






Exploring the Dynamics of Pre and Post Purchase Decisions among Travelers: A Social Media Perspective from Chandigarh

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Abstract: This study delves into the intricate dynamics that shape the decision-making process of travelers in Chandigarh, focusing specifically on the pre- and post-purchase phases within the realm of travel and tourism. Recognizing the increasing prominence of social media platforms as crucial tools for travel-related information, this research aims to elucidate the profound influence they wield on travelers' choices, holding significant implications for tourism marketers and destination managers. Employing a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the study seeks a comprehensive understanding of passengers' behaviors. In the pre-purchase phase, it unravels the factors driving individuals to explore destinations through social media, examining the impact of visual content, user reviews, and influencers on shaping travelers' perceptions and preferences. Moving into the post-purchase period, the research explores the aftermath of the decision-making process, investigating how travelers' expectations align with their actual experiences. It delves into the influence of social networking on post-trip impressions, evaluates the role of user-generated content in shaping satisfaction, and identifies any disparities between anticipated and realized experiences. The study's title succinctly captures its essence, emphasizing the exploration of the intricate relationship between travelers and social media throughout their decision-making journey. The insights derived from this research are poised to be invaluable for destination marketing and tourist management, offering actionable knowledge for refining strategies employed by travel service providers. Particularly beneficial for urban travelers, the findings ensure alignment with travelers' expectations, contributing to an enriched decision-making journey. Furthermore, the research stands to guide practitioners in optimizing their social media presence and content to effectively engage and influence potential visitors.

Keywords: Social media, Travel Decision Making, Destination Marketing.

1. Introduction:

The world of social media has a greater and more noticeable impact on many facets of our lives in the current phase of the digital revolution. Making vacation plans is an instance where this influence is really noticeable. As social media platforms burgeon

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with visually captivating content, peer reviews, and influencers' endorsements, they have evolved into powerful tools shaping individuals' choices regarding their next travel destinations [3]. This study endeavors to delve into the nuanced dynamics of travel enthusiasts' decision-making processes, specifically focusing on the vibrant city of Chandigarh, where posting on social media has become an essential component of many people's travel experiences.

Travelers use social media to post photos and stories about their trips online. To convey the best possible impression of their vacation, they frequently require making significant effort to capture the perfect photo. These photographs and narratives serve as catalysts for other people, motivating them to travel as well and influencing the other travel decisions they make [8]. The number of people using social media and the internet has been growing in India. There has been an increase in the proportion of Indians taking vacations overseas during the identical time. As a result, there was a need to understand how consumers of tourism utilisation, generation, and processing of the information that they obtain from social media.

The current research focuses on a thorough analysis of the role that social networking sites plays in Indian outbound leisure tourists' entire travel experience. It investigates the degree to which travelers consider social media to be reliable and trustworthy while making judgements about their vacation plans. It makes an effort to determine the reasons for why they predominantly use social media during the process of travelling, and it also attempts to determine the variables that convince a person to use social media for travel. There are five chapters that make up the thesis project.

2. Literature Review

Consumers have gained greater power as a result of social media, which has also provided them with more information and alternatives than ever before. As a direct consequence of this, the connection that exists between customers and marketers has also experienced significant transformations. Through the use of social media, customers who are interested in travelling now have access to information and possibilities for making purchases without the need for middlemen [2]. According to [15], This is the outcome of the shift in the web from a business to client marketing efforts strategy to a collaborative one. One of the sectors that is closely entwined with the creation of novel technologies for communication and information is the hospitality and tourism industry. The tourism business includes both information-based and information-sensitive activities [7].

The use of social media has drastically altered the process of traveling, especially when it comes to trip preparation [20]. Social media content, sometimes referred to as "user created content" (UGC) or "consumer generated content" (the CGC), influences the decisions travelers make while planning their travel itinerary. Prospective travellers make use of this material to lessen the risks associated with travel, lessen the amount of uncertainty they experience, and increase their confidence in travelling [20]. At times, travellers have the need for their peers to affirm the decisions they make about their travels [17]. When travellers get a suggestion from a friend or acquaintance, it has the potential to impact their choice to travel, and in some cases, it may even go so far as to change their initial plan. In fact, it has been hypothesized that in the not-too-distant future, travel experiences will be bought and consumed almost exclusively based on how much "capital" they can produce through social media sharing. Everyone shares their trip stories on social media for different reasons. Social contact, validation seeking, and memory formation are likely to be explored. The digital age tourist experience is enhanced by these motives, which impact sharing behaviours [13]. As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, travel livestreaming has also emerged and is having an effect. During times of travel restrictions, livestreaming travel-related content has become increasingly popular as a way to virtually visit popular destinations. There is an audience for travel-related livestreaming content [11].

Internet technologies explore the impact of digitization and the adoption of Internet technology on modern marketing techniques in the tourism industry. Several factors, including the utilisation of social media, data analytics, and personalised marketing strategies, contribute to improving consumer experiences and fostering business expansion in the tourism sector [4]. Search engine optimisation (SEO) techniques are also crucial for tourist websites to increase their online presence and performance. It most likely delves into the ways in which search engine optimisation (SEO) strategies might increase organic traffic [10].

Brand involvement on social media platforms can be understood using a comprehensive framework. User motivations, content attributes, and platform features are only a few of the variables that impact brand engagement. To develop a model that explains these elements, it probably combines several theoretical viewpoints with actual data. By connecting with their audience on a deeper level and increasing brand loyalty, businesses may make good use of social media [5]. A study investigates the role of social media in destination marketing for a sustainable festival, specifically focusing on the mediating effects of destination image and festival authenticity on the relationship between social media usage and tourists' participation at the festival. It also examines data from festival attendees to assess the effectiveness of social media in promoting sustainable tourism and enhancing the attractiveness of destinations [1].

The tourism industry also confronted many obstacles to maintain sustainability amidst the worldwide pandemic crisis. Environmental conservation, the resilience of tourism destinations, and the contribution of sustainable practices to recovery initiatives are all influenced by travel restrictions which was later normalized using Internet and social media [14].

The online information produced by social media influencers has a significant impact on the views, decisions, and behaviours of travellers. Influencers deploy a variety of methods, various sorts of content that effectively engage with audiences, and the consequences for tourism firms in properly harnessing influencer marketing [12]. Promoting eco-friendly hotels is greatly aided by travel social media influencers. The content and recommendations of influencers have a significant impact on how travellers perceive and choose eco-friendly properties. Fostering sustainable tourism practices within the hospitality industry can be achieved through influencer marketing methods [9].

Chandigarh, known for its unique urban planning, cultural vibrancy, and architectural marvels, serves as an ideal backdrop for investigating the interplay between social media and travel decisions. With a burgeoning community of travel enthusiasts who actively utilize social media platforms to discover, plan, and share their travel experiences, Chandigarh becomes an intriguing locale to understand the impact of digital media on the destination selection process.

3. Methodology

A mixed-methods research technique was used to accomplish these goals. To ensure demographic diversity, a sample of 100 enthusiastic travelers in Chandigarh were given surveys, from which quantitative data was gathered. The meticulous and robust research methodologies ensure statistical rigour. To complement the quantitative insights qualitative interviews were conducted to capture, nuanced behaviours and motivation. This dual method approach added depth to the study and allowed for a more holistic interpretation of the results. Clarity on data collection process, analysis, techniques and transparency contributes to the reliability and replicability of the study. Using the mixed approaches together allowed for a thorough grasp of the complex interaction between social networking sites and travel choices.

3.1 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

- To investigate the motivations driving Chandigarh travelers' utilization of social media platforms for researching potential travel destinations.
- To analyze the impact of user reviews, influencer recommendations, and visual content on shaping consumers' pre-purchase opinions.
- To examine the aftermath of travel decisions by evaluating the alignment between chosen destinations and travelers' expectations.
- To investigate the role of social media in shaping post-travel impressions, with a specific focus on how user-generated content influences levels of satisfaction.

3.2 Hypothesis

Hypothesis1: Visual appeal, positive user reviews, and influencer recommendations on social media significantly impact pre-purchase perceptions of travel enthusiasts in Chandigarh, resulting in more positive sentiments towards potential destinations.

Hypothesis2: Chandigarh travellers who connect with user-generated material on social media are more satisfied with their trip locations after purchasing.

3.3 Significance of the Study

This study is essential because it concentrates on primary data that was obtained straight from the source, which is a group of 100 enthusiastic travelers who live in Chandigarh. By engaging with this specific demographic, the study aims to capture authentic insights into their behaviors, preferences, and decision-making criteria when perusing social media for travel inspiration [16]. The results of this study will not only add to the body of knowledge on travel behaviors among academics but will also offer practical advice to various stakeholders involved in trade by looking to meet the changing demands of modern travelers.

4. Pre-Purchase Decision making in Travellers in Chandigarh

“The contemporary traveler's journey from ideation to purchase has been significantly transformed by the omnipresence of social media platforms. With its distinctive urban design and dynamic cultural environment, Chandigarh offers a fascinating backdrop for examining how tourists make pre-purchase selections in the digital era. With the advent of social media, individuals are no longer passive consumers of travel information; instead, they actively engage with a plethora of content, including visual representations, peer reviews, and influencers' endorsements.

This study delves into the multifaceted landscape of pre-purchase decisions among travelers in Chandigarh, aiming to decipher the nuanced interplay between social media and destination choices.”

“Extensive literature has highlighted the transformative impact of social media on travel-related decisions. Previous studies have emphasized the role of visual content in shaping perceptions of destinations [6], user-generated reviews' impact on decision-making [20], and the evolving landscape of influencers in the travel industry [18]. However, there is a dearth of research specifically contextualized within the distinctive socio-cultural milieu of Chandigarh. By providing details about how social networking influences pre-purchase decisions and considering the interests and habits of travelers in this area, this study adds to the body of knowledge already in existence.”

This research investigation explores the complex dynamics that underpin Chandigarh travelers' pre-purchase decisions, with a particular emphasis on the significant influence of social media. The effect of online platforms on decisions about travel has grown in significance in an era where the digital revolution is dominant. Acknowledging Chandigarh as a vibrant and culturally diverse place, this study attempts to disentangle the intricacies of tourists' decision-making procedures, illuminating the crucial function performed by diverse social media networks. Understanding the intricate interplay between travelers and social media during the pre-purchase phase holds immense practical implications for destination marketers, tourism boards, and businesses in the travel industry. By gaining insights into the factors that drive decision-making, stakeholders can refine their strategies to effectively engage with and influence potential visitors. Additionally, the study contributes academically by contextualizing existing theories within the specific socio-cultural context of Chandigarh.”

4.1 Analysis of Pre-Purchase Decision

4.1.1 When looking for appealing discounts and bargains, users typically like to browse the social media pages of travel agencies.

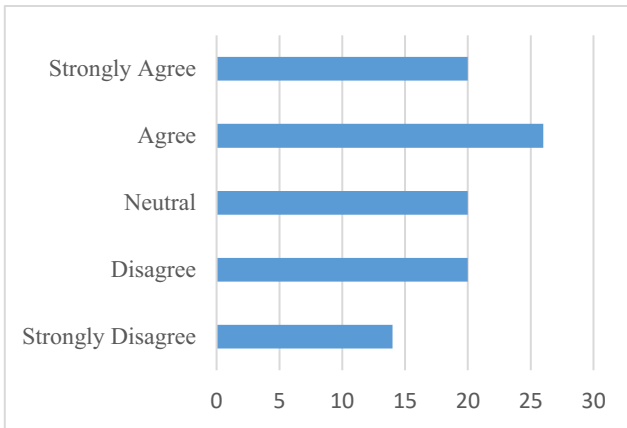


Fig. 1: Users browse social media pages of travel agencies when looking for discounts and bargains.

The data indicates a diverse range of responses regarding the interest in seeking discounts and bargains via the social media profiles of travel agencies. A combined percentage showcased the respondents who agree (26%) and strongly agree (20%) suggests a noteworthy portion of participants expressing an inclination towards using social media for finding appealing discounts.

A significant proportion (20%) of respondents provided a neutral response, indicating a segment of the population who neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with the notion of utilizing social media for discount exploration. Further investigation may be required to understand the factors influencing this neutral stance, such as the perceived effectiveness of social media in delivering discounts or individual preferences.

While a substantial portion of participants express interest, a combined 34% (14% strongly disagree and 20% disagree) indicates a moderate level of disagreement with the idea of using social media for seeking discounts. This dissenting group might have reservations or concerns related to the credibility of discounts on social media, highlighting potential areas for improvement in communication or transparency from travel agencies.

4.1.2 For finalizing the bookings, users interact with travel agencies and hotels on social networking sites.

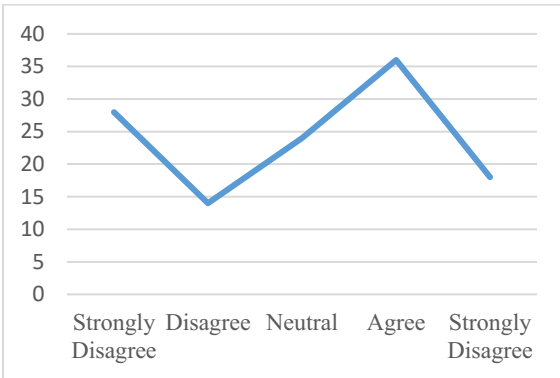


Fig. 2: Users interact with travel agencies and hotels on social media

Many respondents, resulting in a cumulative percentage of 54% (36% agree and 18% strongly agree), express a proclivity for interacting with travel agencies and hotels on social media platforms when finalizing bookings. This indicates a significant reliance on social media as a channel for communication and transactional activities related to travel arrangements.

A notable portion (24%) of participants provided a neutral response, indicating a segment that neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with the idea of using social media for finalizing bookings. Further exploration into the factors contributing to this neutrality can provide insights into the perceived advantages and challenges associated with social media interactions in the travel booking process. While the disagreement responses (8% strongly disagree and 14% disagree) represent a smaller proportion, they still warrant attention. Possible concerns or barriers leading to disagreement may include issues related to privacy, security, or a preference for traditional booking channels.

4.1.3 When it comes to recommendations for places to visit, users completely trust the opinions expressed by social media influencers.

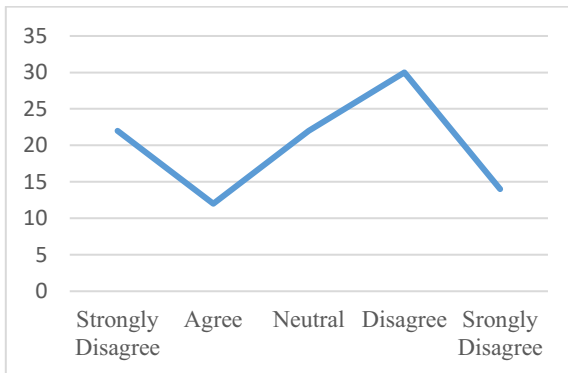


Fig. 3: Users trust the opinions expressed by social media influencers.

A combined 44% of respondents express trust in social media influencers' recommendations for places to visit, with 30% agreeing and 14% strongly agreeing. This indicates a moderate level of reliance on influencers' opinions among the surveyed population.

A significant proportion (22%) of participants provided a neutral response, suggesting a segment that neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with the trustworthiness of social media influencers' recommendations. While the disagreement responses (12% disagree and 22% strongly disagree) represent a smaller proportion, they highlight a notable segment of the population that does not completely trust social media influencers' opinions. Potential reasons for skepticism may include concerns about authenticity, commercial influences, or a preference for other sources of recommendations.

4.1.4 For the most affordable trips, users like to enter contests, giveaways and follow promotions on social media.

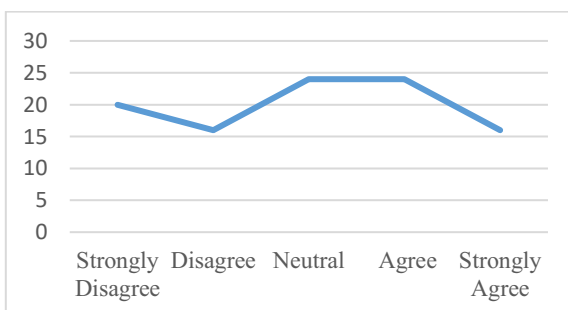


Fig. 4: Users like to enter contests, giveaways and follow promotions on social media.

The replies exhibit a balanced distribution throughout the categories, with a significant share of the total responses coming from each of the following options: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and highly agree. This indicates that respondents have a wide variety of interests and habits when it comes to using social media giveaways, sweepstakes, and promotions to get cheap travel.

The combined percentage of respondents who express agreement (24% agree and 16% strongly agree) and disagreement (20% strongly disagree and 16% disagree) implies an equal split between those who actively engage and those who do not prefer such methods for finding affordable trips.

A notable portion (24%) of participants provided a neutral response, indicating a segment that neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with the idea of entering contests, giveaways, and following promotions on social media for affordable trips.

Understanding the reasons behind neutral responses is crucial for marketers aiming to increase engagement through contests and promotions. Gathering insights into the perceived barriers or opportunities associated with such methods could guide the development of more effective and appealing campaigns.

4.1.5 Different hotel reviews on social media help users to choose a particular hotel / brand.

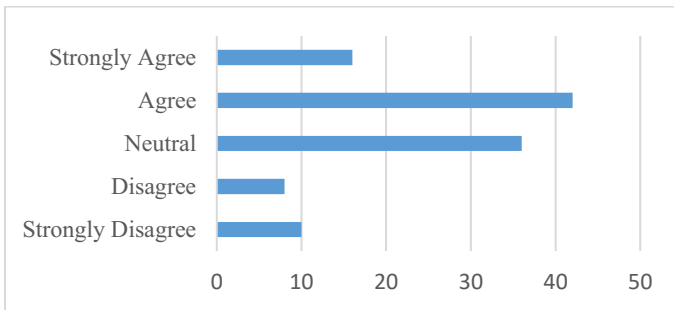


Fig. 5: Different hotel reviews on social media help users to choose a particular hotel / brand.

Most respondents, resulting in a cumulative percentage of 48% (32% agree and 16% strongly agree), express that different hotel reviews on social media significantly influence their choice of a particular hotel or brand. This suggests a considerable reliance on user-generated content and reviews for making decisions related to hotel selection. A substantial portion (34%) of participants provided a neutral response, indicating a segment that neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with the influence of hotel reviews on social media.

Although the percentage of respondents who disagree (10% completely disagree and 8% disagree) is lower, it nevertheless identifies a sector of the public who does

not believe that social media reviews of hotels influence their purchasing decisions. This distrust may stem from worries about the veracity or authenticity of internet reviews.

4.1.6 Experiences & feedback shared by other travellers through blogs, vlogs on social media help users to finalize the travel destination.

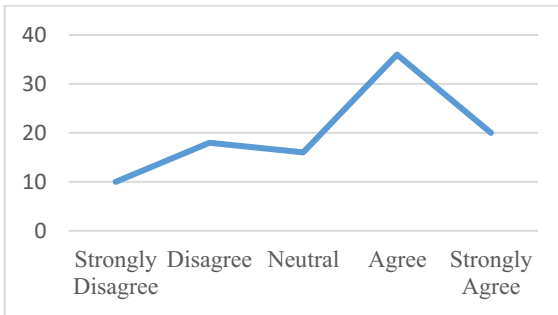


Fig. 6: Experiences & feedback shared by other travellers through blogs, vlogs on social media help users to finalise the travel destination.

A significant portion of respondents, with a combined percentage of 56% (36% agree and 20% strongly agree), express that experiences and feedback shared by other travelers through blogs and vlogs on social media significantly influence their finalization of travel destinations. This suggests a substantial reliance on user-generated content in the form of blogs and vlogs for decision-making in travel destination selection.

A notable portion (16%) of participants provided a neutral response, indicating a segment that neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with the influence of traveler experiences and feedback through blogs and vlogs. The disagreement responses (10% strongly disagree and 18% disagree) represent a smaller proportion but still highlight a segment of the population that does not find traveler experiences and feedback on social media influential in finalizing travel destinations.

4.2 Findings and Suggestions

In Figure 1, For an improved comprehension of consumer behavior under this instance, it would be beneficial to investigate the underlying causes of the disagree and neutral answers. Subsequent research could delve into specific factors influencing trust and confidence in social media-based promotions, aiding travel agencies in refining their marketing strategies. This analysis sheds light on the varying attitudes among travel enthusiasts in Chandigarh regarding the utilization of social media for seeking discounts and bargains. Travel agencies can better target their advertising campaigns according to the interests and issues of their intended consumers by using the insights derived from this data.

The analysis of Figure 2 suggests a considerable interest and engagement among respondents in Chandigarh when it comes to using social media for finalizing bookings with travel agencies and hotels. Service providers can leverage these findings to tailor their strategies and enhance their social media presence, while also addressing concerns expressed by those who are neutral or disagree. Further research could explore specific factors influencing respondents' decisions to engage or not engage with travel agencies and hotels on social media for finalizing bookings. Comparative studies with other demographics or regions could provide a broader understanding of variations in consumer preferences and behaviors.

Figure 3 indicates a moderate level of trust in social media influencers' recommendations for places to visit among the surveyed population in Chandigarh. While a significant proportion expresses trust, there is also a notable segment that remains neutral or skeptical. Understanding the nuances of influencer trust can guide marketers in refining their strategies to effectively engage with the preferences and concerns of their target audience.

Figure 4 highlights a diverse range of responses regarding the engagement of individuals in contests, giveaways, and promotions on social media for obtaining affordable trips. The fairly equal distribution between agreement and disagreement, along with a notable proportion of neutral responses, emphasizes the need for nuanced marketing strategies that cater to the preferences and behaviors of the target audience in Chandigarh.

The analysis of Figure 5 indicates a significant influence of different hotel reviews on social media in the hotel and brand selection process among the surveyed population in Chandigarh. While a considerable majority finds reviews influential, there is also a notable segment that remains neutral or skeptical, emphasizing the need for hotel brands to actively manage their online presence and address concerns to enhance the impact of user-generated content on social media.

Figure 6 indicates a considerable influence of experiences and feedback shared by other travelers through blogs and vlogs on social media in the travel destination finalization process among the surveyed population in Chandigarh. While a substantial majority finds such content influential, there is also a notable segment that remains neutral or skeptical, highlighting the need for destination marketers to actively engage with and manage user-generated content to enhance its impact on travel decisions.

5. Post Purchase decision Making in Travel

Post-purchase decisions encompass the actions and evaluations that travelers undertake after they have made a travel-related purchase, such as booking accommodations, flights, or tour packages. This phase extends from the moment the purchase is made to the actual travel experience and subsequent reflections upon return. It encompasses various aspects, including satisfaction levels, brand loyalty, and the likelihood of repeat business [19].

Social media's influence does not diminish once the traveler hits the "confirm booking" button. Instead, it takes on a new dimension, actively shaping the entire travel experience and subsequent reflections. Travelers are increasingly using social media platforms to share real-time updates during their journeys. From posting picturesque landscapes to sharing culinary experiences, these updates contribute to a dynamic narrative that extends the travel experience beyond the individual.

UGC, including photos, videos, and reviews, becomes a powerful medium through which travelers share their post-travel reflections. Positive UGC can enhance a destination's appeal, while negative reviews can significantly impact the reputation of hotels, attractions, or entire destinations. Travelers can interact with travel brands directly through social networking sites. Whether expressing satisfaction or seeking assistance for issues encountered during the trip, the post-purchase phase becomes an ongoing conversation between travelers and service providers. Positive post-purchase experiences, shared on social media, can contribute to brand loyalty and repeat business. Conversely, negative experiences can dissuade potential future visits, emphasizing the enduring impact of social media on long-term customer relationships.

Understanding the significance of social media in the post-purchase phase prompts destination marketers to adopt strategic approaches. Encouraging travelers to share their experiences through branded hashtags or social media campaigns amplifies positive content, contributing to a favorable post-purchase narrative. Monitoring social media channels for mentions, reviews, and feedback allows destination marketers to promptly address concerns, enhance customer satisfaction, and actively engage with their audience. Collaborating with influencers during and after a traveler's journey can sustain the momentum of positive experiences, influencing a wider audience and contributing to the destination's overall brand image.

5.1 Analysis of Post Purchase and Post Travel Data

5.1.1 Respondents have taken a travel decision based solely on social media’s recommendation

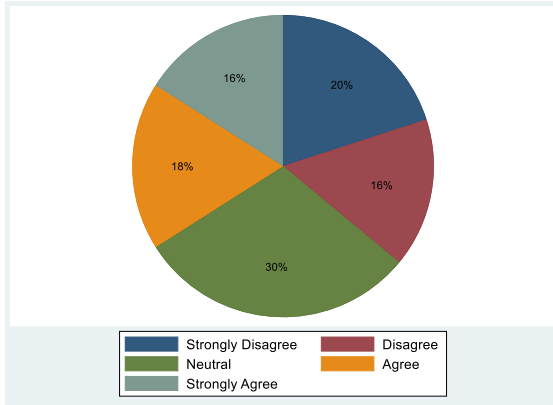


Fig.7: Travel decision based solely on social media’s recommendation

The presented data illustrates respondents' perceptions regarding the influence of social media recommendations on their travel decisions. The survey aimed to gauge the extent to which individuals rely on social media for making travel-related choices. The data indicates a predominant neutral stance among the respondents, with 30% expressing neither strong agreement nor disagreement. This suggests a significant portion of the participants maintains a balanced view regarding the influence of social media on their travel decisions.

Agreement and disagreement responses are evenly distributed, with 18% expressing agreement and 16% strongly agreeing, while 16% disagree and 20% strongly disagree. This signifies a polarized spectrum of opinions within the surveyed population.

The combined percentage of agreement responses (18% agree and 16% strongly agree) suggests a moderate level of influence exerted by social media recommendations on travel decisions. However, the prevalence of disagreement responses highlights a significant cohort that does not rely solely on social media for travel choices. The high percentage of neutral responses warrants further exploration into the factors contributing to this middle-ground stance. Future research could delve into the specific aspects of social media content or platform credibility that influence individuals without eliciting strong agreement or disagreement.

5.1.2 As a resident of Chandigarh, respondents have relied on social media suggestions to take me to local attractions and restaurants.

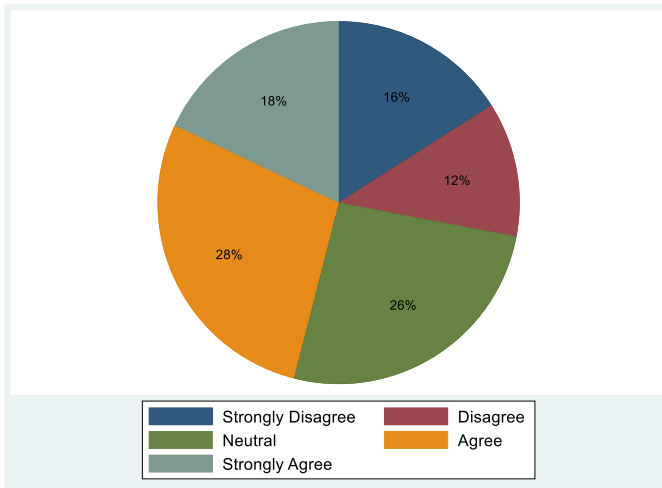


Fig.8: Using social media to choose local attractions and restaurants.

The data presents insights into the extent to which residents of Chandigarh rely on social media suggestions for discovering local attractions and restaurants. The distribution of responses indicates a moderate reliance on social media suggestions, with 28% of respondents expressing agreement and an additional 18% strongly agreeing. This suggests that a substantial portion of residents finds social media influential in guiding their local exploration.

Notably, 26% of respondents provided neutral responses, reflecting a sizable segment that neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with relying on social media for local suggestions. This neutrality prompts further investigation into the factors contributing to the middle-ground stance, such as the perceived reliability of social media content or individual preferences.

Disagreement responses are evenly distributed, with 12% expressing disagreement and 16% strongly disagreeing. This balance suggests a proportion of residents who actively reject the idea of relying on social media for local exploration, emphasizing diverse perspectives within the surveyed population.

5.1.3 In the past, respondents have never regretted making a travel decision based on social media’s recommendation

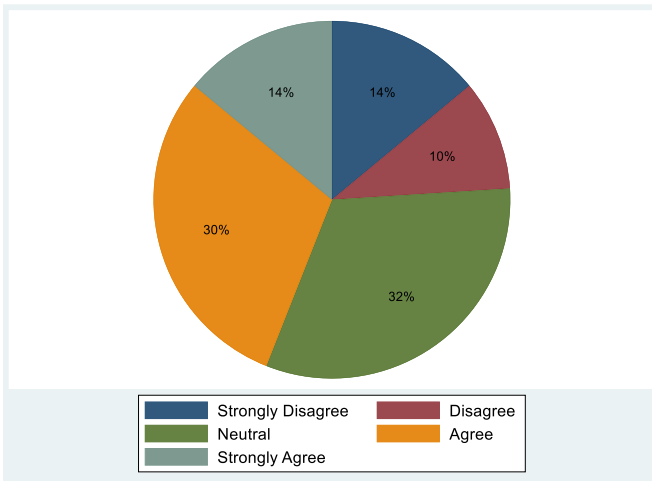


Fig. 9: Never regretted making decision using social media.

The provided data explores the retrospective perspective of individuals concerning their travel decisions made through social media recommendations. The distribution of responses exhibits a balanced representation, with 30% of respondents expressing agreement and an additional 14% strongly agreeing to having no regrets about travel decisions based on social media recommendations. Conversely, 14% strongly disagree, and 10% disagree, indicating a balanced distribution of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Notably, 32% of respondents provided neutral responses, indicating a substantial segment that neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with the statement. This neutrality prompts further investigation into the underlying factors contributing to this middle-ground stance, such as the specific nature of travel experiences, individual preferences, or the reliability of social media content.

The combined percentage of agreement responses (30% agree and 14% strongly agree) suggests that a significant portion of respondents has experienced limited regret regarding travel decisions influenced by social media recommendations. This implies a generally positive retrospective view of the impact of social media on travel choices.

The 14% who strongly disagree may represent a cohort with notably negative experiences. Exploring the specific aspects of dissatisfaction, such as misleading information or unmet expectations, can provide valuable insights for improving the reliability of social media content in the travel domain.

The data suggests a level of trust in social media content for travel decisions, as evidenced by the substantial agreement and strong agreement responses. Understanding the factors contributing to this trust, such as the credibility of sources or the perceived authenticity of shared experiences, is crucial for both users and content creators.

5.1.4 As soon as they get back from a vacation, respondents post on social media about my travel experiences and discuss or promote various travel options.

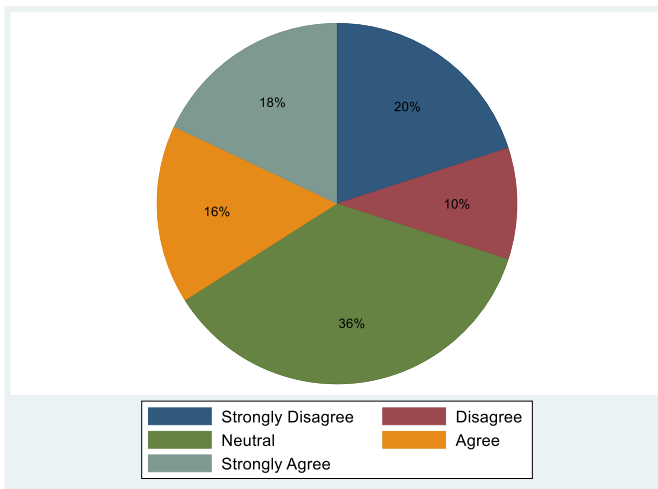


Fig.10: Posting on social media post travel.

The presented data examines individuals' tendencies to engage with social media by sharing their travel experiences and discussing or promoting various travel options upon returning from a vacation. A noteworthy 36% of respondents provided neutral responses, indicating a substantial portion that neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with the statement. This neutrality prompts exploration into the underlying factors contributing to this middle-ground stance, such as individual preferences, perceived social media etiquette, or the nature of travel experiences.

The distribution of agreement (16% agree and 18% strongly agree) and disagreement (10% disagree and 20% strongly disagree) responses is relatively balanced. This suggests a diversity of attitudes among respondents regarding the act of sharing travel experiences and promoting travel options on social media. The combined percentage of agreement responses indicates that a significant proportion (34%) is inclined to share their travel experiences and discuss or promote travel options on social media. Understanding the motivations behind this behavior, such as

a desire to inspire others, document memories, or contribute to travel-related discussions, could provide valuable insights.

The 30% who expressed disagreement or strong disagreement may represent individuals who prefer to keep their travel experiences private or abstain from actively promoting travel options on social media. Exploring the reasons behind this reluctance, such as concerns about privacy or a different approach to social media usage, can offer nuanced insights. The neutral and disagreement responses may be influenced by perceptions of social media etiquette. Future research could explore how individuals navigate the balance between sharing personal experiences and adhering to social norms within their online networks.

5.1.5 After returning from a trip, respondents provide genuine feedback about the location, hotel, and other services on social media.

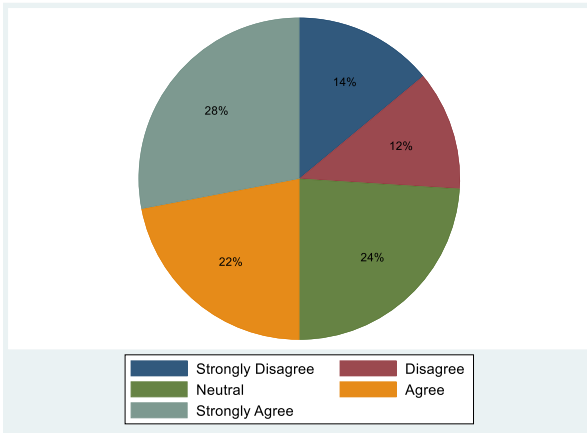


Fig.11: Posting feedback on social media post trip.

The data explores individuals' tendencies to share genuine feedback about the location, hotel, and other services on social media after returning from a trip. The distribution of responses is balanced, with 22% expressing agreement and an additional 28% strongly agreeing to providing genuine feedback on social media post-trip. Conversely, 14% strongly disagree, and 12% disagree. This indicates a diverse range of attitudes toward sharing feedback, with a slight inclination towards agreement.

The combined percentage of agreement responses (22% agree and 28% strongly agree) suggests a substantial portion of respondents is inclined to share genuine feedback about their travel experiences on social media. This emphasizes a potentially positive and engaged user base willing to contribute to the online discourse. A notable

24% of respondents provided neutral responses, reflecting a sizable segment that neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with providing genuine feedback on social media. This neutrality prompts further investigation into the factors contributing to this middle-ground stance, such as the perceived impact of feedback or individual motivations. The 26% who expressed disagreement or strong disagreement may represent individuals who prefer not to share detailed feedback on social media, possibly due to privacy concerns or a different approach to providing reviews. Exploring the reasons behind this reluctance can offer nuanced insights.

5.1.6 To influence their friends and family, respondents post travel videos and stories during and after their journey.

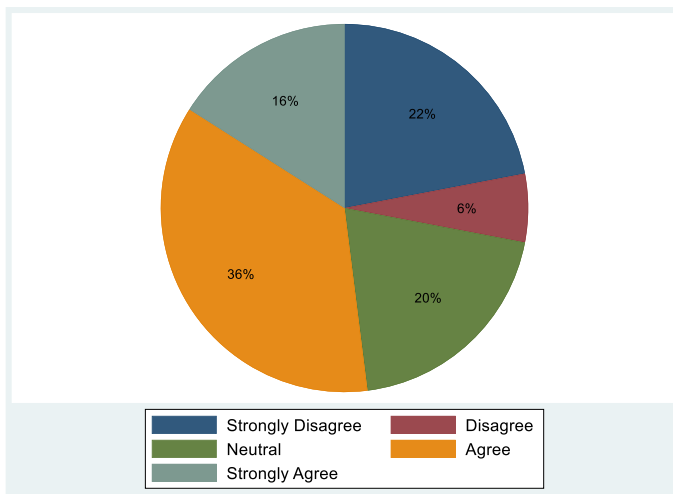


Fig.12: Sharing travel videos and stories during and post travel.

The data on individuals' tendencies to influence friends and family by posting travel videos and stories during and after their journeys. The respondents' attitudes are diverse, with 22% strongly disagreeing and 6% expressing disagreement. Meanwhile, 20% remain neutral on this matter. On the positive side, 36% agree, and an additional 16% strongly agree with the idea of using travel content to influence their social circles. The data highlights a spectrum of perspectives, indicating that a significant portion sees value in sharing travel experiences to influence others, while others hold more reserved or opposing views.

The data reveals that when making travel decisions, individuals exhibit a balanced stance regarding the influence of social media recommendations. With 30% expressing neutrality, there's a significant middle ground. Agreement and disagreement responses are evenly distributed, indicating a polarized spectrum of

opinions within the surveyed population. The combined percentage of agreement responses suggests a moderate level of influence, emphasizing the need for further exploration into factors influencing those with neutral views.

Residents of Chandigarh showcase a moderate reliance on social media for discovering local attractions and restaurants, with 28% in agreement and 18% strongly agreeing. Notably, 26% remain neutral, prompting investigation into the factors contributing to this middle-ground stance. Balanced disagreement responses emphasize diverse perspectives within the surveyed population.

Examining regret about travel decisions influenced by social media, the data reflects a balanced representation. Thirty percent express satisfaction, with 14% strongly agreeing. Dissatisfaction is also balanced, with 14% strongly disagreeing. A significant 32% remain neutral, prompting further exploration into factors contributing to this middle-ground stance.

Regarding sharing travel experiences on social media post-vacation, 36% express neutrality, indicating a substantial portion with varied attitudes. The distribution of agreement and disagreement responses is relatively balanced, reflecting diverse perspectives. The 30% who disagree or strongly disagree may prefer keeping travel experiences private, emphasizing the importance of exploring reasons behind this reluctance.

In providing genuine feedback post-trip on social media, 22% agree, and 28% strongly agree, indicating a positive inclination. The 24% neutral responses warrant exploration into contributing factors. The 26% who disagree or strongly disagree may have distinct reasons for not sharing detailed feedback, highlighting the need for nuanced insights.

On influencing friends and family through travel content, 36% agree and 16% strongly agree, while 22% strongly disagree and 6% disagree. The diverse attitudes emphasize the spectrum of perspectives, with a significant portion valuing the impact of sharing travel experiences to influence others.

5.2 Key Findings and Implications

The data reveals that when making travel decisions, individuals exhibit a balanced stance regarding the influence of social media recommendations. With 30% expressing neutrality, there's a significant middle ground. Agreement and disagreement responses are evenly distributed, indicating a polarized spectrum of

opinions within the surveyed population. The combined percentage of agreement responses suggests a moderate level of influence, emphasizing the need for further exploration into factors influencing those with neutral views.

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On influencing friends and family through travel content, 36% agree and 16% strongly agree, while 22% strongly disagree and 6% disagree. The diverse attitudes emphasize the spectrum of perspectives, with a significant portion valuing the impact of sharing travel experiences to influence others.

Community-driven social media initiatives that encourage residents to share their local experiences and recommendations could foster a sense of community engagement. This approach may resonate with individuals who may currently hold neutral or opposing views. For businesses in the travel industry, focusing on strategies to engage users on social media platforms and building trust in recommendations could bridge the gap between those who agree and those who remain neutral or disagree.

Future research could delve into the specific types of content or platforms that residents find most influential in their local exploration. Additionally, exploring the impact of social media suggestions on residents' perceptions of local businesses and attractions could provide deeper insights.

5.3 Hypothesis testing

5.3.1 Hypothesis 1: Visual appeal, positive user reviews, and influencer recommendations on social media significantly impact pre-purchase perceptions of travel enthusiasts in Chandigarh, resulting in more positive sentiments towards potential destinations.

Hypothesis 1: Null Hypothesis (H0): Visual appeal, positive user reviews, and influencer recommendations on social media have no significant impact on pre-purchase perceptions of travel enthusiasts in Chandigarh.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Visual appeal, positive user reviews, and influencer recommendations on social media significantly impact pre-purchase perceptions of travel enthusiasts in Chandigarh, resulting in more positive sentiments towards potential destinations.

To test Hypothesis 1, Analysis of variance (ANOVA) will allow for the simultaneous analysis of multiple dependent variables (e.g., visual appeal, user reviews, influencer recommendations) to determine if there are statistically significant differences among the groups (e.g., respondents with positive sentiments towards potential destinations and those without).

Anova: Single Factor

Table 1: SUMMARY

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Visual Appeal	4	45	11.25	2.916667
Positive reviews	4	22	5.5	0.333333
Good feedback	4	21	5.25	0.25
Influencer recommendations	4	9	2.25	0.25
Blogs and vlogs	4	3	0.75	0.25

Table 2: ANOVA

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	260	4	65	81.25	5.58E-10	3.055568
Within Groups	12	15	0.8			
Total	272	19				

The table 1 provides a summary of data related to various groups, including counts, sums, averages, and variances for factors such as Visual Appeal, Positive Reviews, Good Feedback, Influencer Recommendations, and Blogs/Vlogs. The ANOVA results in table 2 further analyze the variance between these groups to assess if there are statistically significant differences. Upon examining the averages, Visual Appeal has the highest average (11.25), suggesting a relatively higher impact or positive perception compared to other factors. Positive Reviews and Good Feedback have lower averages of 5.5 and 5.25, respectively, indicating a more moderate influence. Influencer Recommendations and Blogs/Vlogs have notably lower averages (2.25 and 0.75, respectively), suggesting a potentially lesser impact on the perceived attractiveness of destinations.

The ANOVA results indicate a statistically significant difference between the groups (Between Groups $SS = 260$, $F = 81.25$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that at least one of the factors (Visual Appeal, Positive Reviews, Good Feedback, Influencer Recommendations, or Blogs/Vlogs) has a different impact on the perceived attractiveness of destinations. The high F-value and very low p-value ($5.58E-10$) strengthen the evidence against the null hypothesis of equal means. Within Groups, the variance is relatively low (Within Groups $SS = 12$), reinforcing the idea that the differences are primarily attributed to the factors being compared. The F critical value (F crit) is 3.055568, which further supports the rejection of the null hypothesis. In conclusion, the ANOVA results suggest that there is a significant difference in the impact of Visual Appeal, Positive Reviews, Good Feedback, Influencer Recommendations, and Blogs/Vlogs on the perceived attractiveness of destinations. Further post-hoc tests or pairwise comparisons can be conducted to identify which specific factors contribute more significantly to these differences.

5.3.2 Hypothesis 2: Chandigarh travellers who connect with user-generated material on social media are more satisfied with their trip locations after purchasing.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Chandigarh travelers who connect with user-generated material on social media are equally satisfied with their trip locations after purchasing as those who do not connect.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Chandigarh travelers who connect with user-generated material on social media are more satisfied with their trip locations after purchasing.

To test Hypothesis 2, an independent samples t-test can be employed. This test will compare the mean satisfaction levels of two groups: Chandigarh travelers who connect with user-generated material on social media and those who do not. If the t-test reveals a significant difference in satisfaction levels between the two groups, it provides evidence either supporting or refuting Hypothesis 2.

The p-value of 0.716463 is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05. With a p-value of 0.716463, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. There is no statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between Chandigarh travelers who connect with user-generated material on social media and those who do not, based on the given data. The results suggest that, according to the sample data, connecting with user-generated material on social media does not appear to have a significant impact on satisfaction levels after purchasing.

It's important to note that while the sample does not provide evidence of a difference, this does not prove that there is absolutely no difference in the population. The results are specific to the sample at hand. Based on the given p-value, there is no significant difference in satisfaction levels between Chandigarh travelers who connect with user-generated material on social media and those who do not, according to the conducted sample t-test.

6. Limitations of the Study:

Although this study has provided significant contributions to the understanding of the relationship between social media usage and travel choices among travellers in Chandigarh, there are certain limitations that must be taken into account.

Although the research was comprehensive, the findings may not be applicable to a wider population due to the study's reliance on a sample size of 100 enthusiastic travellers in Chandigarh. The demographic particulars may not comprehensively capture the wide range of travel behaviours that exist among various regions and demographic cohorts.

The mixed-methods approach—which combines qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys—presents a difficulty in striking a balance between subjectivity and objectivity. Although valuable, the subjectivity inherent in the qualitative insights may hinder their applicability to larger populations.

The research concentrates primarily on the impact that prominent social media platforms are subject to the influence of visual appeal, user evaluations, and influencer recommendations. Nevertheless, the dynamic and ever-changing nature of the social media environment presents difficulties in comprehensively encompassing all platforms and emergent trends that may influence travel-related choices. The research paper provides a momentary depiction of travel choices and experiences within a designated period. Considering the ever-changing nature of social media trends and user behaviors, it is possible that these results do not comprehensively represent the temporal variations in the impact of social media on travel choices over a prolonged duration.

It is suggested that subsequent investigations ought to contemplate enhancing their research methodologies in order to surmount these constraints and guarantee a more exhaustive and intricate examination of the ever-evolving correlation between social media usage and travel choices.

7. Conclusion

The outcomes of the analysis for Hypothesis 1, supported by the ANOVA test with a highly significant p-value of 5.58E-10, robustly reject the null hypothesis. This indicates a substantial impact of visual appeal, positive user reviews, and influencer recommendations on social media in shaping pre-purchase perceptions of Chandigarh travel enthusiasts. The observed distinctions among these factors underscore their varied influences on consumer perceptions, highlighting the multifaceted nature of elements shaping pre-purchase attitudes in the travel decision context.

On the other hand, the results of the sample t-test for Hypothesis 2, with a p-value of 0.716463, reveal no statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between Chandigarh travelers who engage with user-generated content on social media and those who do not. Consequently, the null hypothesis stands unchallenged, suggesting that connecting with user-generated content on social media does not exert a substantial impact on post-purchase satisfaction levels among the sampled travelers.

The evolution of the travel landscape, with social media as a potent force, has profoundly influenced every facet of the traveler's journey. Beyond initial decision-making, the post-purchase phase plays a pivotal role in shaping the overall travel experience. This research navigates the complexities of post-purchase decisions in travel and underscores the need for the travel industry to recognize nuanced consumer attitudes towards social media recommendations. While a notable proportion acknowledges the influence, a substantial segment remains skeptical or unaffected by such endorsements.

In conclusion, the analysis uncovers a nuanced landscape of attitudes among Chandigarh residents regarding the reliance on social media suggestions for local exploration. Recognizing and understanding this diversity can guide local businesses and destination marketers in tailoring their strategies to effectively engage with the resident population. As Chandigarh continues to evolve as a prominent travel destination, unraveling the complexities of pre-purchase decisions in the age of social media becomes imperative. This study aspires to illuminate the pathways through which social media influences travelers in Chandigarh, contributing to both academic scholarship and practical strategies for stakeholders in the dynamic and competitive travel industry. The post-purchase decision in travel is a dynamic and extended phase that social media actively shapes. From real-time sharing during the trip to the ongoing conversations between travelers and brands, social media's influence endures beyond the initial purchase. Destination marketers must recognize the enduring impact of social media on travelers' perceptions, satisfaction, and the overall success of their marketing strategies. As we navigate this era of connectivity, the post-purchase phase emerges as a crucial arena for the ongoing evolution of travel experiences and destination branding.

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