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## TO UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF MTDC IN PROMOTING TOURISM CONSIDERING THE CURRENT TOURISM TRENDS

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**Abstract:** Tourism is an age-old phenomenon undertaken by people across the globe. There are various reasons for which people travel from one place to another. The aim of the research is to understand the current trends in tourism and preferences of tourists. Further, the study explores the policies designed by MTDC (Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation) to promote tourism on global platform and attract more tourists to Maharashtra.

Maharashtra is one of the significant states of India. It has rich heritage of religion, culture and history. Apart from that it has diverse landforms and thus has wide range of products to offer and attract the tourists to state of Maharashtra.

A structured questionnaire was designed to collect primary data and was floated through Google forms. The responses were collected from the tourists representing different demographic features. The responses were collected from 100 respondents to understand their preferences.

The data was statistically analysed and the findings reveal that the policies designed by MTDC are in line with the preferences of travellers and to cater to their needs and requirements.

**Keywords:** Tourism Trends, MTDC, MTDC Policies

**Introduction:** The phenomenon of tourism is age old and is being followed or used by different types of travellers. Traveling is done for various reasons and the trend is shifting with changing times. Thus, irrespective of the time, the tourism industry is growing at a very fast pace.

The tourist activities and the travel has multiple effects on the local population and the destination, ranging from impact on society and culture, economy, environment and political scenario.

Tourism industry has proven to be one of the fastest growing industries and still holding tremendous potential for progress. Also, it adds to

the foreign exchange earnings of the nation and to the GDP of locals. Thus, it is considered to be one of the most significant industries for socio-economic development of the country.

As mentioned earlier, there are various reasons for which people undertake traveling activity. It is also referred to as Travel Motivators. They are;

**Recreation** – Undertaken by people to relax and rejuvenate during the break from routine. Majority of the tourists travel for leisure during holidays or vacations. It is a break from regular routine.

**Business** – Another important reason for which

people travel is Business. They are frequent travellers and their travel plans are not bound with seasons or destinations.

**Cultural** – cultural tourism promotes the local culture and cultural exchanges between the locals and the visitors. It is one of the main motivators for travel.

**Health** – Taking various medical treatments is the objective of health tourism or also referred to as medical tourism.

**Sports/ Adventure** – This type of travel is undertaken by people who are interested in sports and adventurous activities.

**Incentive Travel** – This type of travel is generally undertaken by the corporates who get the travel vouchers or paid travel plans as reward or incentive on achieving the given targets or completing the goals in given time frame.

#### **Benefits of Tourism**

**Economic** - Tourism is a significant business contributing to revenue and employment generation for the region. It directly contributes to the GDP and total foreign earnings. The allied industries also provide employment and jobs along with the main tourism industry. This phenomenon of generating employment in multiple sectors and in multiple aspects is known as Economic Multiplier effect.

**Social & Cultural** - Tourism activity encourages exposure to various cultures and exchange of cultures. The visitors carry varied cultures to the destination across globe. The local citizens can gain acquaintance of their verbal communication art, talent, civilization etc. and vice-a-versa.

**Political:** India stands as a developing country in global trade. Tourism helps to represent the country in various parts worldwide. It helps to give the exposure to the country on global platform. This helps in increasing the inflow of foreigners and foreign exchange.

**Tourism potential of India:** India has a rich cultural and historical heritage since thousands of years. The diverse landforms and wide variety of landforms and flora & fauna gives it a wide environmental array. Apart from the conventional types of tourism India still holds tremendous potential in niche tourism and can use the same for the development of the region.

**Environmental miscellany:** India is a territory of wide natural attractions. It includes snow covered mountains, rapid and smooth rivers, lush green hills, deserts, dense forest offering a wide spread of offerings for nature tourism.

**Religious places:** India is a country with multiple religions, cultures and languages. It has religious places of significance present in almost every part of the country. Since it is a Hindu nation by origin, we have majority of Hindu temples across the country which are famous pilgrim places. Tourists visit these destinations to offer their prayers and services.

**Art and architecture:** India is one of the oldest cultures on the earth. Naturally, it will have rich heritage of various forms of art. It offers a wide variety of music, dance, instrumental music and dramatics. Architecture is an integral part of the culture.

**Tourism in Maharashtra:** Maharashtra is the third largest state of the nation. It has diverse landforms, pilgrim places and wide array for the tourists. The MTDC has initiated “MAHARASHTRA UNLIMITED!” as the slogan for the campaign to promote tourism in Maharashtra. Maharashtra has very rich historical past with significant dynasties ruling in Maharashtra thus providing many historical places and monuments being present here.

Maharashtra is a land of rich tradition, culture and festivals and is a major tourist and trade destination of India, drawing thousands of tourists from across the world.

**Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC):** MTDC - Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation was established in 1975 by Government of Maharashtra. MTDC works as a central agency in developing and promoting various tourism aspects related to Maharashtra. It focuses on development of accommodation and transport facilities in the state and promotion of various destinations in the state.

**Policies of MTDC to Promote tourism in Maharashtra:** Maharashtra offers a platter to the tourists with varied interests. It is one of the few regions in the world which has diversity in the tourism products and experiences to offer at multiple destinations in Maharashtra. MTDC has the following

1. Identifying and promoting thrust sectors in tourism
2. Promoting cruise tourism
3. Branding & Promoting various destinations in Maharashtra
4. Encouraging the budding entrepreneurs and ensure sustainable tourism

The further chapter of Review of Literature is a secondary data collection and has reviewed

research papers, research articles, books, reports available in various media.

**Literature Review:** Vaishali Goel, Bhavana Jaiswal (2008) in the research paper “Impact of Socio-Demographic Factors and Marketing Strategies on Tourism Industry in India” seeks to provide insights into how socio-demographic factors can complement tourism industry and how various marketing strategies help them to retain the customers. The findings of this empirical study shows that middle age, highly educated, business and service class, males and even married couples frequently avail the services of tourism industry. The study concluded with the hope that various marketing strategies will be helpful in future to convert challenges into opportunities.

Ravichandran K (2008) in the research article “Travellers’ Perception on Travel Service Providers in Electronic Environment” specifically analyses the perception of travellers on traditional intermediaries and the internet facilitations for marketing travel and tourism. The study reveals the similarities as well as differences between the main categories of travellers such as the tourists, business travellers and additionally those who visited for other purposes.

Bhaskar Rao (2007) in the research paper “Tourist Perception towards Package Tours” intends to examine the perception of tourists, domestic as well as international, towards package tours. The study identifies the motivators of tourism and the relationship between the socio-demographic factors of tourists and their preference towards package tours. It finds the propensity of pleasure of a tourist in package tour and considered it as the most important motivator of tourism.

Michael Chiam, Geoffrey Soutar, Alvin Yeo’s (2009) in the research article “Online and Off-line Travel Packages Preferences: A Conjoint Analysis” examines the impacts of a number of elements such as price, package characteristics, travel agents and a seal of approval in online and off-line environments by using conjoint analysis. The findings of the study reveal that price had the biggest impact, although travel agent and airline reputation and trustworthiness also impacted on people’s preferences.

Elena Matei, Tamara Simons (2008) in the research paper “India in Romanis’s Travel Packages – An Analysis” examines in detail that India penetrates with difficulty in Romania’s tourism market even the country possessing strong cultural heritage, icon attractions and central image in global

marketing. The study reviewed several researches into the interaction between Romanian tour operating companies with India’s travel packages via internet.

Ljiljana Stankovic, Jelena Petrovic (2007) in the research article “Marketing of Tourism Destinations of Nis” considers necessary application of marketing in the development of tourist destination offers. Special attention has been paid to the application and development of integral marketing with the aim to create and successfully manage a brand of a tourist destination with special consideration given to the city of Nis.

Arabi U (2007) in the research article “Online Tourism Services in Developing Countries – Need for Website Marketing Infrastructure” explains the need to maintain and increase competitiveness of online tourism through the development of websites marketing in developing countries. It analyses the objectives such as the inter relationship between tourism and internet technology and strategies towards E-Tourism environment. The article recommends that the promotion of e-tourism is very essential to make tourism industry more profitable.

Joaquin Alegre, Maria Sard’s (2006) in the research paper “Tour Operator’s Price Strategies in the Balearic Islands” analyses the package tours’ price strategies of tour operators by taking samples from British and German tour operators. The paper shows the existence of persistent differences in the mean prices from tour operators, as well as price distributions with different dispersion and shape among tour operators and markets.

David Bowie, Jui Chi Chang (2005) in the research paper “Tourist Satisfaction – A View from a Mixed International Guided Package Tour” seeks to identify the variables that are related to customer satisfaction during a guided package tour service encounter, including the role of the tour leader and the service performance by suppliers. Data were gathered through participant observation during a mixed nationality tour of Scandinavian destinations. The findings of the study indicate that the tour leader is a significant determinant psychologically, spiritually and practically in influencing the success of the tour packages.

Nancy Chesworth (2000) in the research article “Value and Uses of Study Tours: A Glorified Vacation or A Valued Learning Experience?” has observed that to be a true professional in the tourism industry one must know what it is to be a tourist. This study looks at the student study tour as a means to enabling students to better understand tourists and tourism, and the impact of the tour on the

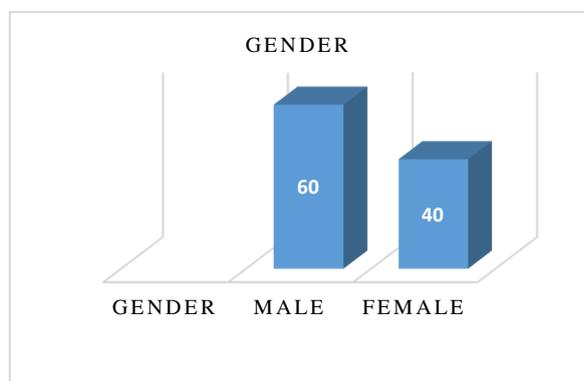
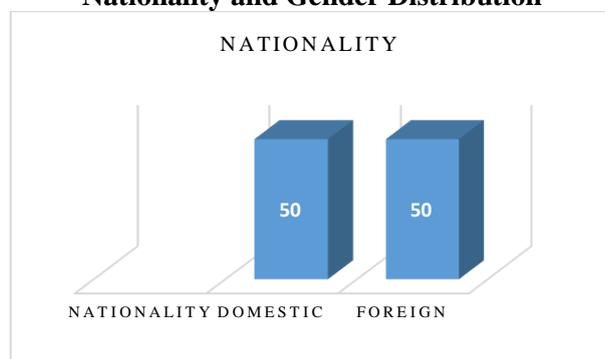
student's life and learning.

David Foster (2012) in the research paper “Measuring Customer Satisfaction in the Tourism Industry” seeks to outline the way in which customer satisfaction has been measured in the Australian tourism industry and the means by which this could be developed further to provide a measure of satisfaction with Australia as a destination.

**Research Methodology:** The present study was designed to undertake the study on tourism development in Maharashtra with special reference to Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC). The primary data was collected directly from the tourists and the officials and staff at (MTDC). Data regarding the tourist satisfaction with the quality of the tour packages offered by MTDC in Maharashtra and the Corporation’s contribution to the tourist’s inflows in the state by way of tour packages was collected with the help of structured questionnaire. Literature review was carried out to collect Secondary Data.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation:** Data analysis was carried out with statistical methods of calculating Average and Percentage from the responses which were received as Primary Data.

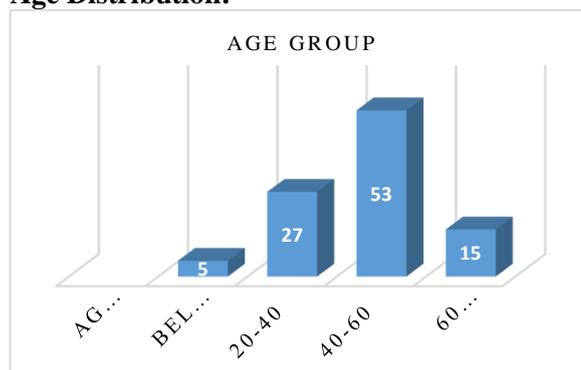
**Nationality and Gender Distribution**



The above figures show the nationality and gender distribution in which 50 % domestic and 50 % foreign tourists visited the Maharashtra state

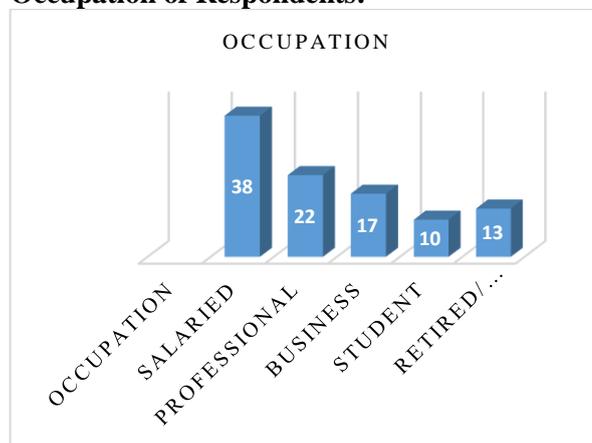
from which 60% are male and 40 % are female.

**Age Distribution:**



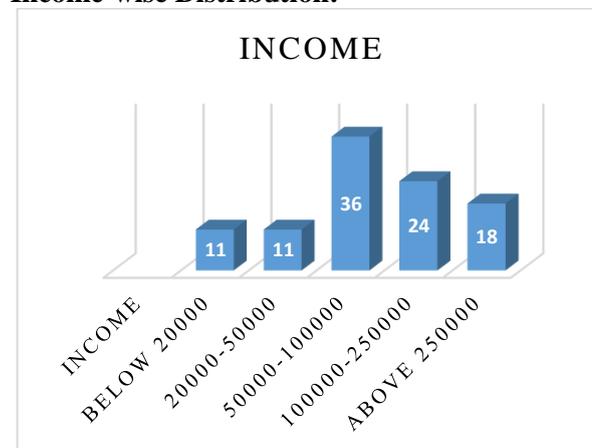
The above figure shows the distribution of age group. Highest number of tourists are from age group of 40 to 60 (53%) who have visited the Maharashtra state in comparison to other age groups.

**Occupation of Respondents:**



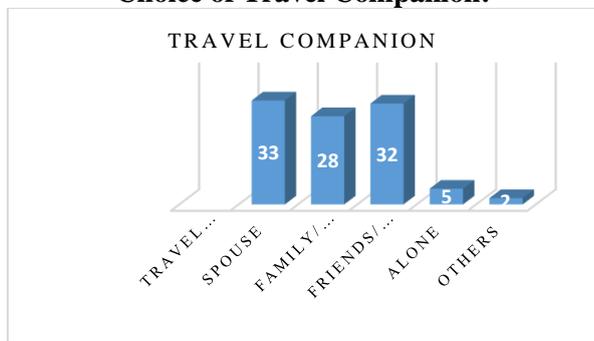
The above figure depicts the distribution as per the occupation of the respondents. The maximum respondents (38%) are Salaried people, followed by professionals (22%) and 17% are respondents who travelled for business purpose and visited various places in Maharashtra.

**Income-wise Distribution:**



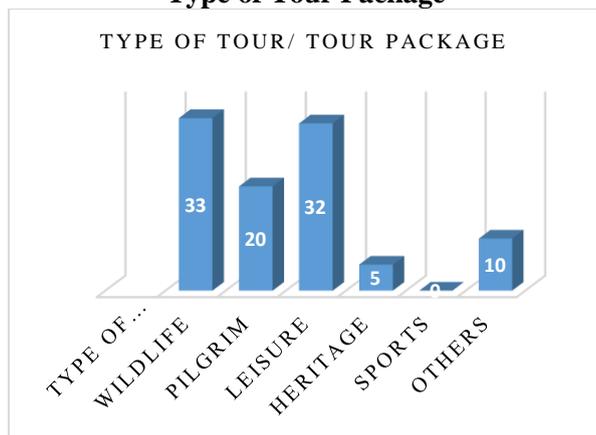
The above graph reflects that maximum respondents (36%) fall under the income group of fifty thousand to one lakh, followed by 24% respondents falling in the income bracket of one lakh to two lakh fifty thousand and 18% respondents are from the bracket of income above two lakh fifty thousand.

**Choice of Travel Companion:**



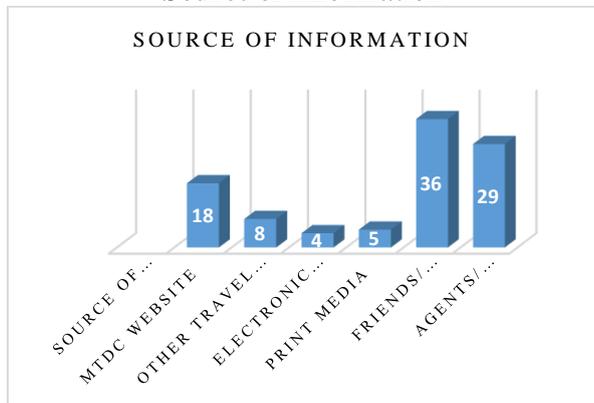
Maximum respondents prefer travelling with spouse (33%) and friends (32%) followed by 28% respondents prefer to travel with family.

**Type of Tour Package**



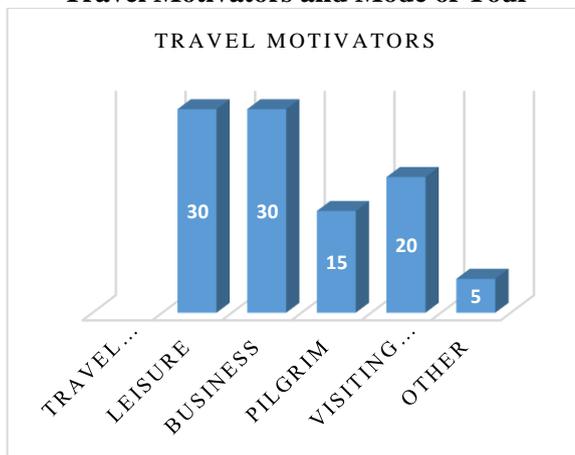
The above figure shows that maximum travelers (33%) choose Wildlife Tours, 32% respondents travel for Leisure followed by 20% tourists traveling to Pilgrim places and remaining respondents traveling for other reasons.

**Source of Information**



As the above graph depicts, the major source information for most of the respondents is through friends and relatives (36%) followed by the travel agents and other travel intermediaries (29%). The other sources from which the travelers gather information are MTDC website, electronic media and print media.

**Travel Motivators and Mode of Tour**



It is evident from the above graph that the major reason for people to travel is leisure and business wherein 30% respondents affirm that, followed by VFR (20%), pilgrimage (15%) and other travel reasons. And maximum respondents (50%) prefer to have package tours; self-organized tours are done by (20%) and remaining respondents go for other modes of tours.

**Conclusion:** The scientifically organized structure of the Corporation, with effective marketing department is successful in formulating and implementing strategies. This helped the Organization to contribute to the tourists' inflows in the state.

The quality of the tour packages has good standards and overall marketing strategy of Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC).

There is no significant difference between the

satisfaction levels of domestic and international tourists,

MTDC has focus on special health packages and less importance to pilgrims, sports, adventure, wildlife, culture packages.

The customers of the Corporation are from higher income groups. To maximise markets coverage, MTDC should expand the distribution networks, establish links relationships with tour operator, marketing agents and other intermediaries and by appointing new marketing executives and personal selling groups in both national and international markets.

In order to provide special care and attention for attracting tourists to the organization, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) should establish more tourist reception and information centres, accommodation units and helpline centres across the globe.

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