SPATIAL DIMENSIONS OF INTERNATIONAL TOURIST VISITATION IN KASHMIR

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Abstract

The study makes an attempt to map the continental distribution of the international tourists in Jammu & Kashmir. The inbound visitor perception related to the prioritisation of three tourist divisions of the study area in terms of time spent/to be spent in each division have been examined. Efforts were also taken to relate the preferences and intention to visit other destinations in India and also to find out relationship between visitor nationality and duration of vacation.

Keywords: *International Tourists, Spatial Distribution, Temporal, Destination Preference, Nationality Jammu & Kashmir, India*

INTRODUCTION

International mobility trends in outbound and inbound travel as well as vital developments impacting the travel and tourism sector assumed centrality of debates in the current World Travel Monitor Forum. The depictions of the first eight months of 2016 as per the World Travel Monitor vividly demonstrate that the global outbound travel remains on the rise notwithstanding the disturbing socio-economic and political disruptions. The number of global outbound visits grew by 3.9%, led by Asia (+11%), including 18% growth in the swiftly emergent Chinese market, and the USA (+7%). European outbound travel grew by 2.5%, with good quality growth from the UK (+6%) and Germany (+4%) (ITB World Travel Trends Report 2016 / 17).

According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, International inbound visits grew by 4% in the first nine months of 2016. In Europe, destinations perceived as safe and secure received a good quality tourist footfall as international travellers deflected away from destinations hit by socio-political distortions. Asia and the Americas have been able to achieve good number of inbound visitations. The Mekong sub-region in Asia has been one of the rapidly growing destinations.

The projections for coming years are very optimistic, with global outbound travel forecasted to increase by between 4% and 5%, propelled once again by Asia and the USA and with robust growth out of Europe. The Chinese are anticipated to

go off on more global visits for several years to approach, even though there possibly will be a perceptible plunge in their occasionally prolific spending in future, according to one Beijing-based expert.

The effect of terror incidents on the travel industry remained a great focus at the Pisa forum. As per the data revealed by the World Travel Monitor data, the actual risk to travellers from terror incidents is greatly lesser than, for example, health troubles or felony. Nevertheless, a significant segment of populace (45%) at the moment has grave safety and security concerns, principally about certain territories, and about two thirds of them think of hopping to those territories that are perceived as being safe. The deliberations at the forum emphasized on the use of multi pronged strategy by the destinations that suffer from image crisis and possible development and inclusion of peace tourism programmes.

Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency to formulate national policies and programmes for the development and promotion of tourism. In the process, the Ministry consults and collaborates with other stakeholders in the sector including various Central Ministries/ agencies, the State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations and the representatives of the private sector. The year 2016 witnessed a growth of 10.7 % in Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India. FTAs during 2016 were 88.9 lakh (provisional) as compared to the FTAs of 8.3 million during 2015. The Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) from tourism in rupee terms during 2016 were Rs.1,55,650 crore (provisional) with a growth of 15.1%.

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REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL EXPLORATION

The study of tourism as an academic field is a recent phenomenon and, over the last few decades, the field has experienced rapid changes in research focus and methodological sophistication (Xiao and Smith 2006). Tracking these changes provides insights into the growth and development of research in the field, as well as highlighting areas for further attention.

Destinations around the world welcomed 956 million international tourists between January and September 2016, according to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. This is 34 million more than in the same period of 2015, a 4% increase. Demand for international tourism remained robust in the first nine months of 2016, though growing at a somewhat more moderate pace. After a strong start of the year, growth was slower in the second quarter of 2016 to pick up again in the third quarter of the year. While most destinations report encouraging results, others continue to struggle with the impact of negative events, either in their country or in their region. Tourism is one of the most resilient and fastest-growing economic sectors but it is also very sensitive to risks, both actual and perceived. As such, the sector must continue to work together with governments and stakeholders to minimize risks, respond effectively and build confidence among travellers.

In India the direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP reflects the internal spending on Travel & Tourism (total spending within a particular country on Travel & Tourism by residents and non-residents for business and leisure purposes) as well as government 'individual' spending - spending by government on Travel & Tourism services directly linked to visitors, such as cultural (eg museums) or recreational (eg national parks). The direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP is calculated to be consistent with the output, as expressed in National Accounting, of tourism-characteristic sectors such as hotels, airlines, airports, travel agents and leisure and recreation services that deal directly with tourists (WTTC, 2016).

Top 10 Source Countries for Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India in 2015 are United States (Share, 15.12 %); Bangladesh (Share, 14.13 %); United Kingdom (Share, 10.81 %); Sri Lanka (Share, 3.73%); Canada (Share, 3.50%); Malaysia (Share, 3.40%); Australia (Share, 3.28%); Germany (Share, 3.09%); France (Share, 2.88%); Japan (Share, 2.58%) (Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, 2015).

A total of 43,833 tourists arrived in May 2016 on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 15,659 during the month of May 2015 registering a growth of 179.9% (Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, 2016). According to Tourism Towards 2030, the number of international tourist arrivals worldwide is expected to increase by an average of 3.3% a year over the period 2010 to 2030. Over time, the rate of growth will gradually slow, from 3.8% at the beginning of the period to 2.9% in 2030, but this is on top of growing base numbers. In absolute numbers, international tourist arrivals will increase by some 43 million a year, compared with an average increase of 28 million a year during the period 1995 to 2010. At the projected rate of growth, international tourist arrivals worldwide are expected to reach 1.4 billion by 2020 and 1.8 billion by the year 2030.

Thanks to their faster growth, the global market shares of Asia and the Pacific (to 30% in 2030, up from 22% in 2010), the Middle East (to 8%, from 6%) and Africa (to 7%, from 5%) will all increase. As a result, Europe (to 41%, from 51%) and the Americas (to 14%, from 16%) will experience a further decline in their share of international tourism, mostly because of the slower growth of the comparatively mature destinations in North America, Northern Europe and Western Europe (UNWTO Tourism Towards 2030, 2016).

STUDY AREA

Jammu and Kashmir is a state located in northern India, frequently denoted by the acronym J&K. It is positioned mainly in the Himalayan Mountains, and shares its borders with the states of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab to the south.
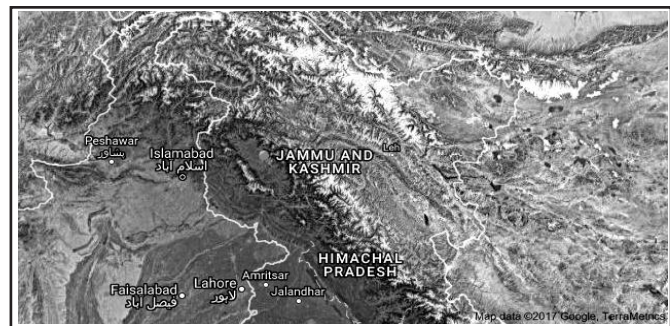
Source: Map Data Google, 2017

Fig. 1

The strategic vision and mission of Jammu and Kashmir tourism is to build a strong brand that intends to achieve globally competitive tourism sector. The aim here is promote sustainable development and integrate tourism as one of the chief propellants of socio-economic upliftment. The tourism authorities aspire to again global leadership and position the destination as one of the innovative visitor experiences. The sector wishes to strongly contribute to the economic growth of the State and promote societal integration and human welfare by generation more and more employment avenues, encourage inclusive development and craft marketing campaigns to emotionally connect with the source markets. The policy aims to promote strong networking among its

various agencies to develop world class visitor experiences that are sustainable, innovative and authentic. The policy further wishes to bring the much required investments into the sector by floating incentives at different levels and promote public private partnerships to support livelihood opportunities at the indigenous level and frame strategies to increase the tourist footfall in the region (DOT, J&K Govt., 2015).

The year 2015 retained a stumpy tempo of tourist influx, observed in Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Ladakh regions. The aggregate tourist arrivals (Domestic and Foreign) in 2015 were 1280586 for Kashmir Valley; 77,76,604 for Jammu Region and 146501 for Ladakh Region. As a result the total arrivals seen in 2015 in entire state of Jammu and Kashmir were 92,03,691 (Directorate of Economics & Statistics, J&K Govt. 2015-16).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To map the spatial distribution of international tourists across different continents.
- To examine the visitor perception related to the temporal prioritisation of three tourist divisions of the study area in terms of 'time spent/to be spent' in each division.
- To examine the relations in preferences and intention to visit other destinations in India.
- To examine temporal relationship between visitor nationality and duration of vacation.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The design of the study is experimental in nature using purposive sampling. Evidently studies based on experiments are usually classified as prospective studies as the researcher needs to wait for finding out the various patterns and relationships in the study population. The study is predominantly based on deductive rather than inductive logic. Like many similar studies the study is flexible and emergent in nature, non-linear and non-sequential in operationalisation. The methods and processes, besides flexible are evolving; hence, like most exploratory studies the design of the study is not as structured and sequential as quantitative ones.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population of the study constituted foreign tourists arriving in twin airports of Jammu and Srinagar of Jammu and Kashmir state. The study primarily attempted to map the continental distribution of international tourists, prioritisation of three tourist divisions of the state in terms of 'time spent/to be spent' in each division besides finding links in preferences of other destinations in India. The data

collection for the study commenced during the month of June, 2016 and concluded in December. Data collectors were deputed to airports of Jammu, Srinagar and Leh and sought responses on a very brief questionnaire. The data collectors were instructed not to take reckoning of domestic tourists in order to add control to the study. Consecutively to pick the threads and patterns of international tourists visiting the state, the researchers have set an ambitious target of 1500 tourists as a sample size. The size was arrived at after consulting the industry experts and academic persons.

DATA ANALYSIS

In line with the demands of the study the researchers relied on frequency and descriptive analysis to find out the various patterns in the data. Concomitantly to uncover other useful trends in the data cross-tabulation with chi-square was also used.

RESULTS

The data collectors almost achieved the predetermined sample size. The researchers received 1430 returned questionnaires. The data was cleaned before the commencement of analysis. Questionnaires with incomplete information were removed. Only questionnaires with more than 90 percent of the information were retained. Also questionnaires with extreme cases/data figures were removed to bring a sense of normality in the data.

SPATIAL PATTERN OF FOREIGN TOURIST DISTRIBUTION IN J&K

As revealed by the Table 1 there is almost symmetry in the distribution of gender. 50.4% constituted males and remaining 49.6 females. It indicates foreign tourists prefer to visit the state with their opposite gender.

Table 1: Respondents' Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Male	640	50.4	50.4
Female	629	49.6	49.6
Total	1269	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary data

Table 2 shows the continental distribution of international tourists. The highest number of tourist arrivals during the study period were from Asia (58%) followed by Europe (21.4%), America (10%) Africa (6%) and Australia (4%). It is pertinent to mention here that despite travel advisories from many European and American countries, there has been relatively steady tourist inflow into the state from these countries.

Table 2: Continent-wise Distribution of Respondents

Continent	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Asia	744	58.6	58.6
Africa	78	6.1	6.1
European	272	21.4	21.4
America	126	9.9	9.9
Australia	49	3.9	3.9
Total	1269	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary data

MAJOR NATIONALITIES AND CONTINENTS

Subsequently, the continent was used as a controlling variable and the researchers tried to find out the nationality of international tourists. The counties were ranked based on the number of their nationals visiting the state. There were tourists from 38 countries of Asia from 9 from Africa, 22 from Europe, 10 from America and each from Australia and New Zealand. The countries were ranked based on the frequency of tourists as follows.

Among the 38 countries of Asia only first fifteen have been reported in Table 3. Others were omitted to give more emphasis on countries sending significant number of tourists to the state. As revealed by the table 3 the top ranking country in Asia with 31.2 percent of the tourists is Thailand followed by Malaysia (31%) with marginal difference. The third rank goes to Chinese tourists (5.1%) trailed by Singapore with 4.3 percent. It is pertinent to mention here that among the south Asian countries only Bangladesh (3.4%) and Sri Lanka (2%) have figured in the top fifteen countries.

Table 3: Major Nationalities- Continent-wise

Asia			Europe		
Nationality	Frequency	In %	Nationality	Frequency	In %
Thailand	232	31.2	British	82	30.1
Malaysia	231	31	French	45	16.5
China	38	5.1	German	36	13.2
Singapore	32	4.3	Spanish	19	7.0
Bangladeshi	25	3.4	Dutch	15	5.5
Israel	24	3.2	Swiss	13	4.8
Japan	18	2.4	Itali	12	4.4
Turkey	17	2.3	Ireland	9	3.3
Sri Lanka	15	2	Polish	7	2.6
UAE	14	1.9	Austria	5	1.8
Saudi	12	1.6	Sweden	5	1.8
Kuwait	11	1.5	Greek	4	1.5
Russia	11	1.5	Norwegian	4	1.5
Indonesia	8	1.1	Slovakia	4	1.5
Hong Kong	7	0.9			

Source: Primary data

Table 3 reveals that UK with 30.1% is single largest contributor of foreign tourists from the Europe followed by France (16.5%), Germany (13.2) and Spain (7). Out of the 22 countries from Europe only the data of 14 countries has been reported in the following table.

Table 4 shows the distribution of tourists hailing from African continent. The top ranking country in the table is South Africa with 73.1% of the total tourists.

Table 4: Major Nationalities - Continent-wise

Africa			The Americas		
Nationality	**Frequency**	**In %**	**Nationality**	**Frequency**	**In %**
S. Africa	57	73.1	USA	82	65.1
Egyptia	6	7.7	Canadian	25	19.8
Kenya	6	7.7	Brazilian	9	7.1
Tanzania	3	3.8	Colombian	3	2.4
Yemini	2	2.6	Argentine	2	1.6
Algeria	1	1.3	US-Chinese	1	0.8
Morocco	1	1.3	US-India	1	0.8
Sierra Leon	1	1.3	Mexico	1	0.8
Tunisian	1	1.3	New Zealand	1	0.8
			West Indian	1	0.8

Source: Primary data

South Africa is followed by Egypt (7.7%), Kenya (7.7%), Tanzania (3.8%) and Yemen (2.6%). Notably counties in the sub-Sahara do not figure in the list. Higher percentage of nationals from South Africa indicates the relative social and economic empowerment of the southernmost country of the continent. As expected the USA is the highest contributor in total tourist inflow from this continent. The country has sent more than 65% of the total tourists. The results are presented in the Table 6. The USA is followed by Canada which has almost 20% share in the total tourists from this continent. Brazil, Colombia and Argentina go after the Canada with respective percentages of 7.1, 2.4 and 1.6.

As reported in Table 5, Australia contributes almost 78 % of the total tourists. On the other hand New Zealand with the remaining 22 % is placed at rank second.

Table 5: Major Nationalities - Australia

Nationality	Frequency	In %
Australian	38	77.6
New Zealand	11	22.4

Source: Primary data

DURATION OF STAY IN INDIA AND J&K STATE

In the next step the researchers tried to find out the prioritisation of the state measured in terms of time spent in the state against the total time spent/to be spent in India. The data was gathered as actual number of days of vacation.

Table 6: Number of Days Available for Vacation in India

Duration	Frequency	In %	Duration	Frequency	In %
<= 6 days	319	25.1	13 – 21 days	258	20.3
7 – 8 days	242	19.1	22+ days	229	18.0
9 – 12 days	218	17.2	Missing	3	2
Total respondents: 1269					

Source: Primary data

The raw data was fragmented in to relatively symmetrical percentages groups. The grouping was done using Visual Binning tool available in SPSS 23. The data was grouped using equal percentiles based on scanned cases technique. This technique is useful as compared to other alternatives in as much as it attempts to bring evenness across all the classes of the data. The total duration available for India is reported in Table 6. As shown by the table people with short duration trips, i.e. less or equal to 6 days are 25% relative to other higher groups. Class of 7-8 days makes 19 % and 17.2 percentage of the respondents were scheduled to stay for 9-12 days. The remaining percentage of respondents belonged to other two categories. Subsequently, the data was again binned to find out the categories for the time spent/to be spent in the state. The results are presented in the Table 7.

Table 7: Duration of Stay in Kashmir Valley

Duration	Frequency	In %	Duration	Frequency	In %
<= 3 days	466	25.1	6 – 6days	107	8.4
4 days	274	19.1	7+days	250	19.7
5 days	171	17.2	Missing	1	0.1

Total respondents: 1269 (100%)
Source: Primary data

As expected the binning has yielded five classes of data starting from less or equal to 3 days of stay to 7 or more days. The table reveals respondents with short duration itinerary are more than other groups. 36.7% of the respondents are from this group. Respondents with 4 days stay itinerary are second with 21.6% of the respondents. However, respondents with more than 7 day time period has 19.7 percentages of the respondents significantly higher than preceding two groups. A similar technique was used to deduce the prioritisation of other divisions of the state. However due to lesser number of respondents classes could not be produced.

Table 8: Visit Prioritisation within J&K

Region	Frequency	In %
Kashmir	1261	99.4
Jammu	72	5.
Ladakh	56	4.4
Total	1269	-

Source: Primary data

As reported by the table 8, Kashmir outnumbers significantly (99.3 % of the respondents) other two regions of the state in terms of tourist inflow. Only 5.6% and 4.4% respectively of the tourists have reported to have Jammu and Ladakh in their travel itinerary. The numbers clearly indicate that Kashmir emerges as the top ranking destination for foreign tourists.

CONTINENT-WISE DURATION OF STAY IN INDIA

Subsequently, the researchers tried to figure out whether there is any relationship between the origins of the respondents (measured by the continent) and duration of stay in India or both the phenomenon are independent of each other. In order to test the percentage difference, Pearson Chi-Square test at 5 % significance level was carried out. The results are presented in the Table 9 and 10.

Table 9: Continent-wise Duration of Stay in India

Continent	Duration (In days)					Total Respondents
	<= 6	7 - 8	9 - 12	13 - 21	22+	
Asia (In%)	30.8	25.9	21.8	15.6	5.9	744
Africa (In%)	25.6	1.3	5.1	39.7	28.2	78
Europe (In%)	19.3	12.2	11.1	22.6	34.8	270
Americas (In%)	12.0	10.4	10.4	25.6	41.6	125
Australia (In%)	6.1	4.1	18.4	36.7	34.7	49
Total (In%)	25.2	19.1	17.2	20.4	18.1	1266

Source: Primary data

As shown by the table 9, there appears significant relationship between the two constructs. Significantly (30.8%) Asians prefer to stay for shorter durations of six or lesser days. Africans stay for 13-21 days with 39.7 percentages. Europeans also stay for longer durations from 13-21 days (22%) and more than 22 days (34.8 %). The same trend follows for American and Australian respondents. Both prefer to stay for longer durations.

Table 10: Chi-Square Tests for Duration of Stay in India vs. Continent

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	286.41a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	303.390	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	182.564	1	.000
No. of Valid Cases	1266	-	

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.44

Table 10 provides evidence to the dependence of continent and the duration of stay. The Pearson Chi-square value 286.41, df 16 is significant with p <0.05. The test is valid in so far as none of the cells has expected value less than 5 counts.

CONTINENT-WISE DURATION OF STAY IN KASHMIR

Like India the researchers also tried to find out any relationship between the length of duration and the geographical location of the inbound international tourists in Kashmir. The results of the cross tabulation is presented in Table 11. The table reveals Asian prefer to stay in Kashmir for shorter durations. Almost 42 percent of the Asian have reported to stay for less than three days in Kashmir. Similarly, Africans also have a preference for shorter durations. Around 60% of the respondents have reported to stay for three or lesser number of days in Kashmir.

Table 11: Continent-Wise Duration of Stay in Kashmir

Continent	Duration (In days)					Total Respondents
	<= 3	4 - 4	5 - 5	6 - 6	7+	
Asia (In%)	41.7	21.8	13.2	10.2	13.2	744
Africa (In%)	59.7	23.4	7.8	3.9	5.2	77
Europe (In%)	25.7	19.9	13.6	6.2	34.6	272
Americas (In%)	26.2	24.6	17.5	4.0	27.8	126
Australia (In%)	14.3	18.4	16.3	12.2	38.8	49
Total (In%)	36.8	21.6	13.5	8.4	19.7	1268

Source: Primary data

Europeans prefer to stay for longer duration in Kashmir. 34.6 percent of the respondents from Europe have said that they have longer duration (More than 7 days) itinerary in Kashmir. There is a divide among Americans related to the duration of stay. Where the data shows that more than 27% people have seven-day itinerary at the same time 26.2% of the respondents have preferred to stay for three or lesser number of days. However, Australians have reported to stay for more than seven days in Kashmir like Europeans. We tested the independence of the two variables (length of duration and geographical location) using Pearson Chi-Square test at 5% significance level. The results are presented in the Table 10.

Table 10: Chi-Square Tests for Duration of Stay in Kashmir vs. Continent

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	118.45[a]	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	118.804	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	55.861	1	.000
No. of Valid Cases	1268	-	

a. 1 cells (4.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.13.

The result has yielded significant relationship among the variables of length of duration and geographical location (Chi Square = 118.45, df 16 and P<0.005). We therefore reject the null hypothesis that both the variables are independent. It is pertinent to mention here that the results should be interpreted in the light of the one cell where expected count has yielded expected value less than 5.

INTERCONNECTION AMONG TOURIST DESTINATIONS

It was also attempted to find out the interconnection among various destinations among the international tourists. Precisely an attempt was made to see which other popular destinations in India are on the itineraries of the International tourists. This analysis was found useful for putting advertorial communication in and around these destinations for promoting the tourist destinations of Jammu and Kashmir. The results are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Other Tourist Destinations Visited/to be Visited Frequencies*

Other States Visited	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	In %	
Agra	722	46.5%	79.1%
Rajasthan	357	23.0%	39.1%
Goa	305	19.7%	33.4%
Kerala	168	10.8%	18.4%
Total Responses	1552	100	-

* Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Table 13 shows that Agra owing to its historical importance and monumental architecture is the most popular destination among the international tourist. 46.5% of the respondents have reported that Agra is on their itinerary list. Rajasthan cultural heritage reflected by various forts dotted across the state is number second destination preferred after Agra (23%). Goa (19.7%) and Kerala (10.8%) have emerged at number third and fourth preferred destinations respectively.

DISCUSSION

Intercontinental tourism performed healthily in the year 2016 with steady growth levels, according to the data released by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Destinations around the globe received 956 million international visitors between January and September 2016, according to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. This was a 4% escalation, which is proximate to the tourism industry's long-term growth rate. "Tourism has been on the rise at or about 4% for the last six years. Following a 5% increase in worldwide tourism to 1,186 million arrivals in 2015, this growth rate for the first nine months of 2016 is within the 3.5 – 4.5% range for 2016.

From a regional perspective, there was robust growth in international tourism for Asia Pacific, good improvements

for the Americas and by and large stumpy growth for Europe. Africa was able to increase its growth rate by 8% largely attributed to the unusual performance of sub-Saharan destinations. Available data from the Middle East signifies a 6% decrease in arrivals, though outcomes may differ from destination to destination.

There are diverse key factors impacting international tourism in 2015 and to some extent in 2016. Serious fluctuations in exchange rates have affected the competitiveness of some destinations by making them more costly or cheaper, whilst low oil prices are retaining down transportation expenses. Against the milieu of socio-political unrest in various countries around the world, the UNWTO flagged the importance of building crisis management plans for the destinations that are facing active conflicts. In contemporary times destination also need to undertake product diversification, look for newer markets and engage with fresh segments. Asians made trips this year to far off destinations with a rise in travel to destination within the region that included a surge in beach holidays. China was once again retained its position as a growth propellant. After a double-digit climb in worldwide trips this year, the stance stays robust for 2017.

The Asian economy sustained to develop well in 2016 and is projected to remain on a firm growth corridor, according to records from the IFO Institute for Economic Research in Munich. After GDP growth of 4.8% in 2015, the region is anticipated to grow by 4.6% in 2016 and also in 2017, sliding a little down to a 4.4% increase in 2018. In China, fiscal compulsions will persist to produce annual economic growth rates of about 6%, but Japan and South Korea will be apprehended back by stumpy growth in global trade, according to the IFO experts.

The number of tourist arrivals in India in the year 2016 was 8.80 million with annual growth rate of 9.7%. The annual growth rate in the foreign exchange earnings was 14%. The share of India in international tourist arrivals 1.18% and the rank of India in international tourist arrivals were 25th internationally. In the Asia Pacific the share of India in international tourist arrivals was 4.72% ranking at 8th position. This data has been released by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India. Nearly 1.3 million tourists have visited Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in the year 2016, notwithstanding the five-month long disturbances in the Kashmir Valley, and it is around 0.3 million more than the arrival of visitors in the state in 2015.

Turbulence in Kashmir valley caused plunge in tourist arrivals by over 55 percent, with only 4, 03,442 tourists visiting Kashmir during 2016, as per the official estimates. The Economic Survey tabled in Legislative Assembly in the Budget Session informs that during 2016, only 4, 03,442 tourists, including foreign as well as domestic, visited

Kashmir. There was a 55% dip in visitor arrivals as against the corresponding year 2015 which witnessed 9, 17,815 tourist arrivals. During the year 2016, the valley witnessed a total of 6, 23,932 visitor arrivals that included 2, 20,490 Amarnath yatris (Pilgrims) and the tourist season maintained high tempo and was in full swing till July, 2016. The rest of the months remained quite turbulent resulting in closure of several business activities. The report mentions that the evaporation of tourists during peak months resulted in loss of business to hoteliers, restaurants, houseboats, poniwallas, transporters, shikarawalla and so on.

The present study reveals symmetry in gender distribution and indicates that tourists arrive in the study area with their opposite gender. The highest number of tourist arrivals during the study period was from Asia followed by Europe, America, Africa and Australia. In order to establish the nationality within the continents, the study used continent as a controlling variable. The results indicate that the biggest chunk of tourists belonged to Asian Countries followed by Europe, America, Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The top three source markets among the Asian nations are Thailand followed by Malaysia and Singapore. The top three African source markets for the study area are Egypt, Kenya and Tanzania. The top there source markets among the European nations are Britain, France and Germany. The top two American nations with significant visitor contribution to the study are the USA and Canada. The study further indicated that Australia contributes more visitors in comparison to New Zealand to the study area.

The next part of the research tried to find out the time budget available with the tourist for vacationing in other destinations of India apart from the study area and the binned data reflects five classes of data and indicates that the visitors with shorter itineraries are more in number than other groups. The similar technique was used to establish the prioritization of the three tourist divisions of the study area and the data indicates the Kashmir Valley takes the highest priority for visitors followed by Jammu & Ladakh. Furthermore, there appears to be a significant relationship between the continental origin of tourists and the duration of the stay in India. The same relationship was seen between the same two constructs in the study area. The study also attempted to dig out links in preferences of tourists to visit other destinations of India and the data revealed that Agra, Rajasthan, Goa and Kerala in descending preferential order were found on the itineraries of the tourists touring the study area.

CONCLUSION

Stable growth trends were observed in international travel in the year 2016. Although a variety of developments could be spotted that affected international tourism in 2015 and to some level in 2016. In 2016, the Asian economy continued

to grow and is anticipated to sustain its growth drivers. The present study was conducted at the twin airports of Jammu & Kashmir to investigate the continental distribution of international tourists and examine the spatio-temporal prioritization of the three tourist divisions of the study area. The study intended to find links in preferences and intention to visit other destinations in India and also to find out relationship between visitor nationality and duration of vacation.

The present research depicts evenness in gender distribution and suggests that tourists arrive in the study area with their opposite gender. The maximum number of tourists during the study period was from Asia followed by Europe, America, Africa and Australia. The data suggests that the largest portion of tourists hailed from Asian Countries followed by Europe, America, Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The data further suggests that the visitors with shorter itineraries are more in number than other groups. The data indicates the Kashmir Valley takes the highest priority for visitors followed by Jammu & Ladakh. There appears to be a significant relationship between the continental origin of tourists and the duration of the stay. The data further suggests that Agra, Rajasthan, Goa and Kerala in descending preferential order were found on the itineraries of the tourists touring the study area.

The number of tourist arrivals in India in the year 2016 was 8.80 million with annual growth rate of 9.7%. Nearly 1.3 million tourists have visited Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in the year 2016, notwithstanding the five-month long disturbances in the Kashmir Valley, and it is around 0.3 million more than the arrival of visitors in the state in 2015. However, the outlook for 2017 looks very positive based on the forecasts released by various research organizations

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