

## Determinants of Consumer Buying Behavior for the Domestic Tourists in Kerala

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### Abstract

Tourism industry has become one of the important industries of Kerala. Since 1990; the growth has been very impressive. The beauty of the land, along with local entrepreneurship and warmth of the people has taken Kerala tourism to the heights we see today. The study focused on measuring the determinants of Consumer Buying Behavior for the Domestic Tourists in Kerala. The main objectives are to analyze the influence of marketing mix factors on consumer buying behavior for domestic tourists in Kerala and to assess the influence of the situational factors on consumer behavior for domestic tourists in Kerala. This study used both descriptive and inferential statistics. Primary data was used for collecting data by administering a structured questionnaire. Percentage averages and correlations are the tools used for analysis. It was found that there is significant relationship between marketing mix factors, situational factors and consumer buying behavior.

**Keywords:** Consumer buying behavior; Domestic tourists.

### Introduction

Kerala has emerged as one of the prime tourism destinations in the national and international map and is considered as the tourism trend setter in the country. Tourism industry has become important industry of Kerala. Since 1991 the growth has been very impressive. The beauty of land, along with local entrepreneurship, availability of plenty of natural resources, skilled manpower, supportive entrepreneurial community and the responsible tourism industry, provide the state an idea setting to the heights we see today. World tourism organization (WTO) defined tourism as "tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes". Tourism in its present form is a product of 21<sup>st</sup> century. The rapid increase in the demand for people to travel internationally

and visit variety of different situations can be incorporated with regard to the increase in tourism industry. Consumer buying behavior is the process which is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and all activities associated with the purchase, use and disposal of goods and services, including the consumers' emotional, mental and behavioral responses that proceed or follow those activities. Tourism consumer behavior can be defined as "the combination of acts, attitudes and decisions concerned with choosing buying and consuming any of the tourism products, services and its post consuming reactions. A number of determinants will be affecting the tourist consumer buying behavior especially domestic tourists as they will be very vulnerable to the local setting of the culture of Kerala. And what are those determinants that will be influencing the behavior are the areas of the study. The department of tourism, Kerala has been very keen to the development of Kerala tourism with regard to tourist services and tourist products so as to enhance the brand exposure of different tourist destinations in Kerala.

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### Review of Literature

Paul V Mathew (2017) in his study "Responsible tourism as a precursor to sustainable development and quality of life – A study on tourism destinations

in Kerala" has revealed that there is a positive relationship between responsible tourism and sustainability development and quality of life. 4 dimensions have been selected for the study like economics, social, cultural and environmental. Kovalam, Thekkady and Kumarakam have been the 3 places selected as responsible tourist destinations. Exploratory factor analysis and structured equations model are the tools used for data analysis. A sample size of 410 households has been used for data collection, Wrap software was employed.

*Manoj Edward (2005)* in the study "A study on the quality attributes of Kerala as a global tourism destination" he has identified international tourists' activities and benefits sought, destination quality perception and vacation satisfaction factors with Kerala as a tourist's destination. The study has conducted in 2 phases. Pilot test conducted with 15 international tourists and after that 405 tourists has been interviewed. The selection was by random sampling. Multiple regression models is used for accessing impact of destinations quality dimensions. Cross tabulations were carried out to reveal the association between variables.SPSS was used.

*Pooja Malhothra (2017)* in her study "Factors influencing tourist satisfaction in the state of Punjab" argued that tourists destination was the major component of tourists satisfaction followed by facilities at hotels and guest houses and at last the facilities of reservation etc. A sample of 200 respondents from Punjab has been selected. Data was collected through structured questionnaire, and analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS version.

### Statement of the Problem

Several studies have been conducted on consumer buying behavior, tourism and tourist satisfaction and loyalty for destinations. Paul V. Mathew in 2017 made study on responsible tourism and found that there is positive relation between responsible tourism, destination sustainability and quality of life.

Palani and Sohrabi (2013) conducted a study on consumer behavior and attitudes when selecting a holiday destination on Finnish tourists on Kurdistan and established that the main reason behind the travels of tourists is to experience a change of climate and to have time to relax with family, friends and relatives.

In spite of the above studies and others on

consumer behavior, there has not been one that focuses of the determinants that influence consumer behavior among domestic tourist in Kerala in particular. The previous studies were conducted with an Anglo-western approach. But Kerala has a different culture and development stage. The aforementioned presented a research gap which this project sought to address. This study sought to identify the determinants of consumer buying behavior for domestic tourists in Kerala.

### Objectives of the Study

To analyze the influence of marketing mix factors on consumer buying behavior for domestic tourists in Kerala

To access the influence of the situational factors on consumer behavior for domestic tourists in Kerala.

### Research Methodology

#### Research Design

The research design sought to establish the relationship between dependant and independent variables. It employs both descriptive and inferential statistics. The dependent variable being the consumer buying behavior and independent variable being the determinants of consumer buying behavior among domestic tourist, which have been outlined as marketing mix factors and situational factors.

#### Population and Sampling Design

The target population of the study is the domestic tourists who have visited the 3 places Thekkady, Kumarakam and Kovalam. Even though there are many tourists' destinations in Kerala only these 3 places were selected on the basis of socio-cultural, economic and environment criteria. The decision to take these places beyond these criteria is that they have been declared as responsible tourist destination by the tourism department of Kerala.

#### Sample Size

Sample size was 100 which was collected via purposive sampling. The primary data was collected by administering five point Likert type scale questionnaire among the respondents who were visited Kovalam, Thekkady and Kumarakam tourists destinations. The questionnaire was divided into 3 sections; the first section seeking the demographic data while the other two is to establish

the respondents' opinion on the variables namely marketing mix factors and situational factors.

**Tools of Data Analysis**

The study used descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze data with the aid of SPSS version 21. Data collected was edited and coded by numbers to each answer of questions. Frequency and percentage tables provided and formed the first stage of describing the data collected. The study found out the correlation between dependant and independent variables, in order to establish the relationship. Presentation of data was done in the form of tables, charts and graphs.

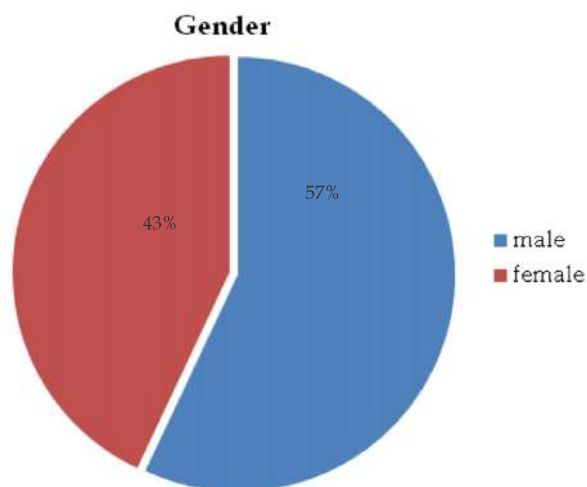
**Limitations of the Study**

- Small sample size
- Time constraints

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

**Table 1:** Gender wise distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	57	57
Female	43	43
Total	100	100

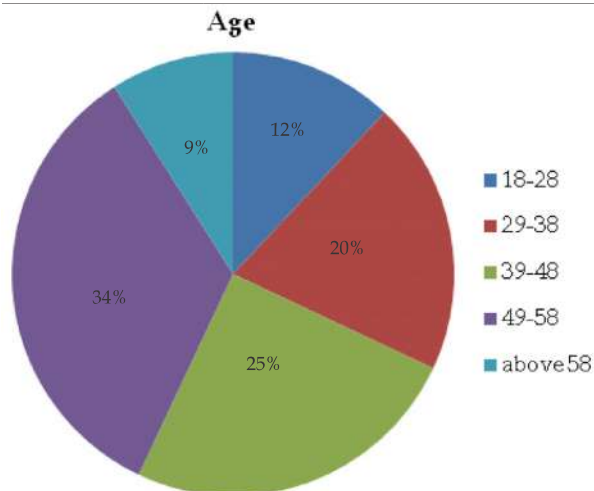


**Chart 1:**  
Out of 100 respondents 57 respondents are male and 43 respondents are female.

**Table 2:** Age wise distribution

Age	Frequency	percent
18-28	12	12
29-38	20	20
39-48	25	25

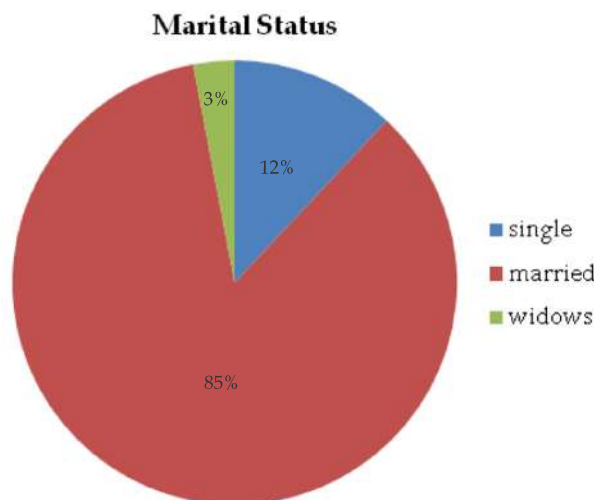
49-58	34	34
above 58	9	9
Total	100	100



**Chart 2:**  
It is clear that 34% of the respondents are of the age group of 49-58. 25% in between 39-48, 20% of the respondents are in the age group of 29-38. Only 9% of the respondents are of the age group of above 58.

**Table 3:** Marital Status

Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	12	12
Married	85	85
Widow	3	3
Total	100	100

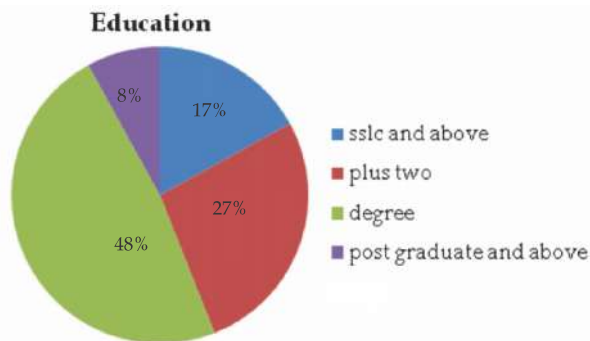


**Chart 3:**  
Majority (85%) of the respondents are married, 12% are unmarried and only 3% are widows.

**Table 4:** Education- wise distribution

Education	frequency	Percent
SSLC and below	17	17
Plus two	27	27

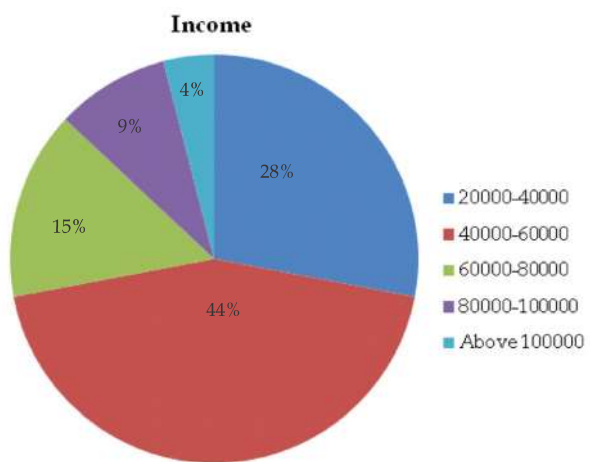
Degree	48	48
Post graduate and above	8	8
Total	100	100



**Chart 4:** The Table 4 established that 48% of respondents are graduated, 27% are having plus two only 9% are post graduates and 17% are SSLC and below level of education.

**Table 5:** Monthly income -wise distribution

Income	frequency	percent
20000-40000	28	28
40000-60000	44	44
60000-80000	15	15
80000-100000	9	9
Above 100000	4	4
Total	100	100



**Chart 5:** 44% of the respondents are in the monthly income bracket of 40000-60000. 28% are having 20000-40000 of monthly income. 15% of respondents are included in the income level of 60000-80000.9% are having the monthly income of 80000-100000.only 9% of the respondents are having a monthly income of 100000 and above.

Correlation analysis was carried out to ascertain the existence of mutual relationship in between marketing mix factors.. It is clear that each of the marketing mix factors like product, price,

promotion, place and physical evidence are correlated to each and every other one. There is perfect correlation between quality of products and holiday options, type of tourism products and holiday options, pricing discounts and influence of price on holiday choices, pricing of Kerala holiday spots with influence of advertisements on travel choices and short holiday destination, online holiday booking with promotional activities and advertisements etc. Here the null hypothesis is rejected as there is significant correlation between various variables i.e.;  $p=.000$ ;  $p<.05$  indicates the correlation is significant (Table 6).

The Correlation analysis presented the existence of mutual relationship in between situational factors. Here it is clear that each of the situational factors like physical factors, social factors and time factors are correlated to each and every other one. There is perfect correlation between eco friendly, destinations and accessibility of holiday destinations, combination of unique experiences and destination atmospheric conditions, religious beliefs and eco-friendly destinations, family holiday choices and travelling with family etc. Here the null hypothesis is rejected as there is significant correlation between various variables i.e.;  $p=.000$ ;  $p<.05$  indicates the correlation is significant (Table 7).

From the table 8 it is clear that income of the respondents and the marketing mix factors are more correlated than other variables like age and education in selection of destinations and buying behavior after income education matters. Age is influencing the least (Table 8).

From the table 9 it is clear that income of the respondents and the situational factors are more correlated than other variables like age and education in selection of destinations and buying behavior after income education matters. Age is influencing the least (Table 9).

**Major Findings**

- Out of 100 respondents 57 respondents are male and 43 respondents are female.
- 34% of the respondents are of the age group of 49-58. 25% in between 39-48, 20% of the respondents are in the age group of 29-38. Only 9% of the respondents are of the age group of above 58.
- Majority (85%) of the respondents are married, 12% are unmarried and only 3% are widows.

Table 6: Correlation analysis of marketing mix factors

		Holiday options	Type of tourism products	Influence of price on holiday choice	Pricing of Kerala holiday spots	Pricing discounts	Offers and discounted products	Promotional activities	Influence of advertisement on travel choices	All inclusive holiday package	Short holiday destinations	Online holiday booking	Star rating of holiday facilities	Environment facilities for holiday destinations
Quality of tourism products	Pearson Correlation	.466**												
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000												
	N	100												
Holiday options	Pearson Correlation		-.428**											
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000											
	N		100											
Influence of price on holiday choice	Pearson Correlation			.235*	.198*				-.208*					-.220*
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.019	.048				.038					.027
	N			100	100				100					100
Pricing of Kerala holiday spots	Pearson Correlation									.380**	.344**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)									.000	.000			
	N									100	100			
Pricing discounts	Pearson Correlation													
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.198*										
	N			100										
Offers and discounted products	Pearson Correlation													
	Sig. (2-tailed)													
	N													
	Pearson Correlation													
	Sig. (2-tailed)													
	N													



Table 7: Correlation analysis of situational factors

		Eco-friendly destinations	Destination sceneries and unique experience	Destination and atmospheric conditions	Family holiday choices	Influence of religious beliefs on travel destinations	Travelling with family	Seasonal travelling	Travel time and holiday choices	Destination accessibility
Eco friendly destinations	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.270** 100	.007 100	-.079 100	-.293** 100	-.458** 100	.330** 100		.227* 100	
Destination sceneries and unique experience	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.270** 100	-.628** 100	.000 100						
Destination atmospheric conditions	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N		-.628** 100	.000 100						
Family holiday choices	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N				-.293** 100	.237* 100	-.320** 100			.240* 100
Influence of religious beliefs on travel destinations	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N					.017 100				.016 100
Travelling with family	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.330** 100			-.320** 100	-.480** 100				
Seasonal travelling	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N							.222* 100		
Travel time and holiday choices	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N						.222* 100			
Destination accessibility	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N				.240* 100					.016 100

Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

**Table 8:** Multiple Correlation Between Marketing Mix Factors And Demographic Factors

		Age	Education	Income
Marketing Mix Factors	Correlation	1.000	.086	-.031
	Significance (2-tailed)	.2	.433	.777
	df	0	84	84
	Correlation	.086	1.000	.777
	Significance (2-tailed)	.433	.12	.000
	df	84	0	84
	Correlation	-.031	.777	1.000
	Significance (2-tailed)	.777	.000	.5
	df	84	84	0

**Table 9:** Multiple Correlation Between Situational Factors And Demographic Factors

		Age	Education	Income
SITUATIONAL FACTORS	Correlation	1.000	.042	-.110
	Significance (2-tailed)	.	.692	.298
	df	0	89	89
	Correlation	.042	1.000	.755
	Significance (2-tailed)	.692	.	.000
	df	89	0	89
	Correlation	-.110	.755	1.000
	Significance (2-tailed)	.298	.000	.
	df	89	89	0

- 48% of respondents are graduated, 27% are having plus two. Only 9% are post graduates and 17% are SSLC and below level of education.
- 44% of the respondents are in the monthly income bracket of 40000-60000. 28% are having 20000-40000 of monthly income. 15% of respondents are included in the income level of 60000-80000. 9% are having the monthly income of 80000-100000. Only 9% of the respondents are having a monthly income of 100000 and above.
- Correlation analysis was carried out to ascertain the existence of mutual relationship in between marketing mix factors. It is clear that each of the marketing mix factors like product, price, promotion, place and physical evidence are correlated to each and every other one. There is perfect correlation between quality of products and holiday options, type of tourism products and holiday options, pricing discounts and influence of price on holiday choices, pricing of Kerala holiday spots with influence of advertisements on travel choices and short holiday destination, online holiday booking with promotional activities and advertisements etc. Here the null hypothesis is rejected as there is significant correlation between various variables i.e.;  $p=.000$ ;  $p<.05$  indicates the correlation is significant.
- The Correlation analysis presented the existence of mutual relationship in between situational factors. Here it is clear that each of the situational factors like physical factors, social factors and time factors are correlated to each and every other one. There is perfect correlation between eco friendly, destinations and accessibility of holiday destinations, combination of unique experiences and destination atmospheric conditions, religious beliefs and eco-friendly destinations, family holiday choices and travelling with family etc. Here the null hypothesis is rejected as there is significant correlation between various variables i.e.;  $p=.000$ ;  $p<.05$  indicates the correlation is significant.
- Income of the respondents and the marketing mix factors are more correlated than other variables like age and education in selection of destinations and buying behavior after income education matters. Age is influencing the least.
- Income of the respondents and the situational factors are more correlated than other variables like age and education in selection of destinations and buying behavior after



income education matters. Age is influencing the least.

### Conclusions

From the aforementioned, we can arrive at a conclusion that influence of, marketing mix on consumer behavior in the tourism sector in Kerala revealed the existence of a statically significant relationship. This study concludes that all the components, market have contributed to the relationship, and therefore are important in enhancing consumer behavior in the tourism sector.

This study sought to determine whether situational factors did influencing consumer buying behavior in the tourism sector in kerala. The findings show that there exists a significant relationship between situational factors and consumer behavior in the tourism sector. All components like physical factors, social factors and time factors all contribute to consumer buying behavior.

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