



MOTIVES AND DESTINATIONS FOR RECREATIONAL OVERSEAS TRAVEL: A SURVEY OF MINORITIES OF INDIAN SUBCONTINENT ORIGIN RESIDING IN NEWHAM, EAST LONDON

Paulina Arleta Depta

The Leading Edge Limited

Iford Chambers, 11 Chapel Hill, Ilford, IG1 2AF, United Kingdom.

Abstract: The relationship between travel motives, destinations and demographic characteristics was studied. A sample of 165 randomly selected respondents among South Asian ethnic residents of Newham were asked questions about where they travelled to and why in preceding twelve months. In the first stage of the research travel motives were classified. The analysis of surveys shed some light on how motives determine destinations and what impact demographic factors have on both. The study could serve as a practical reference for local travel agencies in developing market strategies and more targeted promotions of packages.

Key words: Travel motives, push and pull motives, travel destinations, South Asians, Newham.

INTRODUCTION

Various studies have been carried around tourist motivations which determine travel destinations. Some focused on one specific destination and explored intentions in this context (Kim *et al.*, 2003), others compared motives by nationality (Kozak, 2002) or a group (Yang and Wu, 2006). No research, however, focused only on Asian communities residing in any of London boroughs in connection with their overseas travels. This paper will therefore pioneer such a study, enriching knowledge by shedding more light on motives and destinations of tourists of Indian Subcontinent origin residing in Newham, being East London.

Today's world, being a global village, provides opportunities for its inhabitants to travel across with fewer restraints than decades ago. Ties that bind countries enable free movement and impact on world's demographics, thereby creating interesting geographical, statistical and social developments. Travel motives and destinations are important study areas in order to better understand and predict factors that influence travel decision-making. In particular it will help to predict personal needs, expectations and benefits sought by the traveller. This research may be a point of reference for East London, in particular Newham, travel agencies – to help these to build packages for holiday destinations or

prepare offers aimed at Asian ethnic groups. Tourism planners should have a good understanding of tourist needs, expectations and perceptions and how they may differ across different nationalities or ethnic groups.

London is a metropolis where currently West meets East. A unique feature of the minorities living in London is the tendency to create clusters, resulting in an informal division of the city into settlements by national origin (Turkish, South Asian, Polish, etc.). The city's east end has a significant number of immigrants from the Indian Subcontinent (South Asia). Although the settlement of South Asians in London dates back more than 400 years to the early years of the British Empire, the main immigration boom took place in the 1950s and 1960s. South Asians then started coming to the UK from Bangladesh, India (including Sri Lanka) and Pakistan, in search of a better life; and started settling down in East London. Their movement¹ has been mainly registered statistically, but not studied, leaving a gap and room for narrower research, as mentioned earlier.

Against this background, the purpose of this study is to answer the research question: What travel motives influence the international destinations of South

¹ Movement, for the purpose of this study, refers to overseas travel only.

Asians living in Newham? More specifically, the research has three objectives:

- To develop a classification scheme for travel motives for South Asians travelling from their places of residence in Newham;
- To investigate how motives determine destinations for this ethnic group;
- To identify the relationship between groups within tested population, motives and destinations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Personal needs are a good starting point to discuss travel motivations. The process of leaving one's own settlement and going away for a period of time depends of the choices of the individual. Hall and Page (2002) tried linking travel motives with Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, highlighting the argument that unless the lower (primary) need is not fulfilled, it dominates one's behaviour. On the other hand, once it is fulfilled, then the individual would be motivated to movement by higher level needs of the hierarchy. It can be noticed that the lowest two (psychological and safety) levels rather stand as a stronger base to migration².



Fig. 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs
Source: www.simplypsychology.org

² "The United Nations defines migrant as an individual who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate. Under such a definition, those travelling for shorter periods as tourists and businesspersons would not be considered migrants" (<http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-migration/key-migration-terms/lang/en#Migrant>)

Several other authors (Dumazedier 1967, Krippendorf 1987, Parker 1983), just like Maslow's concept, suggest that free time and holidays are connected to the concept of self-actualisation or self-realisation. That means one travels recreationally to be fully alive, satisfied and happy rather than because he has to. It is easy to notice the gradual transition between levels of the pyramid: from the very bottom, physiological needs force an individual into movement while at the top of the pyramid, self-actualisation needs create an internal demand for improvement of quality of self existence by voluntary travelling.

Pearce (1982) modified Maslow's hierarchy to be more suitable for dealing with tourist matters, setting the lowest need as "easy access" and "affordable". Going upwards, one's needs change to factors "history and culture", "adventure", "events and activities", "gaining knowledge", factors "sightseeing variety", "seeking relaxation", having it topped with "fulfilling prestige".

Goosens (2000) focuses on emotions as an important factor in the development of tourist motives. He argues that tourists are dragged to destinations by the personal emotional benefits they can gain from those destinations. On the other hand Reisinger and Turner (1997) give more attention to culture as the main element in motivating one to travel. They state that cultural background and upbringing affect motivations to travel abroad. Moreover, Kim *et al* (2003) consider a gap between cultures as a main travel motive. Dallen (2006), however, argued that religion and spirituality are among the most common motives of travelling abroad, and it determine the development of sacred places and events market.

Tourism is related to human nature, which makes it always very complex to study why people travel to certain places (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Shih (1986) therefore used values, attitudes and lifestyles to assess whether personal values affect the selection of a destination. His typology separates a population into different lifestyle types and groups with different travel habits. That is when routine lifestyle activities affect travel motives and choices. In other words, motives represent learned behaviour, knowledge and beliefs formed by society and culture. Also Espinoza (2009) sees tourist motives as a reflection of social activities.

This study cannot go without mentioning two generally accepted prime groups of motives that have a pushing or pulling psychological force. Crompton (1979) first draws seven socio-psychological, or push motives (escape, self-exploratory, relaxation, prestige, regression, kinship-enhancement, and social interaction) and two cultural, or pull motives (novelty and education). The concept of push and pull motives is that people who travel are either pushed by their own needs or pulled by external forces of destination features and attributes. Since Crompton's classification, some further studies were carried out on push and pull motivational factors in different settings such as nationalities, destination or events (Jang, Wu, 2006). Yuan and McDonald (1990), for instance, studied motives for overseas travel from Japan, France, Germany and the UK.

Leiper (2004) identified eight types of tourist motivations that are contrary: stimulation and relaxation, luxury versus economy, adventure versus passiveness and seeing versus doing. A traveller is somewhere between the two extremes, aiming at balancing the two components. Other types of needs and motivations to travel are: need for escape from known environment, need for rest and relaxation, need for sunlight, need for regressive behaviour, need for self-evaluation, need for self-esteem, prestige and confidence, need for social interaction, need to spend time with relatives and friends, need for novelty and need for education.

RESEARCH

Population characteristics

The subject area is focused on Newham due to a heavy concentration of this South Asian ethnic minority, which becomes an increasing tourist market segment in the area. Newham borough is situated 8 km east of the City of London, north of the River Thames. It is home to 307,984 persons, among whom 110,053 (35.7%) are South Asians (see Fig.2). That is 1.3% of the overall South Asian population residing in London (Census, 2011).

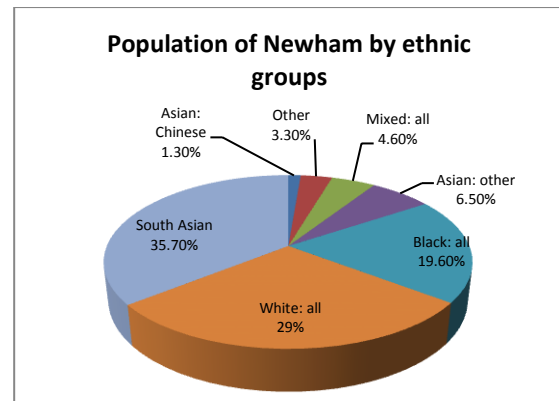


Fig.2. Population of Newham by ethnic groups

The research on age structure revealed that Newham's South Asian community is relatively young. Over a quarter is under 19 years old and only 11% is over 65 years of age. This is as a result of young immigrants constantly flowing into the country (mainly students) and choosing the East End as home for financial (East End is comparatively cheaper than the rest of London), cultural and historical (first immigrants from South Asia settled in East London, Whitechapel) reasons (McAuley, 1993).

Data collection

The study is a result of analysis of secondary information: available literature and statistical data (gathered by Census 2011) as well as empirical research. The chosen inductive research method through observation, hypotheses, classification of the information and creating generalisations, led to the final outcomes and findings. A consumer-based questionnaire was adopted for the study. It focused on travel motivations, destinations and demographic variables. Motivations presented in the work of Swanson and Horridge (2006) (see Tab.1), served as a base for suitable classification of relevant motives and grouping them in push and pull items (see Tab.2). There were eight factors distinguished. This classification was prepared for and used in a questionnaire. Information on destinations was gathered by using open questions, such as "Where did you travel abroad in last twelve months?" Respondents needed to specify the country and give at least one motive that pushed or pulled them there. Demographics include age, gender, nationality, marital status, education level, accommodation style and owning a car.

Internal motivators	Desire for escape
	Rest
	Relaxation
	Prestige
	Health and fitness
	Adventure
	Social interaction
External motivators	Attractiveness of the destination
	Destination resources
	Traveller's perception and expectations

Tab.1. Travel motives according to Swanson and Horridge (2006)

Push motives	Education (learning about new places, cultures)
	Adventure (need for experiencing something thrilling)
	Relaxation (need for taking rest from everyday life)
	Need for visiting friends and family
	Health and fitness (spa, activities)
Pull motives	Value for money
	Attractiveness of the destination (natural values)
	Culture and history (museums, historical heritage, special events)

Tab.2. Classification of travel motives

Both, paper and online, surveys were conducted over a period of 5 months, between August and December 2012, in different public locations of Newham borough. The questionnaire remained unchanged throughout the period of study. The test was carried by pollsters to test the total of 165 adult respondents, including 56 respondents from India, 54 from Pakistan, 35 from Bangladesh and 20 from Sri Lanka (see Tab.3). All together 427 individuals were approached – response rate came up to 39%. As the survey was conducted by polltakers, all of them were usable for analysis. For the completion of the study, the personal interviews and observation was also used.

	Respondents	Males	Females
India	56	48%	52%
Pakistan	54	52%	48%
Bangladesh	35	51%	49%
Sri Lanka	20	45%	55%
TOTAL	165	49%	51%

Tab.3. Tested populations by nationality and gender

Microsoft Excel was used for data capturing and data analysis. Mean and frequencies were presented on charts. Cross-tabulations were used to compare some of the results.

Problems encountered during the research

As in most surveys, difficulties were encountered during the data collection period. One of the main problems was reluctance of the respondents – not everyone was keen on completing a street questionnaire, therefore gathering data took more time than initially expected. Also, it drove the research towards reaching individuals via internet, in which way they would be more confident to complete the poll.

Language barrier was another obstacle for carrying out successful research. Many of older respondents could not read in English or their vocabulary was not enough to easily go through questions. This resulted in translating a questionnaire, so it could be available in Hindi (official language of India) and Urdu (official language of Pakistan) as in English.

From a technical point of view, manual data entry was the only possible way to record most of responses, as the majority of surveys carried out were paper-based, and only 20% of them were done online. It added to the work and time allocated for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The tested population was treated as a unified mass due to many similarities in their characteristics. Therefore there is no detailed study on the relationship between individual nationalities and tested factors.

It came to light during the research and study that on the motives and destinations of individuals the following do have an impact:

- Cultural traditions and upbringing;
- A place and role in society;
- Education;
- A system of values and aesthetic perceptions;
- Aspirations and needs.

The study has shown that a great majority of respondents - that is 81% (see Tab.4) - are motivated to travel abroad by push factors, among which need of visiting family and friends is the leading one. Over half of South Asians, who took part in the survey, feel a need to go back where they, or their parents or grandparents, came from. Many of them look for an opportunity to find a spouse in the homeland³. With regards to the relationship between this motive and demographical factors, there is no significant pattern – any age group regardless of gender, education level and financial status, all travel back home.

Relaxation follows with approximately a fifth of the sample pushed by need for rest. Different from simple and slow-paced life in South Asia, life in London brings stress, exhaustion and longing for a break. There is a peculiar relationship between a relaxation factor, age and tourism destination in the tested population. Younger individuals tend to look for relaxation outside of the UK as well as their homeland, as they wished to stay anywhere, but home. Nevertheless, the older generation associates relaxation mainly with going back to their roots. Therefore as many as 77% of respondents stated South Asia as their destination (see Tab.5).

The need for experiencing an adventure and learning about new places is more popular among young respondents and it has a direct affinity with the level of education and standard of living. This study has indicated that higher educated and financially stable individuals

³ Homeland in this article refers to country of ethnic origin.

tend to look for novelties – either to expand their knowledge or undergo new experiences. Destinations associated with this factor mentioned by respondents include: France, Spain, Germany and Italy in greater proportion than non-European countries. Clash of cultures and the need for enjoying novelties, makes many South Asians travel across Europe. The least popular factor in push motives group was health and fitness, which linked to sea sites or mountains in different locations around the world, and was more popular in the younger generation of respondents.

		Respondents	
Push motives	Need for visiting friends and family	55%	81%
	Relaxation	21%	
	Education	2%	
	Adventure	2%	
	Health and fitness	1%	
Pull motives	Attractiveness of the destination (natural values)	13%	19%
	Value for money	5%	
	Culture and history	1%	

Tab.4. Push and pull motives – popularity among respondents

In pull motives group the most popular was attractiveness of the destination. Very distinct patterns were observed as chosen destinations for this factor repeatedly referred to Middle East and USA cities. Dubai, New York, Los Angeles, Las Vegas and Florida peninsula were ranked as top five destinations. Such travels were tightly related to social status: individuals owning a flat/house or renting a house, and owning at least one car, were more likely to visit those destinations than individuals, who rent a flat or share a flat/house and do not own a car. The later group were choosing more economical solutions for their travels and were more likely to be motivated by value for money over attractiveness of the place. In addition they selected European cities as destinations due to the availability of cheap flights and the duration of the holiday. And again France, Spain, Germany got to the top of the most common destinations, followed by Portugal and Mediterranean islands (Majorca, Ibiza). Culture and

history motive turned out to be some of the least popular, with only 1% of tested population choosing them.

Destination	Respondents
Europe	5%
Americas	9%
Africa	0%
Australia	1%
South Asia	77%
the rest of Asia (with Middle East)	5%
not travelling abroad	3%

Tab.5. Destination popularity among respondents

The study revealed additional interesting findings:

1. None of the respondents mentioned any African destination, which leads to the conclusion South Asians are not interested in the old continent.
2. 3% of the sample claim not to travel abroad at all, saying work, lack of time and visa procedures create obstacles for international travel.
3. Although questions about motivations left room for “other” to give respondents a chance to provide own motives, no other motives were declared.
4. Gender had no impact on motivations or destinations.

Validity of the research and Conclusion

The research can be a valid reference for local travel agencies, it is suggested that further research shall follow in many variations:

- ✓ Studying different populations (other ethnic groups) in the same context in different areas (other boroughs);
- ✓ Studying different populations in the same context in the same area;
- ✓ Studying a bigger sample of the same population in the same context in different areas of the city.

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About the Author:

Paulina Depta has nearly 10 years experience of administering and managing European employability skills and training. She has acquired hands on experience in the inception, design and delivery of funded learning programmes as part of her work for the European Social Fund. Paulina is a recipient of the Learndirect Lifetime Achievement awards. She attended Easton & Otley College, Havering College and Casmir the Great University. She holds a Masters degree in Geography with a specialization in Tourism. Her interests include factors and destinations for tourism, push-pull dynamics of motivation, employability skills provision, funded learning and ethnic interactions