

# Navigating the **Online Travel Landscape**: Factors Influencing Tourists' Choice of OTAs in Delhi and NCR Region in India

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**Abstract** | The purpose this study is to identify factors influencing tourists' choice of online travel agencies (OTAs) in Delhi and NCR, India, within the era of digital technologies. This study employed a non-probabilistic research approach with purposive sampling to analyse data from 552 primary respondents who had used OTA platforms in the past twelve months. SPSS was used to conduct exploratory factor analysis, enabling the identification of underlying patterns in the data. This study illuminates the crucial factors that motivate travellers to utilise OTA platforms for their needs. This study investigated six key factors influencing the use of online travel platforms: ease of use and information accessibility, motivation for obtaining detailed travel information, personalisation and customisation options, reviews and social proof from fellow travellers, availability of discount deals, and the desire for the best tour packages. The study's insights contribute with valuable knowledge to the existing literature on the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology and social influence theory. This study also offers practical guidance to OTA managers with actionable strategies to refine their services in alignment with user expectations. Furthermore, the findings of this study emphasise the role of social factors in technology adoption and provide valuable insights that can guide future research in the field of consumer behaviour.

**Keywords** | OTAs, online travel agencies, consumer behaviour motivation, OTA platforms, digital era

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## 1. Introduction

In the age of digitisation, online travel agencies, or OTAs, have become essential players in the travel sector (Psefti et al., 2021, Chakravarty, 2024). Like other regions globally, India sees a wide range of motivating reasons impacting tourists' decisions about OTAs. Because these characteristics directly affect user experience and business growth, both consumers and OTA providers must recognise and understand them. First and foremost, in the fast-paced digital world of today, convenience is of utmost significance. Travellers like online travel agencies have intuitive user interfaces, smooth booking procedures, and 24/7 customer service (Krasnodebski, 2020). Cost-effectiveness is also important - Indian travellers prefer online travel agencies that offer attractive discounts, reasonable rates, and exclusive offers so customers feel they are getting good value for their money (Talwar et al., 2020). The variety of choices is also essential because Indian tourists look for detailed listings of venues, flights, cars, and activities so they may customise their trips. Additionally, consumers prioritise trust and dependability, favouring OTAs with a strong track record of security, openness, and favourable user feedback (Min et al., 2021). Tourists value travel agencies that provide personalised suggestions based on their past travel experiences and taste, which means that personalisation has become even more important (Yang et al., 2023). For Indian visitors who are often on the go, accessibility across many devices is another crucial component (Tiwari et al., 2022). For online travel agencies to increase user retention and nurture long-term satisfaction, they must identify and manage these complex and changing motivator elements (Garcia et al., 2022). For online travel agencies to succeed, it is essential to comprehend and adjust to the evolving taste of Indian travellers as the digital landscape develops (Kontis and Skoultos, 2022).

Travel agents and travel agencies make travelling easy by providing tour information, holiday packages, and booking facilities for flights, hotels, resorts, as well as bus and taxi booking (Pencarelli, 2020). Jedin et al. (2022) reveal that when individuals reserve hotels via online travel agencies, five key variables significantly influence their expectations. These variables include room amenities and facilities, customer recognition through star ratings, pricing considerations, promotional aspects, and other amenities provided by the hotel. The swift progression of technology in recent years has brought about a revolution in numerous industries, with the travel sector being no exception (Tfaily, 2018). With the advent of online travel agencies, the way people plan and book their trips has undergone a significant transformation

(Tao, 2022). OTAs have emerged as key players in the travel industry, offering a wide range of services and convenience to travellers worldwide. These platforms have gained immense popularity, empowering travellers with the ability to compare prices, access extensive travel information, and make reservations with just a few clicks. Among the most significant advancements in this realm are online travel agencies. These digital platforms have gained immense popularity and transformed the way people plan, book, and experience their travels. Online Travel Agencies operate as internet-based platforms that function as intermediaries connecting travellers with various travel suppliers, including airlines, hotels, car rental companies, and tour operators (Vila et al., 2021). They provide a comprehensive range of travel-related services, offering travellers the convenience of browsing, comparing, and booking various travel options from the comfort of their homes. The utilisation of online travel agencies has witnessed a tremendous upsurge in recent years due to several factors. Firstly, OTAs provide travellers with a vast array of options and flexibility in planning their trips (Silva et al., 2019). These platforms consolidate information from multiple airlines, hotels, and other travel service providers, offering users a comprehensive overview of available options and prices. By using OTAs, travellers can effortlessly compare various travel packages, accommodations, and transportation options, enabling them to make informed decisions based on their preferences and budgets. Secondly, the convenience and accessibility offered by OTAs have revolutionised the travel booking process (Ahmad & Sharma, 2023). With the widespread use of smartphones and internet connectivity, travellers now have the power to research, plan, and book their entire journey from their own homes. OTAs provide user-friendly interfaces, enabling travellers to browse and book flights, accommodations, car rentals, and activities seamlessly (Islam et al., 2022). Furthermore, these platforms often offer customer reviews and ratings, empowering travellers with valuable insights to enhance their decision-making process (Mishra et al., 2023).

The rise of online travel agencies has fundamentally altered the way individuals plan and arrange their travel arrangements (Angeloni and Rossi, 2021). OTAs have in fact provided travellers with unprecedented convenience, accessibility, and choice (Sengtong et al., 2022). In the digital revolution, consumer behaviour has changed. Travellers have changed the way they plan to travel (Kovačić et al., 2023), as they use online travel agencies to book hotel rooms rather than doing so directly with hotels, because of the discounts available on the booking process (Şanlıöz-Özgen et al., 2024). Travellers use OTAs for many reasons, some of them being the better prices on travel package deals and hotel books, the quick and easy-to-use & navigation, the trust in the OTA brand, and the easiness in booking all travel needs in one place (Raab et

al., 2018). Using OTAs allows travellers to get a comparison on vacation packages, a selection of desired hotels, an easy payment of prices, and the possibility to change or cancel the booking more easily (Kim et al., 2020). Talwar, et al. (2020) discovered that the value of the quality of benefits, followed by the preference value, predicts the intention toward OTAs, along with the value of money, social status, preference, and information.

The tourism sector in India is expanding significantly in 2024, as evidenced by a rise in foreign visitor numbers and a notable contribution to the GDP of the nation (Singh and Alam, 2024; Devi et al., 2024; Statista, 2024). The number of foreign visitor arrivals (FTAs) in India increased by 43.5% from 6.44 million in 2022 to 9.24 million in 2023 (PIB, 2024). The Indian government has launched several initiatives to help increase these numbers, such as promoting adventure and niche travel, streamlining the e-visa application process, setting up a 24-hour multilingual tourist helpline, and launching the "Paryatan Didi" and "Paryatan Mitra" programs on World Tourism Day 2024 (MOT, 2024). These initiatives seek to improve the traveller experience and draw in more foreign tourists. Tourism in India is increasingly diversifying across various sectors, including medical tourism, food tourism, religious tourism, dark tourism, rural tourism, and herbal and agricultural tourism (Kumar, 2024; Bhadeshiya and Prajapati, 2024; Paliwal et al., 2024).

In the digital age, understanding the motivational factors driving tourists' preferences for online travel agencies is essential for comprehending the dynamics of the Indian tourism market. This research aims to analyse and identify the key motivational factors influencing Indian tourists' choices of OTAs, offering insights into the evolving landscape of online travel consumption and its implications for both the tourism industry and digital marketing strategies. This study is structured furthered in following sections: literature review, research methodology, findings and analysis, discussion, implications, conclusions, limitations and scope of future research.

## **2. Literature review**

Travellers use OTAs for multiple reasons to complete their travel. Many studies have been done on factors of motivation to use online travel agencies. OTAs have emerged as powerful platforms in the travel and tourism industry, providing travellers with a convenient, accessible and efficient way to book flights, accommodations, and other travel-related services (Talwar et al., 2020; Jolene, 2023). The emergence of the internet has transformed how individuals organise and secure their travel plans (Pencarelli, 2020). The way people plan, book, and

embark on their travel adventures has been transformed by the advent of online travel agencies. OTAs provide a convenient platform for travellers to explore various options, compare prices, and make reservations online (Sun et al., 2024; Vinod, 2024).

### **2.1.Complete information on travel destination**

Zhu et al. (2022) stated in the research study that travellers use the OTA because of its content quality & trust. Albayrak et al., (2023) discovered that individuals use online travel agency websites and applications for reasons such as efficiency, system availability, privacy, responsiveness, contact, and personalised information in a comparable study. Datta (2021) asserts that travellers go through five stages in deciding to purchase travel products: recognition of need, information searching, evaluation of alternatives, and post-purchase behaviour. Tourists prefer online travel agencies because they provide extensive information about travel destinations, tourism producers, and related offerings. Shao et al. (2023) note that high-income group travellers are early adopters of internet-based travel planning compared to their low-income counterparts. Higher-educated individuals are more likely to use online travel agencies, and these platforms often attract travellers by offering special discounts or promoting travel packages (Oumayma and Ez-Zohra, 2023). Due to rapid changes in online consumer behaviour, OTAs improve website service quality, easy access, and the latest information (Sharma et al, 2022).

### **2.2.Online reviews**

Wong et al. (2020) showed that tourist consumers use online travel agencies to read online reviews for a particular hotel, vacation, travel agent, among others, because travellers consider online reviews to be correct, accurate, and reliable. Travellers visit OTAs to see images of attractive holiday destinations, which are published on travel portals and images are indeed more effective in buying vacation packages (Thakur et al., 2022, Roy et al., 2024; Yadav et al., 2024). Silva et al. (2019) have researched online travel consumers and found that travellers use OTAs mostly for domestic and leisure travel and different booking accommodations on different OTAs. Zhu et al. (2024) discovered that online reviews play a significant role for tourists, irrespective of traveller characteristics, except for age. Users visit websites not only to get information but also can provide information to other users. These Web 2.0 travel websites offer commendable facilities to the users where they can complete their trip and provide

information to fellow travellers to form an idea for trip planning by sharing experiences, costs, etc. Lemy et al., (2021) examined in a study that due to the revolution in the internet world, travellers can plan and buy their holidays easily on online travel agency platforms. Kotler (2022) discovered that individuals from Generation X and Millennials have exhibited increased erudition, as they tend to engage in thorough product research before making a purchase.

### **2.3. Easy to use**

Wei (2021) found in the study that the attitude toward OTAs impacts the level of satisfaction. He has done research on travellers in different groups about their ease of use and usefulness. This study offers suggestions for e-business dealing with travel agencies. Sevim et al. (2017) investigated in their study that the use of the Internet is considered technology acceptance. They also summarised that perceived ease of use is superior to participation. Tam et al., (2022) investigated a model for online travel purchase intention. Their findings revealed that travellers' attitudes towards online travel purchases are effectively gauged through three key measurements: perception, convenience, and the value and variety of merchandise options available.

### **2.4. Quality of service and offers**

For planning a trip, travellers use mobile applications which have a good design of the website and apps and the best quality of service (Sia et al., 2023; Ali et al., 2024). Previous research has established a correlation between the quality of a website and the inclination to utilise a travel website for travel planning purposes (Ray et al., 2021). Travellers use online travel websites which have quality information on specific travel products or destinations. Pinto and Castro (2019) major key factor for travellers to use OTAs is the information factor. Information needs must be solicited, for successful, online transactions. If travellers do not find satisfactory information on the visited OTA website, then they shift to another online travel website. Travellers favour online travel agencies that exhibit high-quality website systems, possessing essential technical attributes like usability, availability, reliability, adaptability, and response time (Wan Jasni et al., 2020). Travellers show a different level of interest in OTAs travel products, as they are sometimes inclined to blend new technology products causing travellers to hesitate to buy online (Sun et al., 2022).

Numerous research studies stress the significance of comprehending these motivations to acquire a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour and decision-making within the travel sector post covid pandemic era (Jasrotia et al., 2023; Azhar et al., 2023). This study's literature review underscores the vital need to identify the determinants influencing travellers' utilisation of online travel agencies platforms in the Delhi and NCR Region in India. Through an examination of the fundamental factors motivating individuals to interact with OTAs, this research seeks to augment the existing knowledge base and furnish valuable insights for travel agencies, marketers, and policymakers. Grasping these motivations will empower stakeholders to customise their offerings, marketing approaches, and policies to align with the evolving needs and preferences of travellers in the digital age.

### **3. Research methodology**

The present research study employed an exploratory research method to investigate the motivational factors driving the utilisation of online travel agencies. The objective of this research is to identify factors influencing tourists' choice of OTAs in Delhi and NCR Region in India. The respondents were screened to ensure that they remembered their last experience of using an OTA platform. The criteria for respondent selection were online users, who utilised the platform for information search, holiday destination planning, hotel bookings, and related services offered by online travel agencies, at least once during the last twelve months.

A sample size of 552 respondents was selected for the study, consisting of individuals residing in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR), including Gurugram, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Noida, and Greater Noida. This study population was chosen based on the high number of internet users in this region, as reported by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (DOT, 2018; MOT, 2019). To ensure representative sampling from the target population, the purposive sampling technique, a non-probabilistic sampling method, was employed (Campbell et al., 2020). The sample size of 552 was determined considering the population size of 18.35 million in the Delhi-NCR region (MHA, 2011), with a desired margin of error of 7% and a confidence level of 95%. The data collection instrument employed in the current study utilised online medium. To administer the questionnaire, the researchers utilised Google Forms, an online survey service. The survey link was shared on various online social networking platforms through the researchers' accounts, as well as through networks of friends, followers, and individuals within the researchers' social circles. In addition, individual messages containing

the survey link were sent via email services and WhatsApp to reach out to contacts and facilitate questionnaire administration. To analyse the quantitative data and identify respondents' preferences towards different attributes of online travel agency platforms, IBM-SPSS version 27 was utilised.

### **3.1. Sample and data collection**

The current research was conducted in the first quarter of 2024 (January to March) aimed to examine the motivational factors that influence the usage of online travel agencies. The initial stage employed a descriptive research design, employing quantitative methods to collect data. Respondents were requested to express their opinions and rate their level of agreement on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

### **3.2. Data collection and administration of the questionnaire**

The final instrument of the research questionnaire was used to collect the primary data from the selected population. The data collection was completed through different online channels, spanning from January to March of the year 2024. The purposive sampling method was utilised to solicit responses from the intended target audience. The survey instrument was distributed among individuals residing within the geographical scope of Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR), encompassing Gurugram, Faridabad, Noida, Greater Noida, and Ghaziabad, and was easily accessible to the researcher. A total of 900 questionnaires were disseminated among online travel users who had used online travel agency platforms for booking travel services in the Delhi and NCR region. For online data collection, Google Forms served as the primary tool. A predefined questionnaire in the form of a Google Form link was generated and distributed through various social networking platforms affiliated with the researcher, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram, among others. Additionally, this questionnaire link was shared within several travel-related groups on these social networking sites. Among these distributed questionnaires, 552 complete responses were collected, indicating a response rate of 77.43%.

### **3.3. Questionnaire development**

The statement of the questionnaire was developed through a detailed study of the past literature. This instrument was validated by face validity.



3.4. Users profile

The demographic characteristics of respondents, encompassing data such as age, gender, occupation, and frequency of travel, are presented in Tables 1 through 4. These tables contain an analysis of 552 user profiles in total.

3.4.1. Frequency of travel

Table 1 shows the proportionate presence of each frequency category among the user community under study, breaking down user distribution based on how frequently they participate in travel-related activities.

Table 1: Frequency of Travel

Frequency of Travel	Number of Users	Number of Users (Percentage)
Monthly	92	16.60%
Quarterly	123	22.32%
Half Yearly	152	27.65%
Yearly	185	33.43%

Source: Author’s own compilation

3.4.2. Age criteria

Table 2 shows how users are distributed across various age groups, emphasising how each age group is proportionally represented within the user population under study.

Table 2. Users Age

Age (Years)	Number of Users	Number of Users (Percentage)
18-24	82	14.76%
25-40	328	59.40%
41-60	134	24.35%
Above 60	8	1.48%

(Source: Author’s own compilation)

### 3.4.3. Gender

Table 3 presents a summary of the gender distribution across the user base, emphasising the relative representation of men, women, and users who declined to disclose their gender within the sample under investigation.

Table 3. Users Gender

Gender	Number of Users	Number of Users (Percentage)
Male	408	73.99%
Female	140	25.28%
Prefer Not to Say	4	0.74%

Source: Author's own compilation

### 3.4.4. Occupation

Table 4 presents a summary of the occupational variety within the user base, illustrating the proportionate presence of users in the examined sample across several occupational groups.

Table 4. Users Occupation

Occupation	Number of Users	Number of Users (Percentage)
Student	40	7.19%
Self Employed	135	24.54%
Service	359	64.95%
Retired	18	3.32%

Source: Author's own compilation

## 4. Findings and analysis

The findings of the research study of the data analysis of the online travel agencies are discussed below.

In this research study, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was applied as the primary objective of reducing a large set of items into a comparatively small set of factors. Exploratory factor

analysis is used in research studies to reduce a large set of data into smaller sets of variables and identify the relationship between the measured variables.

The value of KMO being 0.842 (table 5) supported the objective of curtailing several variables into fewer factors.

Table 5 - KMO and Bartlett's Test

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.842
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1188.544
	df	210
	Sig.	0

Source: Author's own compilation

As the data was collected for identifying the motivation for using online travel agencies on a five-opinion Likert scale where 1 represented strongly agree and 5 represented strongly disagree, so principal axis factoring procedure was utilised to extract factors from the list of the variable. The data being gathered on the Likert scale was discrete, so the main component analysis method was most appropriate considering no distributional presumptions. By using these rules, six elements were (table 6). Together these six elements were fit for clarifying around 58% of all the variable variances.

Table 6 - Total Variance Explained

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.758	27.421	27.421	5.758	27.421	27.421
2	1.610	7.665	35.086	1.610	7.665	35.086
3	1.530	7.284	42.370	1.530	7.284	42.370
4	1.331	6.336	48.706	1.331	6.336	48.706
5	1.098	5.229	53.935	1.098	5.229	53.935
6	1.041	4.958	58.893	1.041	4.958	58.893
7	0.968	4.611	63.504			
8	0.843	4.014	67.519			
9	0.774	3.686	71.205			
10	0.759	3.615	74.820			
11	0.650	3.097	77.917			
12	0.608	2.894	80.810			
13	0.585	2.784	83.594			
14	0.563	2.683	86.278			

15	0.507	2.412	88.690
16	0.504	2.400	91.089
17	0.441	2.100	93.190
18	0.423	2.013	95.203
19	0.357	1.701	96.904
20	0.347	1.651	98.555
21	0.304	1.445	100.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Author's own compilation

The rotated component matrix is shown which tells all 6 extracted factors (table 7).

Table 7 - Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>						
	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
To explore bestselling packages for international and domestic destinations						0.712
To check the flight status, deals, offers, gift vouchers, visa, loan & insurance information	0.515					
To find the best deals on air tickets, hotels, and holiday packages				0.529		
Because I can personalise a trip as per my need			0.568			
To search for appropriate travel product information and fares						0.528
To find useful, complete and relevant information for particular travel destinations	0.631					
To evaluate alternative travel options			0.638			
To get information about transportation to and from destinations (Bus, Rail, Air, and Taxi)		0.612				
To find high-quality travel products			0.617			
To read testimonials and reviews on a particular holiday travel package					0.574	
To post reviews on holiday packages that I availed						
To collect information to make decisions on travel packages for group tours / corporate travel		0.669				
To make a group travelling seamless					0.825	
To save time and money on holiday travel package booking		0.650				
To get an itinerary for a particular destination					0.507	
Because I can use it easily	0.709					
Because it is free to search for information there		0.605				

Because people who are important to me think that I should use such platforms	0.767
Because people who influence my behaviour think that I should use such platforms	0.627
Because I can use such services anytime and anywhere	0.718
To get travel ideas	0.618
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation <sup>a</sup>	
a. Rotation converged in 30 iterations.	

(Source: Author's own compilation)

In exploratory factor analysis (EFA) or principal component analysis (PCA), the scree plot plays a crucial role in determining the ideal number of factors or components to retain. The scree test, conducted by scrutinising the scree plot, is utilised to identify statistically significant factors or components. The scree plot visually represents all six factors identified in the analysis (Figure 1). Below, the scree plot is shown in figure 1.

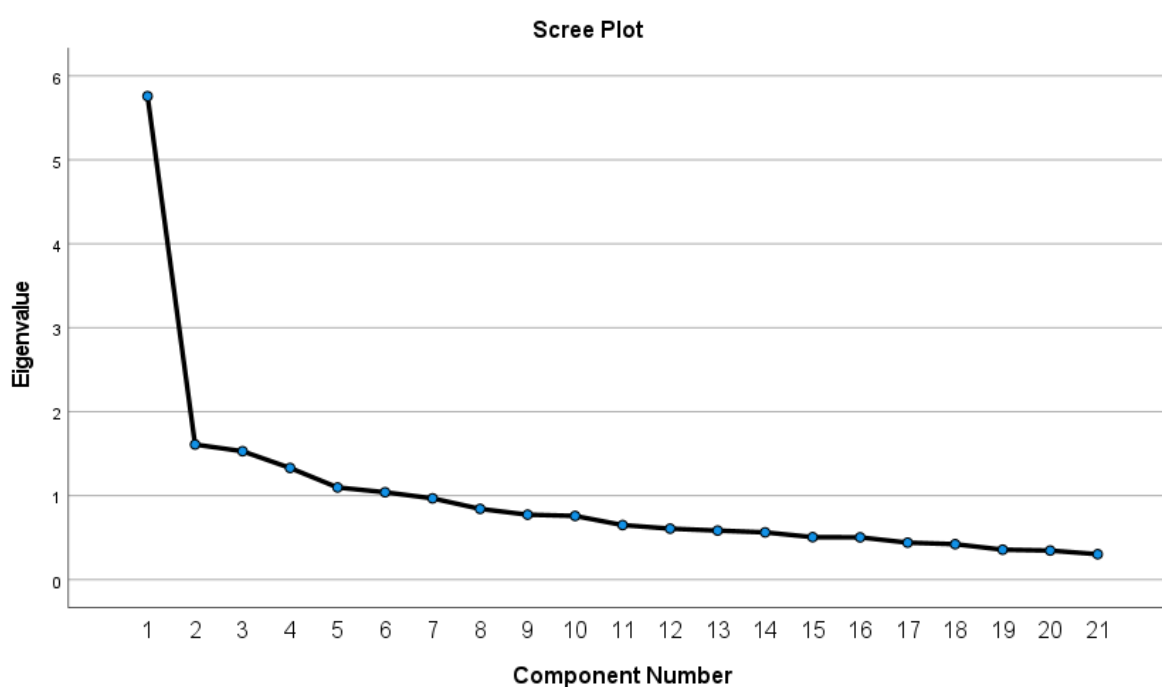


Figure 1 - Scree Plot

Source: Author's own compilation

Investigating the pivoted segment matrix proposed that six factors club the variables in a theoretically justifiable way.

In the analysis of data, there were identified six factors. All six factors having striking loadings and with high factor determinacy were esteemed to be considered as elements clarifying the use motivation for using OTAs. The first factor comprises the items related to being easy to use, finding complete and relevant information for holiday destinations & travel ideas, checking the booking status of flights and hotels, and getting an opportunity to post travel reviews. These factors can be clubbed as motivation for the Ease of Use and Information Accessibility. The second factor comprises items related to collecting information to make decisions on trip planning, saving money and time, getting transportation information, and free use of getting information. These items can be clubbed under the factor heading of motivation for detailed travel information. The third factor is the collection of items related to the personalisation of trips, evaluating alternative travel options, and getting high-quality travel products. All these factors explained the motivation for the personalisation and customisation Options. The fourth factor in the line of four factors comprises items like finding an itinerary for a particular holiday destination, reading, and writing reviews on travel packages, and making group travelling seamless. These items can be clubbed under the head of motivation for fellow travellers' reviews and social proof. The fifth factor comprises the items related to finding the best deal on hotels, holidays, flights, and taxis, getting information anywhere and anytime, and getting fellow travellers. All these factors can be clubbed under the heading of motivation for discount deals and accessibility. And the last sixth factor is considered a motivating factor to search for appropriate travel product information and fares and to explore best-selling packages on international and domestic destinations. Both factors can be clubbed under the heading of motivation for the best tour packages.

## 5. Discussions

The findings of this study provide insight into how visitors' choices for online travel agencies in the modern digital environment are complex and multifaceted. It has been shown that there are six main criteria that influence travellers' decisions to use online travel agencies convenience and pertinent information, comprehensive travel information, customisable packages, reviews from other travellers, great discounts, and the finest tour packages. It is

imperative that OTA providers and other travel industry stakeholders comprehend these variables to properly address the changing demands and preferences of travellers in the digital age. Travellers' preferences were found to be significantly influenced by how easy it was to navigate through OTA sites. Consumers want convenience and efficiency from their online interactions in this fast-paced environment. OTAs with user-friendly interfaces, simple navigation, and extensive content regarding travel destinations, lodging options, and activities are more likely to draw and keep more users. To help travellers make well-informed decisions regarding their trip arrangements, the availability of comprehensive travel information is also essential. When OTAs give tourists all the information they need to plan their journeys with confidence, including itineraries, local attractions, transit alternatives, and cultural insights, they build platform loyalty and trust. Travellers' decision-making processes are greatly impacted by the comprehensiveness and depth of travel information offered by online travel agencies (OTAs). Users can customise their vacation arrangements based on their choices and needs by having access to extensive information about locations, lodging, transportation, and activities. Furthermore, giving out precise and thorough information promotes reliability and trust - two things that are crucial in the fiercely competitive OTA market. Furthermore, a key factor influencing OTA usage is the capacity to tailor travel packages to individual preferences. More and more tourists are looking for individualised travel experiences that fit their interests, schedules, and budgets. OTAs that give customers flexible alternatives for choosing their accommodations, activities, and itinerary customisation enhance value and improve their trip experience in general. In a competitive industry, OTA platforms may stand out from the competition and build lasting relationships with customers by offering a range of options and services. Travellers in the modern day are more and more interested in individualised experiences that suit their own interests and tastes. Users can build unique travel experiences with the help of OTAs that provide flexible options for customising itineraries, lodgings, and activities, which increases user pleasure and engagement. Reviews left by other travellers on OTA platforms are a major factor in influencing the decisions made by passengers. Travellers' preferences for OTA platforms are greatly influenced by social media. Prospective visitors can learn from other users' experiences thanks to the incorporation of user-generated material, like reviews and ratings. In addition to endorsing the platform, positive ratings help foster confidence and trust in the decision-making process, hence reducing the perceived risks connected with online transactions. In a time of social media and information sharing, peer recommendations have a big influence on what people buy. Tourists who read positive reviews and ratings from other tourists are more confident in a destination because they provide social

proof of its general quality, safety, and attraction. Negative reviews, on the other hand, have the potential to discourage users and erode their confidence in the OTA platform. To retain their credibility and cultivate a good traveller community, OTA suppliers must place a high priority on the authenticity and openness of user-generated material. Promotions and discounts also show up as important factors influencing travellers' use of OTAs. Price sensitivity is still a major factor in determining which OTA platforms travellers choose. The provision of promotional packages, special offers, and discounts has a significant impact on how customers make decisions. Price comparison has been easier to obtain in the digital age, which has forced OTAs to deliberately use incentives and discounts to draw in and hold onto customers in the face of fierce market rivalry. Customers aggressively search for value-added benefits and cost-saving alternatives in a market where price sensitivity is growing. By providing consumers with unique discounts, incentives, and loyalty points, OTAs encourage users to make reservations through their platform, hence increasing market share and revenue. OTA providers must, however, find a way to balance remaining profitable with providing competitive prices to ensure their long-term growth and market competitiveness. A key driver of tourism has been the provision of well selected travel packages that accommodate a wide range of interests and price points. An advantageous market position is achieved by OTAs who carefully choose and advertise premium tour packages that appeal to a wide range of traveller demographics and interests. Travellers with discriminating tastes might be drawn to OTAs and set themselves apart from rivals by presenting the best-in-class offerings. When it comes to travellers looking for hassle-free travel experiences, the greatest tour packages are a winning offer. For visitors who have limited time or experience preparing trips, pre-packaged tours carefully chosen by online travel agencies provide convenience, cost, and peace of mind. Online travel agencies simplify the booking process and reduce the administrative strain of planning a trip by combining lodging, transportation, activities, and guided services into all-inclusive packages. Furthermore, user satisfaction and repeat business are increased by the guarantee of quality and dependability that comes with carefully chosen travel packages. OTA providers may become more competitive, draw in more customers, and build enduring relationships with visitors by realising the value of features like ease of use, relevant information, customisation, ratings, discounts, and tour packages. To respond to changing consumer trends, technology breakthroughs, and market dynamics in the future and foster sustainable growth and value creation in the travel industry, the OTA sector must continue its research and innovation.



## **6. Implications**

The discussion of the implications of this research study encompasses theoretical, managerial, and practical perspectives.

### **6.1. Theoretical implications**

This study establishes a theoretical groundwork for comprehending these consequences, offering guidance to stakeholders on how to harness the potential of OTAs for optimising the efficiency and efficacy of travel planning and booking procedures. This study makes a substantial theoretical contribution to the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT), specifically in the context of OTAs. The results of this study support and broaden these concepts, identifying other elements that impact users' incentives to adopt and continue with OTA platforms. The results also highlight how cost-cutting measures such as OTA discounts and offers promote usage and are consistent with the facilitating conditions of the UTAUT. This result is consistent with the social influence theory (SIT), which holds that users' decisions are influenced by their perceptions of social approval or disapproval. It implies that there is a greater chance of increasing utilisation for OTAs with a strong review system that offers social validation of locations and services. There are important theoretical implications for travel industry practitioners when it comes to comprehending the motivational elements that impact travellers' preferences for online travel agencies in the digital age, especially in the Indian setting.

### **6.2. Managerial implications**

The outcomes of this research study serve as valuable guidance for managers of online travel agencies aiming to optimise their platforms according to user needs. Owners of OTAs can elevate their services by refining aspects such as travel package information, details about holiday destinations, seamless bookings across various platforms, as well as the provision of discounts and special deals. This study offers insightful perspectives for both designation managers at OTAs and travel planners, empowering them to enhance service quality and elevate customer satisfaction. By comprehending the underlying motivations of travellers, OTAs can customise their services and offerings to cater to a diverse range of needs, ultimately elevating the overall user experience. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the evolving dynamics between travellers and OTAs, facilitating the development of more personalised and

efficient travel solutions. OTAs platform managers can make their website or mobile apps easy and fast travel bookings. This research provides an understanding of the travellers' behaviour. OTA managers must regularly update the travel information on their platforms.

### **6.3. Practical implications**

Users want hassle-free booking experiences; therefore, the simplicity of using OTAs is a major motivator. Users seek out platforms that provide extensive insights about hotels and destinations in response to their need for specific travel information. The ability to customise packages meets a range of tastes and improves user satisfaction. Reviews from previous visitors promote trust and help in decision-making. Discount offers are attractive to consumers on a tight budget, which promotes platform engagement. Users looking for well-selected experiences are drawn to the top travel packages. These driving forces highlight how crucial competitive products and user-focused features are to OTA's success in the Indian market. The demands of travellers and how they use OTA platforms are better understood according to this study. Additionally, this study recommends that managers plan their marketing initiatives to maximise return on investment. By making engaging adverts, OTA marketing can draw in new users and retarget old users. This study helps OTA's manager to make their marketing campaigns that straightforwardly speak to the user's needs and motivations of different customer segments, fostering higher engagement and loyalty.

## **7. Conclusion**

The results from this study identify factors that motivate travellers to use OTAs. These factors include ease of use and information accessibility, motivation for obtaining detailed travel information, personalisation and customisation options, reviews and social proof from fellow travellers, availability of discount deals, and the desire for the best tour packages. This study indicates that travellers use OTAs frequently for future trip plans and feel comfortable using online travel websites and apps. It is recommended that OTAs and travel service providers consider motivating factors and tailor their offerings to meet the identified motivations. By addressing the ease of use, providing detailed and personalised travel information, facilitating interaction with fellow travellers, offering attractive discounts, and displaying the best tour packages, OTAs can better cater to the needs and preferences of their target audience. These findings can help OTAs, and other travel service providers enhance their offerings, improve

user experiences, and better cater to the diverse needs and preferences of travellers. Understanding these motivations can ultimately contribute to the continued growth and development of the online travel industry. Therefore, the findings of this study offer the valuable insights for OTA providers and stakeholders within the travel & tourism industry, indicating that meeting present-day travellers' needs requires a versatile approach. This study also highlights the importance of customer focused service offerings and brings out the potential for OTAs to shape future travel experiences through tailored, transparent, and accessible digital solutions.

### **8. Limitations and scope of future research**

The current study, in line with typical scientific research, acknowledges several inherent limitations. Notably, the primary constraint lies in the restricted scope of the research, specifically focused on domestic tourists. This research was conducted in Delhi and the National Capital Region in India. This research study opens future research on different populations of users in India and other countries. Further research can be done in other industries, and on other platforms to get the factors motivating users to use their platforms. Future studies may further explore these factors and their impact on consumer behaviour to inform targeted strategies for the travel and tourism sector. Further research can build upon these findings to explore additional factors and investigate the evolving landscape of online travel platforms and artificial intelligence and machine learning applications, ensuring that the travel industry continues to meet the evolving needs of travellers in an increasingly digital world. The study's non-probabilistic, purposive sampling approach is one of its limitations, which might limit how broadly the results can be applied. There is a chance of sampling bias because the sample was chosen according to predetermined standards rather than by chance, which could restrict how broadly the findings can be applied. By using probabilistic sampling strategies to improve representativeness and generalisability, future research could overcome this constraint. This study utilises quantitative approaches; future research could focus on qualitative methods, specifically through interviews exploring users' experiences.

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