and amenities, influencing their overall tourism experience.	Siddiqui, Masood, 2010
Entertainment	Entertainment occurs when the tourists observe the others' activities passively.	Malviya, 2008; Gil Arroyo, 2013
Transportation	Transportation refers to the different modes of travel—air, road, rail, and water—that tourists use to reach and navigate within destinations. It is a vital element in ensuring accessibility, mobility, and overall satisfaction during a trip, as it connects tourists to various locations and attractions	Pellegrino, 2021; Malviya, 2008
Tourist attractions	A tourist attraction refers to a place, site, or event that draws the attention of tourists and motivates them to visit a destination. Common examples include natural wonders, cultural landmarks, historical monuments, zoos, museums, gardens, and festivals. Tourist attractions play a key role in defining the appeal of a location and contribute significantly to the tourism industry by creating unique experiences for visitors	Benckendorff, 2014; Siddiqui, Masood, 2010
Local culture	Local culture refers to the shared practices, traditions, beliefs, and values of a specific community or region, often passed down through generations and closely linked to the geographical area and its way of life. It encompasses language, customs, food, art, social norms, and other cultural expressions that are unique to a locality.	Smith, 2009 Issues in cultural tourism studies. Routledge; Zhou (2004)
Duration of Visit	Duration of visit refers to the length of time a tourist spends at a destination, typically measured in days or nights. It is an important factor for tourism planners as it can influence both tourist spending and the overall experience. This metric helps destinations gauge how long visitors engage with attractions, accommodations, and other local services, allowing for better resource allocation and planning to meet demand. Longer stays usually result in higher economic contributions to the destination	Sunil & Sandeep .(2021)
Travel companion	A travel companion in tourism refers to a person or group of people with whom a traveller shares their journey, experiences, and activities during a trip. The presence of a travel companion can enhance the tourism experience by providing social interaction, emotional support, and shared enjoyment of destinations and activities. Travel companions play a role in shaping tourists' preferences, satisfaction, and overall travel behaviour (Karri & Pratt, 2024).	Karri & Pratt, 2024; Sunil & Sandeep, 2021
Nature of visit	"Nature of visit" refers to the primary purpose or intent behind a traveller's visit to a destination. This could involve leisure, business, cultural exploration, or nature-based activities. The nature of visit often dictates the type of activities a traveller engages in, the services they use, and their overall experience at the destination. It also influences their behaviour, spending patterns, and satisfaction with the visit	Job et al., 2023; Sunil & Sandeep, 2021
Surroundings	"Surroundings" refer to the physical and environmental conditions that exist around a tourist destination, which significantly contribute to the overall visitor experience. These surroundings can include natural landscapes, urban environments, local communities, and built infrastructure, all of which shape tourists' perceptions of a place and influence their satisfaction with the destination.	Lazuardy, 2023; Siddiqui, Masood (2010)
Food options	"Food options" refer to the variety of culinary offerings available to travellers at a destination, including local cuisine, international dishes, and special dietary alternatives. These food options significantly	Pozzi, 2023; Sunil & Sandeep, 2021

	contribute to the overall tourism experience, enhancing the attractiveness of a destination by offering diverse and authentic culinary experiences. Travellers often seek unique, sustainable, and culturally relevant food options during their journeys	
Interaction with locals.	Interaction with locals in tourism refers to the engagement and communication between tourists and the residents of a destination. This interaction can involve cultural exchanges, participation in local traditions, shared experiences, and socialization, allowing visitors to gain a deeper understanding of the community's lifestyle, customs, and values, while contributing to the local economy and fostering mutual respect	Reisinger & Turner, 2003; Sunil & Sandeep, 2021

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive research design to investigate and understand the preferences of tourists visiting Mumbai. The primary objective of the research is to explore the varying preferences that tourists have when choosing a destination, focusing on attributes such as entertainment, cultural attractions, transportation, and other key factors. A survey method was employed as the primary data collection technique, utilizing a structured questionnaire to gather quantitative data from respondents. The descriptive nature of the research enables a detailed exploration of tourist preferences by capturing patterns and trends in decision-making. By concentrating on what tourists value the most, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence destination choice. This research design is appropriate for the study's goals as it seeks to describe the preferences of a broad and diverse group of tourists visiting Mumbai.

The target population for this study comprises individuals aged 18 years and above who are visiting Mumbai. A sample size of 50 respondents was selected using a convenience sampling method, which involved selecting participants based on their availability and willingness to participate. Although convenience sampling has limitations regarding generalizability, it was deemed appropriate for this exploratory study, given the objective of identifying general trends in tourist preferences. The structured questionnaire utilized a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' attitudes and opinions regarding various aspects of their tourist experience, ranging from strong agreement to strong disagreement. This scale helped quantify the subjective preferences of the respondents effectively. In terms of data analysis, demographic variables such as gender, age, and occupation were analyzed to create a profile of the respondents and assess how these variables might influence preferences. Additionally, conjoint analysis was used to evaluate the best combination of tourist preferences and their relative importance, providing valuable insights into the most influential factors for destination choice. Figure 1 portrays the methodological approach which ensures that the study not only captures overall tourist preferences but also offers a deeper understanding of how specific demographics may influence those preferences.

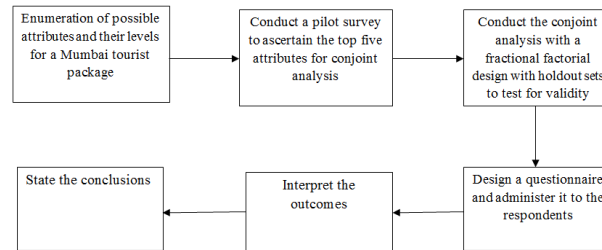


FIGURE 1
METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

RESULTS

Table 2 DESCRIPTIVES OF ATTRIBUTES				
Attribute	Attribute level	Utility	Range	Relative
NightLife	Nightlife_conservativenightlife	0.143	0.286	8.0067189
	Nightlife_Vibrantnightlife	-0.143		
Entertainment	Entertainment_Pubs	-0.686	1.366	38.241881
	Entertainment_Malls	0.006		
	Entertainment_Outdoor	0.68		
Public transport	Publictransport_Rail	0.038	0.228	6.3829787
	Publictransport_Road	-0.133		
	Publictransport_metro	0.095		
Food	Food_Indianfood	0.59	0.86	24.076148
	Food_Continentalfood	-0.27		
	Food_localfood	0.32		
Tourist attraction	Touristattraction_Hills	0.167	0.832	23.292273
	Touristattraction_Temples	0.365		
	Touristattraction_Fort	-0.066		
	Tourist attraction_Beaches	-0.467		

		Total range	3.572	
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Table 2 describes the attributes namely nightlife, entertainment, public transport, food, and tourist attraction with different attributes levels.

Nightlife

Nightlife, represented by two levels—conservative nightlife and vibrant nightlife—has an equal utility value of 0.143 for both options, indicating no strong preference between the two types. The range of 0.286 for nightlife is relatively low compared to other attributes, suggesting that differences in nightlife options do not significantly influence decision-making. With a relative importance of 8.00%, nightlife is among the least influential attributes in this analysis. This low impact highlights that while nightlife is a factor, it does not play a pivotal role in overall preferences, suggesting that efforts to improve nightlife options may yield limited influence on attracting or satisfying individuals compared to other more critical factors.

Entertainment

Entertainment emerges as the most influential attribute in this analysis, consisting of three levels: pubs, malls, and outdoor activities. The utility values within this category vary significantly, with pubs having the highest utility at 0.66, indicating a strong preference. In contrast, malls and outdoor activities each have much lower utility values of 0.06, showing they are far less appealing to respondents. The range of 1.366, the highest among all attributes, underscores the substantial impact of entertainment options on overall preferences. Relative importance is marked at 38.24%, making it the most decisive factor in decision-making. This suggests that entertainment is a critical component in shaping overall satisfaction, and a variety of appealing entertainment options, particularly pubs, can greatly enhance the attractiveness of a location.

Public Transport

Public Transport includes three modes: rail, road, and metro, with utility values of 0.128, 0.138, and 0.078, respectively. The preference is marginally higher for road and rail, while metro is the least preferred mode of transport. The range of 0.228 is relatively modest, indicating that variations in public transport modes have a limited impact on overall decision-making compared to other attributes. With a relative importance of only 6.39%, public transport is the least influential attribute in this analysis. This suggests that the choice of transport mode is not a major driver of preferences, and while it contributes to the overall experience, it does not significantly sway decisions. This low impact might be due to the perceived uniformity in the quality or appeal of different transport options.

Food

The food attribute includes three categories: Indian food, continental food, and local food. Indian food stands out with the highest utility value of 0.59, indicating a strong preference among respondents. Continental food follows with a utility of 0.27, and local food has the lowest utility of 0.0, showing minimal appeal. The range of 0.86 reflects the substantial impact of food

choices on overall preferences, highlighting that variations in food options significantly influence decision-making. Relative importance for food is 24.07%, making it a crucial attribute second only to entertainment. This high importance suggests that food offerings, particularly Indian cuisine, play a vital role in attracting and satisfying individuals. As such, enhancing the variety and quality of food options could greatly improve overall experiences.

Tourist Attractions

Tourist attractions comprise four levels: hills, temples, forts, and beaches. Among these, beaches have the highest utility value of 0.467, making them the most preferred tourist attraction. Hills and temples have moderate utilities of 0.167 and 0.366, respectively, while forts have no added utility at 0.0, indicating they are the least appealing among the options. The range of 0.832 is high, demonstrating that the variability in preferences for tourist attractions significantly impacts overall decision-making. With a relative importance of 23.29%, tourist attractions are nearly as influential as food in determining overall satisfaction. This suggests that promoting diverse and appealing tourist sites, particularly beaches, can effectively cater to varying tastes and enhance the attractiveness of a location.

Overall, these insights indicate that entertainment, food, and tourist attractions are the primary drivers of preferences, while nightlife and public transport play secondary roles. Understanding the utility, range, and relative importance of each attribute can guide strategic efforts to enhance the most impactful areas and improve overall satisfaction.

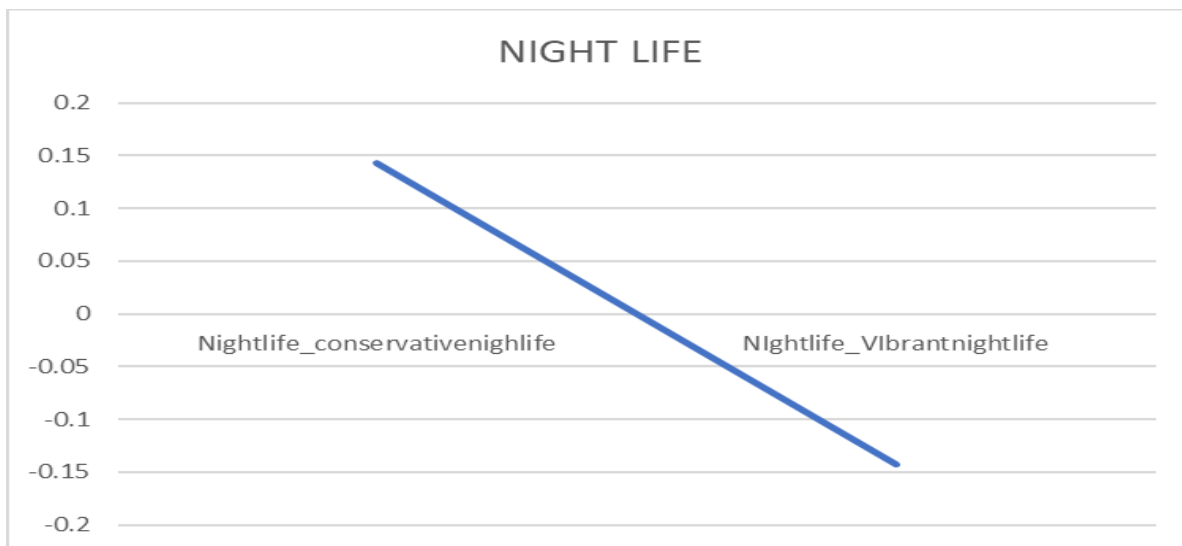


FIGURE 2
NIGHTLIFE

Figure 2 depicts the nightlife with attributes. The X-axis of the graph represents the two different levels of the Nightlife attribute: "Conservative nightlife" and "Vibrant nightlife." These categories reflect distinct types of social experiences. Conservative nightlife typically includes quieter, more traditional, and reserved options, such as lounges, low-key bars, or cultural night activities. In contrast, vibrant nightlife refers to lively, energetic, and dynamic options, including nightclubs, music venues, and bustling bars that cater to those seeking a more animated evening atmosphere. This differentiation helps in understanding the distinct preferences between these

two nightlife settings. The Y-axis displays the utility values, ranging from approximately 0.2 to -0.2, which indicate the relative appeal of each nightlife option. Utility values are a measure of desirability or preference, where positive values suggest a favorable perception and negative values imply less preference. In this graph, the utility of conservative nightlife is positive at around 0.148, while vibrant nightlife has a negative utility value of approximately -0.148. These values visually capture the differing levels of appeal for each type of nightlife, highlighting how each option is perceived by respondents. The graph shows a distinct downward trend from "Conservative nightlife" to "Vibrant nightlife," indicating a preference shift between these two options. Conservative nightlife starts with a positive utility value, suggesting it is somewhat favored among the respondents. On the other hand, vibrant nightlife is marked by a negative utility value, showing that it is less preferred. This trend suggests a clear inclination toward quieter and more reserved nightlife experiences, which might be due to factors like personal comfort, safety concerns, or a cultural preference for less intense social settings. The negative perception of vibrant nightlife could be linked to associations with noise, crowds, or a general preference for a more relaxed environment.

The observed trend implies that respondents have a discernible preference for conservative nightlife over vibrant nightlife, reflecting a stronger inclination toward quieter social environments. The positive utility of conservative nightlife suggests it meets the respondents' expectations for comfort and enjoyment, while the negative utility of vibrant nightlife indicates it may not align with their preferences. This contrast could be due to a range of reasons, such as the desire for quieter settings, lower stress levels associated with less crowded spaces, or a cultural disposition toward more traditional nightlife experiences. The findings suggest that nightlife venues might need to offer a balance between these types to cater to varied tastes.

Impact on Decision-Making

Despite the evident preference trend, the overall range for the Nightlife attribute is relatively low at 0.286, indicating that nightlife variations, while noticeable, do not play a major role in influencing broader decision-making compared to other more impactful attributes like Entertainment or Food. This suggests that while the preference for conservative nightlife is evident, it is not a dominant factor in shaping overall satisfaction or choices. Thus, areas or cities looking to enhance their nightlife appeal should consider offering diverse options, including more conservative settings, to better align with the audience's inclinations while not over-prioritizing nightlife as the main draw.

The graph highlights a clear preference for conservative nightlife over vibrant nightlife among the respondents, suggesting that quieter, more reserved settings are more in line with the audience's expectations. Although this attribute does not heavily influence overall decision-making compared to other factors, understanding these nuances can guide strategic planning for nightlife offerings to better match target audience preferences. By recognizing this trend, nightlife venues and urban planners can create balanced environments that cater to a wider range of tastes, enhancing the overall appeal of their offerings.

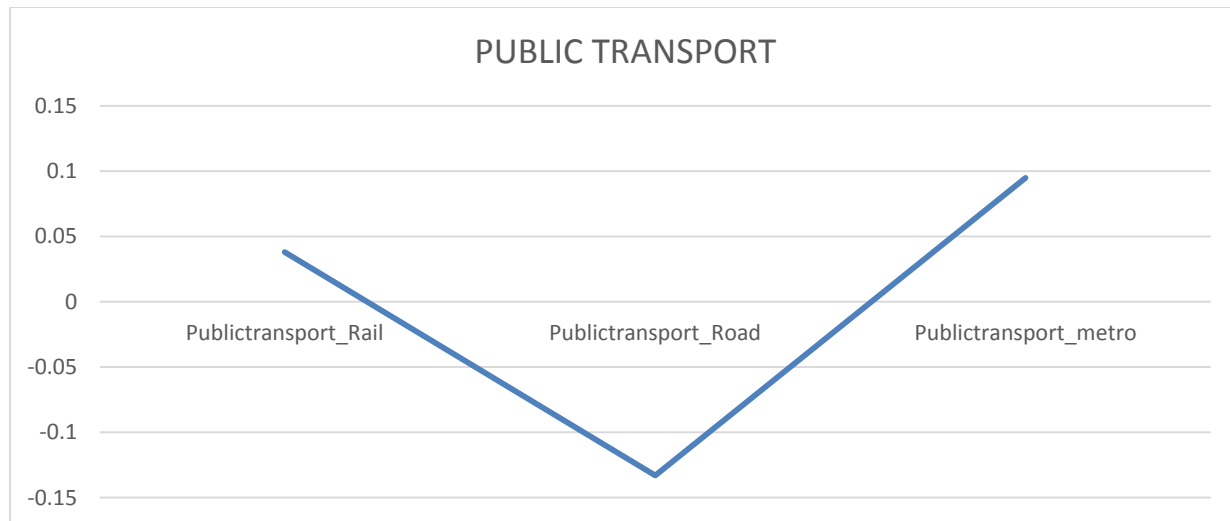


FIGURE 3
PUBLIC TRANSPORT GRAPH

Figure 3 portrays the chart of Public transport preference of the respondents. The X-axis of the graph represents the three modes of public transport: Rail, Road, and Metro. These categories reflect different options available for public commuting. "Public transport Rail" represents trains and other rail-based systems that offer a structured and scheduled mode of transport. "Public transport Road" includes buses and other road-based public transport options that provide flexibility and reach a broader network of locations. "Public transport metro" refers to underground or elevated rail systems specifically designed for urban transit, offering a rapid, reliable, and high-frequency service commonly found in larger cities. The Y-axis displays the utility values associated with each mode of public transport, ranging from positive values slightly above 0.1 to negative values near -0.15. These utility values indicate the relative desirability or preference for each transport mode. Positive utility values suggest that the mode is viewed favorably, while negative values imply less preference. In this graph, the values fluctuate, showcasing the varying levels of appeal across the different transport modes. Rail and metro have positive utilities, whereas road transport has a negative utility, indicating it is the least preferred option. Trend Line analysis shows a distinct V-shaped trend, beginning with a slight positive preference for rail transport, followed by a noticeable dip at road transport, and then a rise back to positive values for metro transport. Specifically, "Public transport Rail" starts with a utility value of approximately 0.128, suggesting a mild preference among respondents. This value then drops significantly for "Public transport Road" to around -0.138, indicating a clear aversion to road-based public transport. Finally, the utility increases sharply for "Public transport metro," reaching around 0.078, showing a favorable perception of metro systems. The pronounced dip for road transport suggests that respondents view this option as less reliable, less comfortable, or less efficient compared to the more structured rail and metro systems.

The observed trend implies that among the available public transport options, metro systems are slightly more preferred, followed by rail, while road transport is the least desirable. The positive utility for metro suggests that it is viewed as a modern, efficient, and convenient mode of transport, likely due to its reliability, speed, and reduced traffic congestion. Rail transport, while also preferred, does not have as strong an appeal as metro, possibly due to factors like limited reach or perceived comfort levels. The sharp negative utility associated with

road transport indicates significant dissatisfaction, which may be driven by issues such as traffic delays, overcrowding, pollution, or inconsistent schedules. This pattern highlights that respondents value structured, high-frequency, and less traffic-prone transport options.

The overall range of utility values for public transport modes is relatively narrow compared to other attributes like entertainment or food, suggesting that while there are clear preferences among transport types, these preferences do not heavily sway overall decision-making. Public transport's relatively low impact on decision-making (as indicated by a previous importance rating of 6.39%) implies that while important, transport choices do not dominate satisfaction or location decisions to the same extent as other factors. However, the distinct dislike for road transport and preference for rail and metro highlight the need for improving urban transit infrastructure, particularly by investing in reliable and efficient rail and metro systems.

The graph reveals that structured and efficient transport options like metro and rail are preferred, with metro slightly leading in appeal. Conversely, road-based public transport faces significant challenges in terms of desirability. These findings underscore the importance of enhancing public transport systems by focusing on expanding and improving metro and rail services, as these modes align better with user preferences for reliability, speed, and overall convenience.

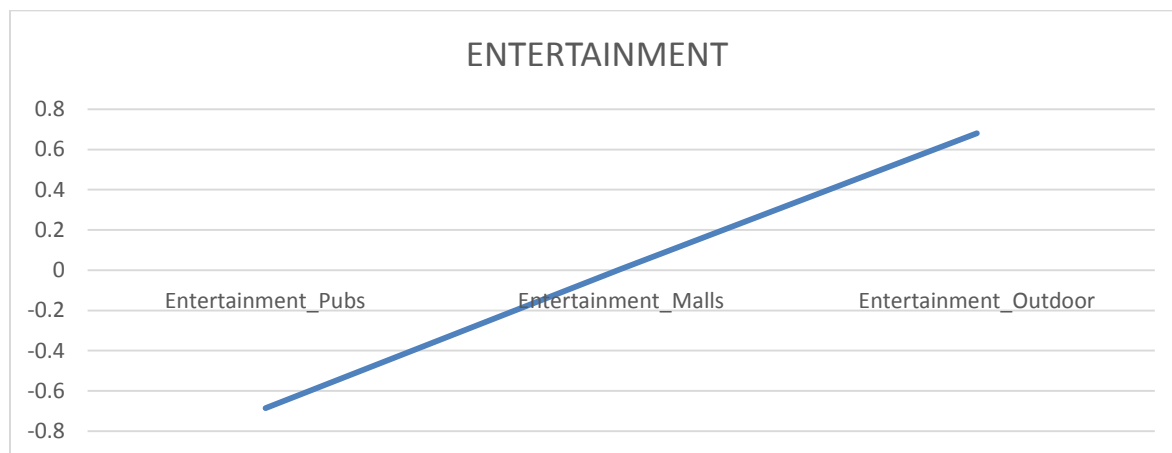


FIGURE 4
ENTERTAINMENT ALTERNATIVES

The study includes a Figure 4 which provides an evaluation of the numerous entertainment alternatives that are available to tourists. These possibilities include bars, shopping malls, and activities that take place outside. Due to the fact that the graph demonstrates that outdoor entertainment is the most popular choice among tourists, it is important to emphasize the value of this option in improving the whole experience that tourists have. The values that are positive on the graph imply that people have a favorable perception of outdoor entertainment, whilst the values that are negative indicate that people have a less preference for indoor options such as bars and commercial centers. The implications of this trend highlight the significance of developing a wide variety of outdoor activities and experiences in order to appeal to the tastes of tourists. The findings, taken as a whole, highlight the fact that entertainment is an essential component for tourists to consider when choosing a location. Therefore, destination managers should prioritize the provision of outdoor entertainment options in order to improve their tourist appeal and competitiveness in the tourism market.

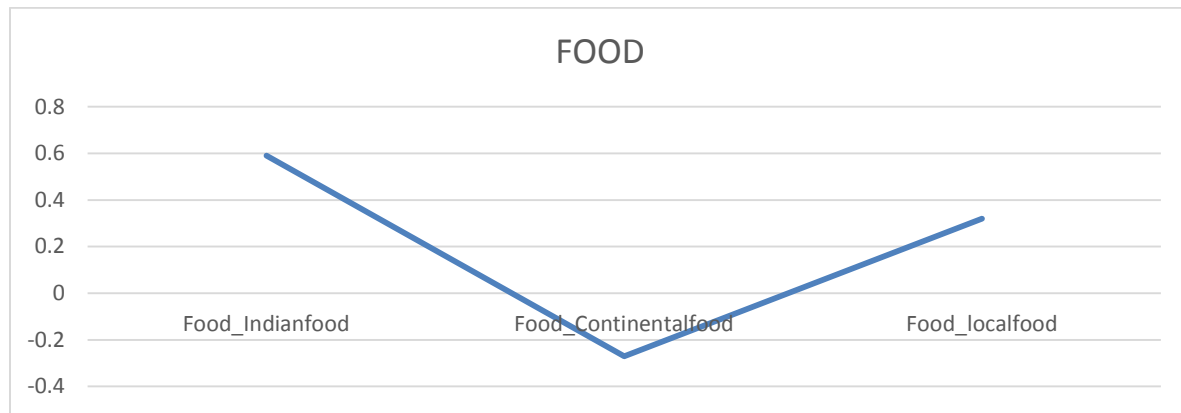


FIGURE 5
FOOD PREFERENCES

Figure 5 illustrates the preference scores for different food categories: Indian food, Continental food, and Local food. The graph's U-shaped trend provides insights into how tourists value various culinary options. Indian food has the highest positive score, indicating that it is the most preferred choice among tourists. This highlights the strong attraction to traditional and familiar tastes, particularly for domestic tourists who may prioritize authentic Indian flavors. It also suggests that Indian cuisine, known for its rich spices and variety, is an integral part of the travel experience, enhancing the overall satisfaction of tourists.

Continental food shows the lowest preference, falling into negative territory. Continental food is less favored, suggesting that tourists do not prioritize international cuisines when traveling within the region. This might reflect a preference for experiencing local and authentic flavors rather than familiar global dishes, which can be easily accessed at home.

Local food has a moderate positive score, positioned between Indian and Continental food. This indicates that tourists are interested in regional specialties and are keen to explore the local culinary landscape. It reflects a curiosity and appreciation for localized food experiences that offer a taste of the specific culture and traditions of the area they are visiting.

Overall, The food preferences graph underscores a strong inclination towards Indian and local cuisines, emphasizing the importance of offering authentic and culturally rich food options. The low preference for Continental food suggests that tourists are looking for distinct and region-specific dining experiences rather than standard international fare.

Combined Insights from Both Graphs

Tourist Experience Focus: Both graphs consistently indicate a preference for authentic and culturally immersive experiences. Tourists favor outdoor entertainment and local culinary delights, highlighting a desire for genuine engagement with the destination's culture and environment.

Strategic Implications for Tourism Development: To enhance tourist satisfaction, tourism operators and local businesses should focus on expanding outdoor recreational facilities and promoting Indian and local cuisines. Creating events that combine these aspects, such as food festivals in open-air settings or outdoor adventure parks with local food stalls, can create a synergistic and highly appealing tourist experience.

Cultural Alignment: The data reflects a conservative trend, particularly evident in the low

preference for pubs and Continental food. Tourism strategies should therefore be aligned with these preferences, emphasizing culturally aligned and region-specific offerings that cater to the primary audience's tastes and values.

These insights provide a clear direction for enhancing the overall attractiveness of a tourist destination by focusing on the most valued aspects of entertainment and dining, as indicated by the preference scores.



FIGURE 6
TOURIST ATTRACTION

Figure 6 depicts the preferences for different types of tourist attractions: Hills, Temples, Forts, and Beaches, based on their respective utilities. This analysis provides insights into the varying levels of appeal these attractions have among tourists. The utility for Hills is positive, showing a slight preference among tourists. This indicates that tourists appreciate the serene and natural settings offered by hill stations. Hills are often associated with relaxation, scenic beauty, and a break from the urban hustle, making them a favored choice for tourists seeking tranquility and a connection with nature. The moderate positive value suggests that while Hills are appealing, they are not the most dominant attraction in the decision-making process. Temples have the highest utility among the attractions, indicating a strong preference. This suggests that cultural, historical, and spiritual significance play a major role in tourists' decisions when selecting destinations. Temples attract tourists not just for their religious importance but also for their architectural beauty and historical value. The high utility value signifies that tourists are drawn to experiences that offer cultural depth and a sense of heritage, making temples a crucial element of tourism packages. Forts exhibit a declining trend in utility, showing a preference lower than that for Hills and Temples. While Forts hold historical significance and can provide a glimpse into the past, their appeal seems limited compared to other attractions. This could be due to the perceived lack of interactive or engaging elements that modern tourists seek. Forts may be valued for their educational aspect, but the lower utility suggests that they are not top choices for leisure-oriented tourists who prefer more dynamic experiences. Beaches have the lowest utility,

significantly below the other attractions, even showing a negative value. This indicates a low level of preference among tourists for beach destinations within the context of this analysis. The negative trend could be attributed to several factors, such as overcrowding, lack of unique experiences, or a preference shift towards more culturally enriching and quieter destinations like Hills and Temples. Beaches, while traditionally popular, may not meet the evolving tastes of tourists who are now seeking more distinctive and immersive experiences.

The graph highlights the varying levels of preference for different types of tourist attractions, with Temples standing out as the most favored due to their cultural and historical value. Hills also enjoy a positive perception, reflecting a desire for natural and peaceful settings. In contrast, Forts and Beaches lag behind, suggesting that tourists prioritize cultural and natural experiences over historical or conventional beach visits. These insights can guide tourism developers to focus on enhancing the appeal of Hills and Temples, while also exploring ways to make Forts and Beaches more engaging and attractive to meet the evolving demands of tourists.

Top Three Utilities-Based Combinations

Table 3 COMBO-1	
Nightlife_conservativenigh life	0.143
Entertainment_Outdoor	0.68
Publictransport_metro	0.095
Food_Indianfood	0.59
Touristattraction_Temples	0.365
Total Utility	1.873

The table 3 presents the utility score of a combination labeled "Combo-1," evaluated based on various lifestyle and travel-related factors. The total utility score of 1.873 represents the overall satisfaction derived from this combination of experiences. Among the factors, "Entertainment: Outdoor" has the highest contribution with a score of 0.63, indicating that outdoor activities significantly enhance the overall utility. "Food: Indian Food" also plays a substantial role, contributing 0.59, reflecting a strong preference for Indian cuisine. In contrast, "Tourist Attraction: Temples" has a moderate impact on utility, adding 0.365, suggesting a reasonable interest in cultural visits.

"Nightlife, conservative night life" has a lower score of 0.143, showing a minimal contribution, possibly due to a conservative or moderate approach to nightlife activities. Similarly, "Public Transport: Metro" contributes only 0.095, indicating that metro transport is not a major factor in enhancing overall satisfaction. The distribution of scores suggests that outdoor entertainment and food preferences are the most influential components of this combination, while nightlife and public transport play less significant roles. The total utility reflects a balanced blend of interests, with a notable emphasis on enjoying outdoor experiences and local cuisine.

Table 4 COMBO-2	
Nightlife_conservativenigh	

life	0.143
Entertainment_Outdoor	0.68
Publictransport_Rail	0.038
Food_Indianfood	0.59
Touristattraction_Temples	0.365
Total Utility	1.816

The table 4 provides a quantitative analysis of various attributes of a location labeled "Como-2," with a focus on how these aspects contribute to the overall experience, as measured by their utility scores. The total utility score of 1.816 reflects the combined value that visitors or residents may derive from these specific factors.

Among the highest contributors, outdoor entertainment stands out with a utility score of 0.68, suggesting that activities such as hiking, nature experiences, or other outdoor leisure options are highly valued in this location. Similarly, Indian food adds significant positive value (0.59), indicating that the availability or quality of Indian cuisine is a key strength that enhances the overall satisfaction for visitors or residents.

Temples as tourist attractions contribute moderately to the experience with a utility score of 0.365, showing that cultural or religious sites hold some appeal, likely for those interested in heritage tourism. In contrast, conservative nightlife offers a much smaller utility of 0.143, indicating that while there may be options for nightlife, they are likely subdued or less exciting compared to more vibrant offerings elsewhere, and thus, contribute only modestly to the overall experience.

Finally, rail transport receives the lowest utility score (0.038), implying that the public transportation system, specifically rail, adds very little to the appeal of the location. This could suggest either a lack of accessibility or simply that rail transport is not a priority or well-developed in this area.

Above combination is deriving second highest utilities as per tourist preference. Tourists have rated conservative night life, outdoor entertainment, and availability of temples nearby tourist destination, availability of Indian food and railways for commutation as highest among all options.

Table 5 COMBO-3	
Nightlife_conservativenigh life	0.14
Entertainment_Outdoor	0.6
Publictransport_metro	0.09
Food_localfood	0.3
Touristattraction_Temples	0.36
Total Utility	1.60

Table 5 shows how different parts of a tourist experience contribute to their overall enjoyment or satisfaction, called "Total Utility," which is 1.603. The elements include nightlife in a quiet or conservative area, which adds a small positive value (0.143). Outdoor entertainment

is highly valued (0.63), while using the metro adds a little benefit (0.095). Trying local food has a good impact (0.32), and visiting temples as a tourist attraction is also important (0.385). Overall, outdoor activities, local food, and temples are the main things that make the trip enjoyable for tourists.

Above combination is deriving third highest utilities as per tourist preference. Tourists have rated conservative night life, outdoor entertainment, and availability of temples nearby tourist destination, availability of local food and railways for commutation as highest among all options.

DISCUSSIONS

The study titled "Evaluation of Tourist Preferences for Mumbai as a Tourist Destination: A Conjoint Analysis Approach" provides a detailed analysis of the various factors influencing tourist preferences when choosing Mumbai as a travel destination. By using conjoint analysis, the research dissects how different attributes such as entertainment, food, transport systems, and cultural experiences contribute to the overall tourist experience and decision-making process. The analysis reveals that certain factors play a more significant role in shaping the tourist's choices, offering vital insights for destination managers, city planners, and marketers in the tourism industry.

At the forefront of these influencing factors is entertainment, which emerged as the most decisive attribute, contributing to 38.24% of the overall tourist decision-making process. Within the entertainment category, outdoor activities such as nature-based experiences, parks, and adventure sports were the most highly favoured by tourists. This suggests that travelers are seeking immersive experiences that allow them to engage with the environment and partake in recreational activities that are enjoyable and authentic. The preference for outdoor activities over other forms of entertainment, such as shopping malls or indoor recreational spaces, highlights a growing trend among tourists toward experiential travel, where interactions with nature and cultural surroundings are prioritized. Additionally, pubs were another form of entertainment that garnered considerable utility, suggesting that tourists enjoy a balance between social nightlife and outdoor recreational activities. The lower preference for shopping malls may indicate that tourists view these as less unique or culturally enriching, as similar commercial experiences can be found in many global cities.

The second most influential factor identified in the research was food, which accounted for 24.07% of tourist preferences. In this category, tourists showed a marked preference for Indian cuisine, which had the highest utility value. This indicates that food is not merely a functional aspect of travel but is seen as an integral part of the cultural experience. Indian food, known for its rich spices and diverse flavors, is a key attraction for both domestic and international tourists, offering them a taste of local traditions and culinary heritage. Interestingly, local food, which includes regional and culturally specific dishes, ranked second in preference, further reinforcing the idea that tourists value authenticity in their culinary experiences. On the other hand, continental food received the lowest preference, suggesting that tourists are not particularly interested in international cuisines when travelling within India. This is likely because continental dishes are more familiar and less distinctive compared to Indian and local cuisine. The findings suggest that restaurants, food vendors, and local businesses should focus on providing authentic, high-quality Indian food to cater to tourist expectations. Emphasizing the local culinary landscape through food festivals, cooking classes, or food tours can further enhance Mumbai's reputation as a gastronomic destination.

In addition to entertainment and food, cultural and historical attractions were identified as key elements in shaping tourist preferences, accounting for 23.29% of the decision-making process. Among these, temples were the most preferred tourist attractions. The strong appeal of temples highlights the significance of cultural depth and historical richness in drawing tourists. For many travelers, visiting temples offers not only a spiritual experience but also an opportunity to engage with the architectural and cultural heritage of Mumbai. This preference underscores the importance of preserving and promoting Mumbai's religious and historical landmarks as part of its tourism strategy. Hill stations were also favoured, appealing to tourists seeking scenic beauty and a tranquil escape from the urban environment. The preference for natural, peaceful settings like hill stations reflects the broader trend of travelers seeking relaxation and a connection with nature during their holidays. Surprisingly, beaches received a lower preference in the study, indicating that they are not as influential in tourist decisions as might be expected. This could be due to several factors, including overcrowding, pollution, or a lack of distinctive experiences compared to more popular beach destinations elsewhere. Destination managers might consider re-evaluating the way beach tourism is marketed and managed to improve its appeal.

While entertainment, food, and cultural attractions were the most significant factors, the research also examined the role of nightlife in shaping tourist preferences. Nightlife accounted for 8% of tourist decision-making, and within this category, conservative nightlife options were more highly favoured than vibrant, high-energy nightlife like nightclubs and bars. This finding suggests that tourists visiting Mumbai may prefer quieter, more relaxed nightlife experiences, such as cultural shows, lounges, or low-key social events, over loud, dynamic settings. This preference could be linked to personal comfort, safety concerns, or cultural norms that favour more traditional forms of entertainment. Although nightlife is not a dominant factor in tourist decision-making, it still plays a role in shaping the overall experience, especially for those tourists seeking balanced, culturally aligned social settings after a day of exploration.

Another factor examined in the study was public transport, which accounted for 6.39% of tourist preferences. While not the most influential factor, transport infrastructure still plays an essential role in ensuring that tourists have a convenient and hassle-free experience while navigating the city. Among the various transportation options, metro systems were the most preferred, followed by rail services. The preference for metro systems highlights the importance of reliability, speed, and ease of access, especially in a sprawling metropolis like Mumbai where traffic congestion can significantly impact travel experiences. Road transport, including buses and other road-based public transportation, received the lowest preference, likely due to concerns about traffic delays, overcrowding, and pollution. This finding reinforces the need for continued investment in Mumbai's public transportation infrastructure, particularly in expanding and improving the metro and rail systems, which offer tourists a faster and more efficient way to explore the city.

Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the complex interplay of factors that shape tourist preferences in Mumbai. Entertainment, food, and cultural attractions emerge as the primary drivers of tourist satisfaction, while nightlife and public transport play secondary but still important roles. For destination managers, these findings underscore the importance of creating a well-rounded tourism offering that caters to a diverse range of preferences. By focusing on enhancing outdoor entertainment options, promoting authentic Indian cuisine, preserving cultural landmarks, and improving transport infrastructure, Mumbai can enhance its attractiveness as a top tourist destination.

The implications of these findings are significant for both destination management and marketing strategies. First, the preference for outdoor activities and cultural experiences suggests that Mumbai's tourism stakeholders should prioritize the development and promotion of attractions that offer tourists an immersive, authentic experience of the city's natural and cultural heritage. Second, food tourism presents a significant opportunity to draw visitors, particularly through initiatives that celebrate Indian and local cuisine. Finally, improving public transport infrastructure, particularly metro and rail systems, will further enhance the overall tourist experience by ensuring that visitors can easily and efficiently navigate the city's many attractions. By aligning tourism offerings with these preferences, Mumbai can position itself as a competitive and attractive destination for both domestic and international travelers.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The theoretical implications of the study "Evaluation of Tourist Preferences for Mumbai as a Tourist Destination" are significant for advancing the understanding of consumer behaviour in tourism, particularly in the context of destination selection and preference formation. The study's use of conjoint analysis contributes to the theoretical discourse on how tourists prioritize various attributes, such as entertainment, food, transport, and cultural attractions, when making travel decisions. This nuanced approach challenges traditional models of tourist decision-making by revealing that preferences are not only influenced by singular attractions or facilities but are the result of an interaction of multiple factors, each contributing differently to the overall experience. For instance, the emphasis on entertainment as the most influential factor in the decision-making process highlights the growing importance of experiential and immersive travel, where tourists seek deeper engagement with the environment and local culture. This shifts the theoretical focus from conventional sightseeing to experience-oriented tourism, encouraging researchers to further explore the psychological and emotional dimensions of travel experiences.

Moreover, the findings regarding food preferences and cultural attractions enrich the theoretical understanding of cultural tourism and culinary tourism, emphasizing the role of authenticity in tourist satisfaction. Tourists' strong preference for Indian cuisine and local culinary experiences suggests that theoretical models of tourist behaviour must account for the increasing importance of food as a central part of the travel experience, particularly in culturally diverse destinations. Similarly, the preference for temples and hill stations as key attractions suggests that cultural depth and natural tranquillity are becoming pivotal factors in destination selection. This contributes to the literature on cultural and heritage tourism, encouraging future research to investigate how cultural preservation and promotion impact tourist behaviour. The study also underscores the need to integrate transport infrastructure into theoretical models of tourist satisfaction, highlighting the practical importance of efficient and reliable transportation in enhancing the overall tourist experience. These findings invite a re-evaluation of existing theories in tourism, particularly those that overlook the multi-faceted nature of tourist preferences and how they interact to shape the overall travel experience.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The practical implications of the study "Evaluation of Tourist Preferences for Mumbai as a Tourist Destination" offer valuable insights for destination managers, policymakers, and stakeholders in Mumbai's tourism sector. The findings emphasize that entertainment, particularly

outdoor activities, is a key driver of tourist satisfaction. This suggests that tourism authorities should focus on enhancing outdoor recreational spaces, such as parks, beaches, and adventure zones, to cater to the growing demand for immersive, nature-based experiences. Investments in outdoor facilities, such as better infrastructure for adventure sports and nature walks, would attract both domestic and international tourists, thereby boosting the city's appeal.

Additionally, the strong preference for Indian and local food highlights the importance of promoting authentic culinary experiences. Restaurants and food vendors should prioritize offering traditional Indian cuisine, which could be promoted through food festivals and culinary tours that highlight Mumbai's diverse gastronomic landscape. Such initiatives would capitalize on the increasing trend of food tourism, making Mumbai a prominent destination for food enthusiasts.

Furthermore, the preference for temples and hill stations as cultural attractions underscores the need to preserve and promote Mumbai's cultural heritage. This could involve maintaining and upgrading historical sites, developing more guided cultural tours and ensuring easy access to these attractions. For transportation, the preference for metro and rail services suggests that improving the city's public transport infrastructure—especially expanding metro lines—would enhance tourist satisfaction by providing convenient and reliable options for navigating the city.

By addressing these practical insights, tourism stakeholders in Mumbai can design more tailored marketing strategies and enhance overall visitor experiences, leading to increased destination competitiveness and economic benefits for the region.

LIMITATIONS

The study "Evaluation of Tourist Preferences for Mumbai as a Tourist Destination" acknowledges several limitations that affect the generalizability and scope of its findings. One of the key limitations is the use of convenience sampling, which may introduce bias into the results. Since the sample is drawn from individuals readily available and willing to participate, it may not fully represent the diverse range of tourists visiting Mumbai. As a result, the findings may not accurately reflect the preferences of all tourist segments, particularly those from underrepresented groups or different demographic backgrounds. This limits the broader applicability of the conclusions to a wider population of tourists, reducing the reliability of the study for making generalized assumptions about tourist behaviour in Mumbai.

Another limitation of the study is its focus on a single destination, Mumbai. While the findings provide valuable insights into tourist preferences specific to Mumbai, they may not be applicable to other destinations with different characteristics, cultural contexts, or tourist profiles. Additionally, the study relies heavily on quantitative methods through conjoint analysis, which, although effective in measuring preferences, may overlook deeper qualitative insights into why tourists prefer certain attributes. The study does not extensively explore emerging trends such as digital platforms and sustainability, which are becoming increasingly important in shaping tourist decisions. Future research incorporating diverse sampling methods, qualitative techniques, and an examination of these trends could provide a more comprehensive understanding of evolving tourist behaviour. By addressing these limitations, future studies could enhance the robustness and generalizability of research in this area.

CONCLUSION

The study “Evaluation of Tourist Preferences for Mumbai as a Tourist Destination: A Conjoint Analysis Approach” provides crucial insights into the factors shaping tourist decision-making in Mumbai. The research reveals that entertainment, particularly outdoor activities, plays the most significant role in influencing tourist preferences, followed closely by food preferences, with a marked inclination towards Indian cuisine. Cultural attractions, such as temples and hill stations, also emerged as key components of a desirable tourist experience, underscoring the importance of cultural depth and natural beauty in destination selection. Although nightlife and public transport were less influential, the preference for conservative nightlife and structured, efficient metro and rail services highlights the nuanced aspects of travel preferences in Mumbai.

The findings offer actionable insights for destination managers and tourism stakeholders, suggesting that investments in outdoor recreational spaces, authentic culinary experiences, and cultural preservation can significantly enhance the city’s tourism appeal. However, the study’s limitations, including its reliance on convenience sampling and focus on a single destination, indicate the need for future research to explore more diverse sampling methods, incorporate qualitative insights, and examine emerging trends such as digital platforms and sustainability.

Overall, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of tourist behavior in the context of Mumbai and offers valuable implications for destination management and tourism marketing strategies. By focusing on these key preferences, Mumbai can enhance its competitiveness as a premier tourist destination, ultimately driving sustainable growth in its tourism sector. Future studies addressing the identified limitations will provide a more comprehensive view of evolving tourist preferences in the global tourism landscape.

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