

# Behavioural Perspective of Pilgrims and Tourists in Banaras (Kashi), India

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## ABSTRACT

Pilgrims are the special tourists whose purpose is to visit the place where they become involved in the religious activities, that is how the group pilgrimage tourists. Differences in behavioural attributes like perception, attitudes and motives vary according the cultural background and personality. In a holy city of Banaras, majority of domestic tourists is pilgrimage tourists, whose behaviour depends upon the exposure, which they have before visiting the city. The first dominant impression of tourists about this city is the religious notion like one of the most sacred cities for Hindus, the abode of Shiva and ghats along with the Ganga river. The Ganga river in Varanasi is the main attraction for all the visitors, but perceptual levels and degrees vary. Domestic pilgrimage tourists visiting Varanasi mainly involve in rituals and religious festivities, while foreign tourists enjoy recreation.

**Key words:** Cognitive map, the Ganga river, image, international tourist, perception, pilgrimage tourist.

## BACKGROUND

India has a rich variegated landscape, and natural and cultural heritage that have great potential for the development of tourism. Tourism industry in India has grown substantially over the last three decades and holds a remarkable position because of the biggest contribution of foreign exchange. During 2000 and 2001 tourism industry alone recorded earning of worth US\$ 3168 and US\$ 3042 millions (*FHRAI Magazine*, 2003) The foreign tourist arrivals during 2000 were 2.65 millions in India, recording 0.38 % share in the world tourists market. Like international tourism, the role of domestic tourism is also noteworthy. This type of tourism acts as a foundation stone on which the structure of international tourism rests. Statistics for the period of April-September 2002 submitted by Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), declares Varanasi as the top most (rank 1) tourism destination in the state of Uttar Pradesh (*The Times of India*, 20 December 2002, p. 3). Tourist Arrivals in recent years in Varanasi (Table 1) shows continuously increase of domestic tourists and tendency of decrement in International tourism. Still the volume of international tourist in U.P. is considerably high, as it is almost double to some states of India.

Table 1. Banaras: Tourist Influx

Year	Domestic	Growth, %	International	Growth, %	TOTAL
1998	287,606	-	132,588	-	420,194
1999	341,974	+ 18.9	112,141	- 15.4	454,115
2000	431,901	+ 26.3	115,254	+ 2.8	547,155
2001	454,832	+ 5.3	108,546	- 5.8	563,378
2002	496,539	+ 9.2	86,267	- 20.5	582,806

(source: UP Tourism, Varanasi)

The old phenomenon of the tourist was in form of the 'pilgrimage' (*tirtha-yatra*) and tourist was in the form of 'pilgrim' (*tirtha-yatri*). This age-old tradition has changed into a form of pilgrimage tourism or spiritual tourism, and commonly organised by the specialised institutions. The sacrality and cultural continuity of Banaras has always been a distinct force of spiritual magnetism attracting people from all corners of India. Banaras records a very special image (like sacrality associated to life and death) in each of the visitor's mind, irrespective of domestic or international tourists. Sometimes the actual experience replace the image carried earlier in their mind. Domestic tourists-pilgrims visiting Banaras mainly involved in rituals like ancestors' rites, pouring ashes and flowers of their recently dead family members and taking holy dip in the Ganga river. This tour is completed by worshipping the Lord Vishvanath Shiva, the patron deity of the city.

## THE FRAMEWORK

The behavioural perspective of human personality is a subjective quality mostly reflected in terms of spatial interaction of man and image formation and its exposition. Every view of spatial vision has connectedness with the visual landscape, generally perceived and expressed in the form of image that develops in the mind of settlers, visitors and tourists. The formation of image is associated to the issues of time, culture, society, education, and mental set-up, i.e. altogether the overall personality of people and place. The first idea of cognitive mapping has been initiated by Trowbridge (1913) who has emphasised the role of orientation. His ideas were further elaborated by Tolman (1932) with an addition of concept of spatial behaviour and related cognition. The first pioneering work has been established by an American architect Kevin Lynch by his classic, *The Image of the City* (1960) in which he has explained the imageability and legibility through the cognitive behaviour of visitors and tourists. After a quarter of century after Kevin Lynch's work, his contributions are further elaborated in an international seminar and its proceedings, 'Reconsidering the Image of the City' (Rodwin and Hollister, 1984). In the field of environmental psychology and behavioural geography the study of cognition and spatial behaviour got special attention, including taking tourists as samples (cf. Golledge, 1987; for recent reviews see Gobster, *et al.*, 2003, and Eisler, *et al.*, 2003).

In his own assessment Lynch (1984) provoked that his original theoretical construct are proved valid by the later contributors that images are much modified by culture and familiarity. He realised that map drawing is a misleading index for most of the people. He also felt that exposition of satisfaction and identification emotionally certainly gives a distorted viewpoint. Nevertheless in a culturally rich and traditionally variant society like India the modified version of Lynch has worked satisfactorily. Lynch's advocacy that his approach and study to be taken as hammer to hit the policy planing in making the city more liveable for the dwellers has not yet taken due consideration. However, cognitive data of tourists indicates its validity in promoting better structure of tourism.

In India, the imagery theory of Lynch was introduced and tested by Singh and Singh (1980); this study is further elaborated on the line of imagery questionnaire used for interviewing tourists and visitors to Banaras (Singh 1988). The same frame is further tested by his follow up study taking fifty respondents from Deoria town (cf. Singh and Shahi, 1988). It has been observed that personality of tourists/ visitors in the context of economic, social, cultural, job status, and perspective of life, has direct effect on the nature of environmental sensitivity that results to form cognitive maps.

The tourists are grouped into two broad categories, i.e. domestic and international. The domestic tourists in majority are labelled under pilgrimage tourists, as remarked by Sievers (1987: 78) that "pilgrimage phenomena is underpinned as being most important element in domestic tourism". This unique journey, pilgrimage-tourism, is a common phenomena in the Oriental world, especially India, Sri Lanka and Japan. Unfortunately the classified statistical counting of domestic tourists is not made yet. In a time of increasing mobility over great distances, rising awareness for cultural identity among Hindus, the upliftment of growing middle-class, use of religion as way to self satisfaction and social harmony, the pilgrimage tourism has become a predominant feature in Indian domestic tourism, especially to the holy place like Banaras (Varanasi/ Kashi). The two groups of tourists can also be described as insider (domestic) and outsider (international).

The basic dilemma between insider-dweller and outsider-visitor is that the former is emotionally attached possessing remarkable human ability to adapt to any situation, no matter how bad it may be. On the other side outsider-visitor is a critic to the situation not suited to him, or he is not accustomed with and also having an utopian/ideal image that in reality found completely disparate. The division of tourists into two broad groups, domestic and international is a simple way of cross-cultural comparison. The idea of pilgrimage tourism within the framework of domestic and international tourism was introduced by a German geographer Angelika Sievers in 1982 and further elaborated in details with case studies of Sri Lanka in 1985 and 1987. It is a question of debate that by which gaze tourism and pilgrimage can be separated, especially in a country like India where sacred and mundane are interdependent and together form a complex system. Cohen (1992: 48) has suggested to see the analytical differences between tourism and pilgrimages as social phenomena at three levels: the deep-structural (*spiritual*), the phenomenal (*experiential*), and the institutional (*organisational*). On this scale one find the points of convergence and also divergence at varying degrees, e.g. the two emerging groups of '*pilgrimage tourism*', and '*touristic pilgrimage*'. For pilgrims there appears a 'centre' possessing spiritual magnetism where they go through the

sacro-petal force, geographically from home to divine, experientially from worldly to spirituality, and personally from individuality to common sharing, and they receive soul healing by re-creation, re-vitalisation, rejuvenation, grace, and exaltation (cf. Cohen, 1979). However the experiences and the qualitative data collected pertaining to these issues cannot be characterise as homogeneous.

The behavioural dimension acknowledges openly that human action is mediated through the cognitive process of information. This can be explained through the closed-question questionnaires and psychologically based test of knowledge. The qualitative understanding of human behaviour can better explained by phenomenological and existential approaches. Both are useful to see the similarities, disparities and cross-cultural groups of people (e.g. domestic/insider and international/outsider tourists). Every insider knows something which no outsider can understand but s/he has suppositional condition too. Similarly every outsider has some better perception and reflections from the worldview point which no insider can easily accept but s/he has pre-conceived construct too. Through behavioural data some aspects of similarities, contrasts and distinction among the domestic and international tourists are analysed here.

Phenomenology helps to explain the reconstruction of the world of individuals, their actions and meanings of the phenomena. Further, existentialism explain the process of creating and imposing the meaning by values. Practice of phenomenological approach is more concerned with questionnaire-based interviews. The use of existentialism is based on the notion that reality is created by the free acts of human agents, so to say participatory observation is more appropriate in this case. Both of these approaches are used in different contexts at different levels. Additionally, some of the significant testing methods, common in psychology, are also used to support the qualitative data. No way claim to be made that which approach is the best? Both the channels, induction (production of data first and construct a theory based upon), and deduction (construct a theory first and generate data to test the validity) are used in this essay at different degrees in different contexts.

Like most of the holy and ancient places in Banaras “places” possessed the deeper sense of meaning because it is a construct produced in the application of mental structure through imposition of collective and metaphorical sacrality by the devout masses since time immemorial. Such “places” always get transformed through the ritual process and performances. In this system each one, e.g. site, time, functionaries, ritual objects, the overseers, the performers – all interwoven in the chain of sacrality, acts as a key symbol in the process of expressing and reaffirming the identity of place developed in the past (cf. Lawrence, 1992: 226). In fact, through these processes a place get rejuvenated and the ephemeral qualities of place merges, especially in a sacred territory like Banaras. The great centres of pilgrimages consisted of series of places defined as sacredscapes (*tirtha-kshetra*), where the power of the divine could be tapped by humanity (Stirrat, 1991: 122). In India Banaras (Kashi) is one of such great places.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In general, tourism data is collected from two kinds of sources: (a) Secondary sources and (b) Primary sources. The secondary data are mostly published by the government and research organisations; and the primary data are based on personal survey. For detailed behavioural and experiential information personal and sample surveys are the pre-requisite. Primary data is generated through detailed questionnaire and interview. This technique is independent of any institutional machinery, instead it requires the modest behavioural skill to distinguish and identify the tourists and collect information. It is notable that the time of taking the interview or survey exerts great influence upon the answers. In fact, the answers sought from the tourists at the time of arrival and departure from the destination may vary to a great extent; the differentiation between the two temporal answers reflects the pre-conceived image and re-oriented vision about the city. One should always be very careful to survey the tourists only in leisure time; this will help in mutual understanding as well as clarity in expositions.

In designing the questionnaire, the major concern has been to ensure that it should not produce pre-determined results either by omitting unfavourable alternations in multiple choice questions or by suggesting desired responses through the phrasing and sequence of questions. To avoid these problems, the adopted questionnaire comprised a series of alternate choice questions and ordering, which were arranged sequentially with a view to minimising the danger of suggested response. This format has been followed in the present survey. The questionnaires were filled in by two ways. Some were left at selected hotels and guesthouses and some individual tourists were personally contacted for in-depth interviews. Some tourists,

who did not have time, were given copies of the questionnaire with a request to return them by post at their earliest convenience but before leaving the country in case of foreign tourists.

The main attention of the survey has been on preferences and behaviour pattern of tourists. However, the attitude and overall reaction of tourists towards varieties of things such as food, accommodation, people, transport, recreation and expenses on different times, etc. were also noted. The analysis of income, purpose of visit, age-sex structure, means of transport in the city and in other parts of India is helpful in reflecting the characteristics of tourists' behaviour, expenditure pattern and preferences.

The primary data collected are organised explained with help of statistical methods like graph presentation, standard deviation, and Spearman's rank correlation coefficient through different software like MS Excel-97 and SPSS 10. The values, which are significantly correlated with each other after Spearman's analysis, can be used to formulate a hypothesis. The result of almost all the survey has been done for the period between 2001 and 2003, however some previous year's data were also taken into account, which were collected while working in other projects on Varanasi. The analysis and interpretation under different heads are discussed in the sequence.

## PURPOSE OF VISIT

Purpose or reason of visit to the city, is not easy to classify into groups because somehow or other, major share of tourists recorded multiple purpose. But for generalisation eight categories emphasising the main purpose (Table 2). It has been assumed that within these categories all different groups of tourist are included. This survey was done to know tourist purposes or their motivational factors, which are responsible to attract them to visit Varanasi city.

Table 2. Banaras: Responding Tourists by the Purpose of visit

Purpose of Visit	<i>International Tourist</i>				<i>Domestic Tourist</i>			
	2001		2002		2001		2002	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Pilgrimage/ Spiritual tour	34	22.7	35	23.3	47	31.3	55	36.7
2. Education/ Research	54	36.0	62	41.3	21	12.0	24	16.0
3. Cultural activities	11	7.3	5	3.3	19	12.7	23	15.3
4. Leisure/ Pleasure/ Recreation	27	18.0	30	20.0	18	14.0	12	8.0
5. Visiting Friends & Relatives	12	8.0	10	6.7	15	10.0	18	12.0
6. Package Tour	4	2.7	4	2.7	9	6.0	6	4.0
7. Business/Project	8	5.3	4	2.7	15	10.0	9	6.0
8. Others	1	0.7	1	0.7	6	4.0	3	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Std. Deviation	18.11		21.64		12.48		16.52	
Spearman's rho correlation coefficient ( $\rho_s$ ): 2001= 0.886** ; 2002= 0.874** ** : double significant at 0.05								

(Source: Personal surveys and tabulation).

In an earlier study Singh (1986) reported that 'education and research' is the most important factor for arrival of both domestic and international tourists; and this is again validated by the present study. It is obvious from data that 'Education and Research' is the first priority by international tourist, and 'Pilgrimage/Spiritual tour' is the main reason that attracted maximum percentage of domestic tourists. In general about one-third tourists visited the city for pilgrimage and related purpose.

Pleasure and recreation is another significant reason for travel to Banaras. The city possessed enough sacred sites and images together with scenic beauty of the Ganga river and nearby hilly areas. These attract tourists to have experience of sacredscape and serenity of nature. Cultural activities are also other means of attraction. The package tour with an aim to market Banaras has not yet taken attention by the government or private agencies.

The values of Spearman's rank correlation coefficient between international and domestic tourists support the view that data for both the year are significantly correlated to each other but ranking of the purposes vary.

## ACCOMMODATION USED

The type of accommodation is a good index for cross-cultural studies between domestic and international tourists (cf. Sievers, 1987: 79). The common perception about international tourists has been that they belong to elite class and generally use luxurious hotels, but it is obvious from the present survey that international tourists used more budget hotels for stay. On average a little less than one-third of total tourists have used budget hotels (cf. Table 3). Star hotels are ranked second in case of international tourists, while guesthouses and *dharamshalas* (pilgrims' guesthouses) are ranked next for domestic tourist.

Table 3. Banaras: Responding Tourists by Type of Accommodation used

Type of Accommodation	<i>International Tourist</i>				<i>Domestic Tourist</i>			
	2001		2002		2001		2002	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Star Hotel	36	24.0	42	28.0	21	14.0	24	16.0
2. Budget Hotel	52	34.7	47	31.3	42	28.0	41	27.3
3. Guest House	28	18.7	15	10.0	28	18.7	27	18.0
4. <i>Dharamshala</i>	0	0.0	0	0.0	30	20.0	27	18.0
5. Paying Guest	19	12.7	30	20.0	1	0.7	1	0.7
6. Friends/ relatives	7	4.7	5	3.3	11	7.3	12	8.0
7. Monastery	3	2.0	2	1.3	9	6.0	7	4.7
8. Others	5	3.3	9	6.0	8	5.3	11	7.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Std. Deviation	18.58		18.49		13.85		13.12	
Spearman's rho correlation coefficient ( $\rho_s$ ) : 2001= 0.310; 2002= 0.240								

Others include railway-retiring room, and accommodation not specified.

(Source: Personal surveys and tabulation).

The percentage of stay in guesthouses are nearly same for both kinds of tourists since many of the international tourists those pay visit for education and research are students and hence they prefer guesthouse and paying-guesthouse, especially due to cheaper prices. The domestic tourists who visit as pilgrims stay mostly in the *dharamshalas* or Panda's house that suit to perform their rituals. Pilgrims, especially the Buddhists come here from many countries like Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Japan and prefer to stay in monasteries of their respective faiths or sects.

The values of Spearman's coefficient is insignificant for both the years, indicating that types of accommodation used by the two groups tourist are not in same order.

## MEDIA OF INFORMATION FOR VISITING THE PLACE

It is quite obvious that books are recorded as first choice by International tourists to get information about India and specific place like Banaras. In case of domestic tourists, friends and relatives are their first sources for getting information about the city (cf. Table 4). Friends and relatives with their previous experiences have always been the main inspiring factor for the domestic tourist. Since Banaras (Kashi) is well known as ancient and holy centre, every elderly Hindu wish to visit at once and this information passes one generation to another. Even international tourists have also expressed friends and relatives as source as second option, however since majority of them are from good educational background, they use sources like books, institutions and their colleague, etc. Due to lack of books in local language, domestic tourist couldn't use the book for their knowledge and motivation.

Table 4. Banaras: Responding Tourists by Media of Information

Media of Information	<i>International</i>		<i>Domestic</i>	
	2001	2002	2001	2002
1. Books/ Guidebooks	111	114	48	52
2. Travel Agents	28	31	67	60
3. Institutions/ Govt. Office	60	60	30	32

4. Jls/ Magzines/TV/ Radio	27	23	16	12
5. Friends/ relatives	76	70	96	105
6. Self Induced	10	18	37	40
7. Internet/ WEB	27	34	27	36
8. Others	34	27	9	7
Std. Deviation	33.39	32.58	28.61	30.82
Spearman's rho correlation coefficient ( $\rho_s$ ): 2001= 0.395; 2002= 0.476				

(Others include Feature film, knowing the city from very childhood, and not specified. In tabulating data concerning media of information actual number is not counted because of the fact that a person generally consult more than one resource. Each category refers to the absolute number of 150).

(Source: Personal survey and tabulation).

Travel agents and tour operators play an important role in providing information and services to both kinds of tourists. In current scenario, 'Internet' is coming to be one of the biggest information banks to every one, which provides speedy and vivid information about any place.

Impact of developing educational status is well marked on the percentile increase of the tourists, inspired with the written literature (Table 4). This phenomenon is supported by increasing Spearman's rank correlation value (from 0.395 to 0.476), indicating insignificant correlation and rank order.

## TOURIST'S ATTRACTION

As far as the attraction is concerned there are various purposes to visit the city of Banaras. This city is a centre of culture as well as a great seat of pilgrimage for devout Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhist and even Muslims. At one end it deals with the height of education, and at another end it swims in the depth of rituals. Irrespective of their purposes of visit, every tourist shares some common attractions in this city, like the scene of the Ganga riverfront, magnificent palaces at the riverbank, the zigzag narrow roads of the old city, the Buddhist landscape, etc. The tourist's attraction was surveyed in two ways, i.e. by dividing the interviewers into groups, and individuals (Table 5). This gives a picture of places preferred by group and individual tourists. It is obvious that the riverfront ghats along the Ganga is visited by almost all the tourist, irrespective of international or domestic. Old City also fascinates tourists, especially of the international. They observe the life style of people, yogi, monasteries, *sadhu*, etc. As one person may visit more than one place actual number can not be calculated, therefore percentile has been taken into consideration.

The Vishvanath Temple and its surrounding is second popular destination for domestic tourists and NRIs because the temple is venerated as highly sacred and powerful and also one among the twelve Jyotirlingas ("light-manifested forms of Shiva") scattered all-over India. The reasons for low frequency of foreign tourist to this area include no entry in temple complex zone and checking with intention to create problem by police resulting to harassment and humiliation. Sarnath, where Lord Buddha had given his first sermon to his five disciples ("turning the Wheel of Law") is also a popular choice by the tourists. Sarnath attracts a little less than three-fourth of the international tourists. This whole area is taken as the heritage zone in the Master Plan of Varanasi 2011, yet no progress is made for landscaping, development of monastic spots and areas, institutions like yoga and related training (e.g. Vipasana).

Table 5. Responding Tourists by Sites of Attractions, each category refers to 100.

Sites of Attractions	<i>International</i>				<i>Domestic</i>			
	2001		2002		2001		2002	
	Group	Indiv.	Group	Indiv.	Group	Indiv.	Group	Indiv.
1. The Ganga & Ghats	100	100	100	100	98	99	96	98
2. Vishvanath Temple	16	22	16	25	90	94	96	92
3. Bharat Mata Mandir	38	26	36	31	7	10	4	16
4. BHU & Birla Temple	32	48	34	47	35	40	40	32
5. Sarnath	70	65	73	71	27	46	31	48
6. Ramanagar Fort	6	8	4	2	18	15	15	13
7. Old city	60	72	8	13	20	18	28	16

8. Others	12	15	52	68	8	30	22	20
<b>Std. Deviation</b>	32.64	32.34	33.34	33.17	35.90	34.67	35.30	34.74
Spearman's rho correlation coefficient ( $\rho_s$ ) (group) 2001= 0.429; (group) 2002= 0.452; (Ind.) 2001= 0.299; (Individual) 2001= 0.719* * single significant at 0.05								

(Note: No. of respondents were 150; for each of the category the total unit refers to 100)  
(Source: Personal surveys and tabulation).

Banaras Hindu University campus is a popular attraction for any kind of tourists. It is one of the beautifully maintained campuses of India, which caters education and also have several tourist spots. The campus is full of greenery with grandeur of architectural buildings in which Bharat Kala Bhawan (university museum) and Birla temple (new Vishvanath temple) are visited by most of the tourists. Generally frequency of foreign tourists is more in the museum, while domestic tourists more commonly visit the temple.

There are a very few group or individual tourist who pay visit to nearby natural picnic sites like Rajdari, Devdari and Lekhania Dari (natural falls). This is mostly because of unawareness and less interest taken by tour operators and supportive infrastructure. Presently the awareness towards nature tourism and ecotourism promotes the prospects of increasing influx at these tourism destinations.

### MODE OF TRANSPORTATION IN THE CITY

The transport facility in the city is not up to an optimal requirement, resulting to dissatisfaction among tourists. The crucial problem of the city is the bad maintenance of roads and heavy water logging during rainy season. Since city is very densely populated and some areas are very old where streets are quite narrower than normal, vehicle can not run on those routes. The means of transport ranges from bus, taxi, auto-rickshaw to *tonga*, etc. Taxi (Ambassador, Sumo, Qualis, and other cars) are most common mode of transportation for tourist visiting inside and outside Banaras. Domestic tourist mostly uses auto-rickshaw for city movement while they also use taxi for outskirts visits. Auto-rickshaw is well suited to the condition of Banaras and also used by most of the tourists. On the open areas and long routes taxi is the first priority by international tourists followed by use of auto-rickshaw and mini buses (Table 6).

Table 6. Banaras: Responding Tourists by Mode of Travel in the City.

Mode of Travel	<i>International Tourist</i>				<i>Domestic Tourist</i>			
	2001		2002		2001		2002	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Taxi (Amb/ Sumo/ Qualis)	49	32.7	51	34.0	12	8.0	11	7.3
2. Mini Bus	23	15.3	21	14.0	3	2.0	4	2.7
3. Large Bus	18	12.0	20	13.3	23	15.3	22	14.7
4. Auto Rickshaw	26	17.3	30	20.0	57	38.0	56	37.3
5. Rickshaw	15	10.0	16	10.7	23	15.3	26	17.3
6. Tonga	3	2.0	2	1.3	9	6.0	9	6.0
7. On Foot	10	6.7	7	4.7	18	12.0	17	11.3
8. Others	6	4.0	3	2.0	5	3.3	5	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Std. Deviation</b>	14.58		16.25		17.23		16.97	
Spearman's rho correlation coefficient ( $\rho_s$ ) : 2001= 0.299; 2002= 0.286								

Others include friends' vehicle, government vehicles and not specified.  
(Source: Personal surveys and tabulation).

Most of the domestic tourists belong to middle class, therefore they prefer to use auto-rickshaw and manual rickshaw for the movement in the city, while they hire taxi for longer route with more number of tourists. The popularity of travelling by bus records a tendency of decrease because of very high taxes levied by the government upon the transporters. Many domestic tourists also use *tonga* as mode of transportation, especially for visiting few temple areas like new Vishvanath temple, Durga Temple,

Sankatmochan, etc. Big groups of tourists use the bus as mode of transportation, but it can only be served on outer city routes and parked at the outside areas.

## EXPENDITURE DISTRIBUTION

To collect information concerning the expenditure by a tourist is a complex phenomenon. Here general expenditure per day/per person has been calculated, excluding accommodation and transportation to and from other cities. The expenditure done by tourists mostly refers to the basic services for own requirements. The group expenditures are divided into per person for sake of analysis.

Of course there is a direct relationship between number of days stayed and amount of money spent by tourists, however majority of tourists fall in the category of Rs 100-200 per day. Average money spent by international tourist comes to Rs. 200-500 per day, while for domestic tourist Rs 100-200. Since the value of Indian currency, rupees (Rs) is quite less in comparison to other international currencies like Dollar, Pound and Euro, a general tourist can also spent good some of money without any pressure. Second category of domestic tourist is recorded between Rs 50-100 because most of them visit Banaras for pilgrimage and not for pleasure. Majority of international tourists recorded between Rs 100 and 400 as many of them come here for study and spend minimal amount. This is also found that 10-15 % elite class of international tourists use to spend more than Rs 1000, but only 5-6% of them spent more that Rs 1600 or about \$ 40.

Table 7. Banaras: Responding Tourists by Daily Expenditure.

Daily Expenditure: Rs. / person	<i>International Tourist</i>				<i>Domestic Tourist</i>			
	2001		2002		2001		2002	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. 50 – 100	3	2.0	2	1.3	36	24.0	24	16.0
2. 101 – 200	51	34.0	53	35.3	72	48.0	76	50.7
3. 201 – 400	60	40.0	55	36.8	27	18.0	31	20.6
4. 401 – 800	16	10.6	17	11.3	9	6.0	10	6.7
5. 801 – 1600	11	7.4	15	10.0	4	2.7	6	4.0
6. above 1600	9	6.0	8	5.3	2	1.3	3	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Std. Deviation	24.16		23.09		26.68		27.23	
Spearman's rho correlation coefficient ( $\rho_s$ ): 2001= 0.314; 2002= 0.600								

(Source: Personal surveys and tabulation).

The value of Spearman's rho indicates that expenditure distribution is not in the same order for different groups i.e. number of tourists for a particular expenditure category is not correlated and insignificant between international and domestic tourists in both the years (Table 7).

## FIRST/ OVERALL IMPRESSION

At the first impression the city is most frequently accepted as one of the most sacred places for Hindus. The city consists of a great mass of sacredscapes (sacred spots, sites and artefacts), majority of which are linked to the riverfront. Such unique places have become essential to the lives of devout Hindus because of the community use or symbolism associated with their faith in deep attachment. In fact, these places become synonymous with residents' concepts and use of their own. The loss of such places would reorder or destroy some social process familiar to the community's collective being (cf. Hester, 1993: 279). The places valued most by the dwellers, may not be given prominence by foreign tourists due to their non-familiarity or non-connectedness. However, such places may have negative associations to the feeling of inconvenience. This context lead to psychological conflicts between the residents and tourists. The overall first impression of the foreign and domestic tourists is associated with the religious notion (sacred place of pilgrimages) together with serene-scenic lofty ghats making the riverfront along the Ganga river, and the conception of sacredness (cf. Table 8). The boating in the Ganga and riverfront scenery of ghats (especially at the sunrise) are the unique experiences in the world travel.



Table 8. Banaras: Responding Tourists by “First Impression”, 2003

First Impression	International		Domestic		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Religious/ pilgrimage City	12	18.7	29	33.7	41	27.4
2. City of Ghats	21	32.8	14	16.3	35	23.3
3. Good & Quite city	6	9.4	20	23.3	26	17.3
4. Dirty & crowded city	10	15.6	8	9.3	18	12.0
5. Good Service/ market centre	8	12.5	7	8.1	15	10.0
6. Educational City	5	7.8	4	4.7	9	6.0
7. Exotic/ Complex City	1	1.6	2	2.3	3	2.0
8. Not answered	1	1.6	2	2.3	3	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Std. Deviation	6.55		9.63		14.23	
Spearman's rho correlation coefficient between International & Domestic ( $\rho$ ): 0.807*						

(Source: Personal survey and tabulation, August 2003)

Among the 84 ghats along the Ganga river, five are considered to be most auspicious as described in the *puranic* text, *Kashi Khanda* (84.107-10, 114). From south to north they are Asi, Dashashvamedha, Manikarnika, and Adi Keshava. The half-crescent shape flow of Ganga looks like a half-moon on the forehead of Shiva. The walk along the ghats, followed steps, sound of the temple bells, smell of flowers, the style-mood and dealing of the priests there, a continuous chain of people for taking holy dip, gurgle of the river and murmur of recitation of sacred mantras by devotees after taking holy dip, the rituals at ghats and in nearby temples, devotees' facial expression of faith -- altogether make the riverfront landscape an unique scene in the 'world of faith and rituals'. In other word this whole arena may be called a distinct *faithscape* which has only to be understood with a personal experience and faith because this is not only scenic or traditional way, but also a way for making themselves a connected to the spirit of ultimate reality. Khushwant Singh (1959: 101) has rightly said that 'To know the intrinsic meaning and cosmic mysteries of this city, it is not enough to read about it in books, or see it on the cinema screen, or hear someone talk about it'. Both the physical and cultural elements and processes make the *riverfront faithscape* distinct and disparate from the nearby localities.

The international tourist also perceives this place as dirty and crowded city where at each nook and corner the waste and garbage pits are openly scattered and there is no civic sense to clean it. The drastically increasing pace of population, encroachment to make houses, no public participation and awareness march in this respects, etc. are some of the responsible factors promoting an environment of chaos. However a sensitive Greek visitor had rightly expressed that this "city has to be visualised only in a sense of living organism, not in the purview of the architectural and historical monuments". Naturally, the pilgrimage tourists coming for very specific purpose (religious) never pay serious attention on the other side. However, the domestic tourists certainly react to such scenes and in discourse strongly expression their objections. The city has also been perceived as educational centre, of course at low degree. In fact, since the ancient past the city has been known as city of leaning, however at present its recognition has fallen down.

The city in purview of 'contrasts' and, 'mysteries' is also very attractive. Old historical monuments at Sarnath and recently developed planned colonies in the city area present a 'contrast'; while various sites of saints, seats, aesthetics and similar one show 'mysteries'. According to an American tourist, the impact of Westernisation is clearly visible like opening of star-hotels, souvenir shops, pizzeria, bear shops, etc. Through a general walk in the city one may see frequently moving cows, buffaloes, bulls and goats. It is with this impression that some respondents called the city a zoological garden (Singh and Singh, 1980: 115). Japanese pay relatively high regards due to their sense of belongingness to this city as a Buddhist centre, while British tourists feel the city with lively activity and spiritual feelings. French visitors mostly accept this city as pilgrimage centre. According to the Greek visitors the city represents the mixed culture having full sense of living organism.

The values of Spearman's correlation shows that regarding impression, domestic and international tourists have significant correlation.

## SYMBOLIC MEANING OF KASHI

Banaras is full of symbols and its various meanings. Like ‘the city is situated on trident of Shiva’, ‘the city of *moksha*’, ‘forest of bliss’ (*Anandbana*), etc. On the basis of symbols, surveys conducted that shows that 40% of domestic tourists expressed this place as ‘City of lord Shiva’, while about 30% international tourists expressed as the city where the Ganga river flows (cf. Table 9). There is a very strong belief by devout Hindus that one can get liberation (*moksha*) from birth-rebirth cycle if the dead body will be cremated here. This place is referred as ‘city of good death’. This image supported by the mythologies attracts devout Hindus to carry a large number of dead bodies from near and distant areas for cremation. Another common understanding about the city is the notion that it is the cultural capital of India.

Table 9. Responding Tourists by “Symbolic Meaning of Kashi”, 2003

Symbolic Meaning	International		Domestic		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Sacred/ Holy City of Shiva	12	18.7	33	38.4	45	30.0
2. The Ganga River	20	31.3	10	11.6	30	20.0
3. City of Liberation (Moksha)	6	9.4	21	24.4	27	18.0
4. Cultural Capital	14	21.9	10	11.6	24	16.0
5. City on Shiva’s Trident	2	3.1	7	8.1	9	6.0
6. Rural culture in a metropolis	6	9.4	1	1.2	7	4.7
7. An All-India City	3	4.7	2	2.3	5	3.3
8. Not answered	1	1.6	2	2.3	3	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Std. Deviation	6.70		11.11		15.03	
Spearman’s rho correlation coefficient between International & Domestic ( $r_s$ ): 0.545						

(Source: Personal survey and tabulation)

Water is a dominant feature in many environment and cultures; in India water has special importance historically and more specifically in Hindu thought water has been given prominence as liquid sacred energy which can clean all sorts of sins and provides a new life. On this line of thought the Ganga river is mytholised as ‘mother river’ (“*Ganga Ma/ Mai*”), a cradle of Indian culture and civilisation, as symbol of prosperity and purity Her unique physical position in Banaras has been object of variant symbols, including the most attractive scenic beauty of visitors and tourists – a 5.8km stretch of crescent moon shaped flow from the south to the north, having left-hand natural levee built of limestone concretion, an the right-hand riparian environment of flood plain made of sandy loam and subject to annual inundation.

The visitors when asked what symbolised the word "Bararas/ Kashi" for them, almost all the foreign tourists responded that "the Ganga river with its mysterious ghats and their related activities, especially the ritual bathing and a religious centre of great antiquity". To many of them it also symbolises the "peaceful and holy city", and also a "great cremation centre". However, to a few it also symbolises a city of "numerous beggars more than any other tourist centre". All this shows a high sense of psychological attachment of the tourists to a particular and single element, i. e. the riverfront Ganga in relation to religion. On the other end, in the opinion of home tourists, it is a great seat of Hindu religion, especially the sacred abode of Lord Shiva (Vishveshvara; Singh, 1982: 168).

## SOUNDSCAPE AND SMELLSCAPE

Among the non-visual senses related to environmental aesthetics smell and sound are the most distinct ones. Since both are related to space, time and human concern they ultimately form distinct places, i.e. smellscape and soundscape. These two spatially-ordered places especially the obnoxious smell of sewage disposal spots and the unwanted sound converging to form ‘noisescape’ are the major concern of sensibility and reaction as clearly marked by tourists. Aspect of sound and smell also play role in stability, comfortability and resistance of tourist. Sound and smell phenomena are surveyed together and categorised under nine aspects (cf. Table 10).

Banaras is famous for ringing morning bells, chanting of sacred verses and devotional songs devoted to different deities. Sometimes these sounds attract but when it becomes noise it distracts also. International tourist are very much conscious about these soundscapes and smellscapes. Gurgle of the river (Ganga), temple and street music and chirping of birds are liked by international tourists to a reasonably levels but not constantly, while domestic tourists adjust with such soundscapes and never express their

reaction. Domestic tourists are less conscious so there does not converge a dominant trend. Noise in the streets, shouting among localities and high pitch music always distract both kinds of tourists.

Odour is the other factor to which tourist reaction is quite frequent. Smoke in the evening, smell of urine and sewer, smell of open garbage, etc. always creates problem and uncomfortable situation. This situation develops a kind of irritation in the mind of tourists, which is going to be a serious threat for the development of tourism in the city.

Table 10. Banaras: Responding Tourists by “Soundscape and Smellscape”, 2003

Aspect of Sound/ Smell	International		Domestic		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Gurgle of the river (Ganga)	22	34.4	12	13.9	34	22.7
2. Sounds of the bells & mantras	12	18.7	13	15.1	25	16.7
3. Traffic noise	8	12.5	5	5.8	13	8.7
4. Temple and street music	5	7.8	8	9.3	13	8.7
5. Chirping of birds	8	12.5	3	3.5	11	7.3
6. Smoke in the evening	11	17.2	6	7.0	17	11.3
7. Smell of urine/ sewer	9	14.1	6	7.0	15	10.0
8. Shouting of localities	7	10.9	3	3.5	10	6.7
9. Obnoxious smell of garbage	6	9.4	3	3.5	9	6.0
10. Not answered	1	1.6	2	2.3	3	2.0
Total	64	100.0	86	100.0	150	100.0
Std. Deviation	5.55		3.84		8.37	
Spearman's rho correlation coefficient between International & Domestic ( $\rho_s$ ): 0.488						

(Source: Personal survey and tabulation)

## EPILOGUE: PROSPECT & PERSPECTIVE

For developing any tourism destination three basic requirements are necessary i.e. *attraction*, *accessibility* and *accommodation*. From the ancient period, Banaras has maintained its status of a great centre of pilgrimage. Even today in Banaras city exists a large number of shrines and temples belonging to the Hindus (ca 3500), Muslims (ca 1400), Christians (ca churches), the Buddhists (9), the Jains (3), the Sikhs (3), and several other sacred sites and places. The Hindu shrines and sanctuaries associated to different gods, sometimes the patron one (a form of Shiva), however many times one-and-many together, i.e. the polythetic structure, common in Banaras is *Panchayatana* (‘five gods together’). This multiplicit character of the city has been the main attraction. The serene esthetical beauty of the Ganga river and neighbouring hill territory associated to the goddesses, Vindhyachal Kshetra, has been an additional attraction. However, many of the important shrines are not allowed for non-adherents, especially no way to the international tourists. However at some places there are provision to see the inner side from the outer corridors. The natural setting, the spirit of place, and the continuity of cultural traditions have all blended together to create and preserve a unique lifestyle known as Banarasi (Singh and Rana, 2002: 24). Moreover, it is also famous as a centre for learning the Sanskrit literature, music and painting, yoga and meditation.

Of course, seasonal variation is observed in tourism influx but in Banaras throughout the year both domestic and international tourists pay visit. One of the basic reasons was the attraction to this city as educational centre. During 1965-2000 existed here the American Institute of Indian Studies, AIIS, which earlier served as one of the very popular centre of education and research in Indology, especially its iconographic and photographic collection was magnificent. By shifting this institution at Gurgaon (near New Delhi), one of the most famous educational attractions is lost. The educational tourists additionally require good libraries, teachers/ tutors and skilled assistants who help them during study period. While surveying the educational tourist, a gap between them and the available resources of knowledge was noticed.

The libraries in different universities at Banaras do not provide update information and infrastructural facilities; moreover they also require complicated formalities of affiliation for entry. They are also mismanaged and arranged properly. Besides this, most of the rare and useful books are in private

collection by various scholars' families that tourists can not have easy access and heavy charges are also asked for consultation. These problems discourage student tourists to come and stay for longer period.

There are many untapped beautiful ancient sites and spots worth seen lying in the narrow lanes and streets of Banaras that need to be made accessible for the common tourists. Special means and modes of transportation should be facilitated to reach there.

Till 1988 there was 914.30 ha area under transportation and communication, which was planned to 1300ha in the Master Plans of 1999, and further extended to 1460ha in 2011. However a little additions was made. Most of the roads, lanes and streets are old and developed in haphazard manner, and the both side area along are victim of encroachments. There is no system of outer ring road, of course it is proposed. In the latest Master Plan provision of ply-over bridges, bus stand, new bridge over the Varana river, and widening of the roads and streets under the zonal regulation system are proposed. The most crucial problems the tour operators face is lack of parking spaces and the areas where big size buses can stand. In the main city area there is parking place. The buses are allowed to stand in along the main roads in the western part of the main city only during 9.00PM - 8.00AM. The distances from the main attractive spots are quite longer and there is no alternative arrangement for easy walk or use of small vehicles.

The uncontrolled rule of the charges is the restrictive forces creating dissatisfaction among tourists. Most of the old open spaces, parks and water bodies are illegally captured and converted into residential colonies. Traffic congestion, jams, irregular movement, the noise and smoke pollution by the heavy traffic are the other resultant problems tourists face and reacts to these issues. Expenditure on transportation facilities also depends on profile of the tourist. Elite class tourists prefer high luxury so they spend more money than general tourist for getting different mode and kind of transport facilities. Transport service providers are facing problem of high rate of road taxes, in addition to permit charges and tourist taxes. This has caused price hike for transportation facility, which ultimately cause reaction of anger to tourist about rates as compared to other states. One of the biggest problems disturbing this industry is parking places in the city. There is lack organised open spaces used for parking, but there is rule for "no parking". Administration is not providing space for parking but charging fine if vehicle stands near no parking lane. This directly restricts the movement inside city.

Accommodation is another important basic facility required by any tourist. The studies shows that maximum number of tourists had opted budget hotels for their stay purposes. For domestic tourists, maximum orientation is towards cheap hotels, guesthouses and *dharamshalas*, whose number reaches to 112 in the city. Few of them also manage to stay in some of their friends and relatives. It is obviously noted that no optimally required number of cheap hotels and *dharamshalas* are available. Various study programmes are running in Banaras by different universities of world (e.g. USA, Sweden, Germany, Italy, etc.), in which the group members use to stay for a fortnight to two month. They prefer accommodation like guesthouses, paying guest families and budget hotels. In Varanasi city, there are 12 star hotels and about 150 other registered hotels. The condition of 5\* category hotels are satisfactory but their services are not up to an optimal level. The condition of lower category like 3\* and budget hotels are inefficient and their number is insufficient too. The most important feature of tourist industry is services and maintenance, which is lacking in accommodation industry here.

The conditions of *dharamshalas* are not satisfactory as expressed by majority of pilgrims. Most of them are unhygienic except a few Marvari and Gujarati *dharamshalas*. It would be highly appreciated if government and religious trusts came forward to take care of this. On the line of well appraised *dharamshalas* manage by *Vaishno Devi Trust* (Jammu and Kashmir), the Kashi Vishvanath Temple Trust should develop sufficient accommodation and associated facilities to pilgrims and religious tourists at various spots in the city.

Additionally, the quality of motivational or publicity material, responsible to motivate domestic and international tourists, is not satisfactory. Also the brochures, books and other printed materials are only in either Hindi or English, hence unable to attract tourists of different languages spoken in different states of India or international tourists with other languages. Department of Tourism (state and central level) should take initiative regarding this on priority basis. Among such materials guidebooks and other printed brochures are the useful source information; however they are not sufficient at all. One can surprisingly note that no authentic map and sizeable guidebook on Banaras are available, except the only advanced and comprehensive guidebook (cf. Singh and Rana, 2002).

Through the behavioural survey of tourists, it seems clear that the collective awareness to save the heritage of Banaras has not yet appealed to the dwellers. The proposed plan by the state institutions are not

supported and nurtured by the local resident personnel. In spite of considering sacred structures and objects as cultural and heritage resources which can be used for the special kind of tourism, e.g. pilgrimage-tourism, no noticeable programme has been developed. The tourists from abroad opine that the spatial structure need to be allowed for the benefit with a view to promoting conservation and preservation and a securing financial support but this type of development be without losing its sense of community and also to protect fragile place-related institutions from tourist encroachment. Of course, from the local side it is a matter of suspicion and also a threat to the traditional religious and cultural traditions, which do not allow interference from the outsiders. It is noteworthy that such programmes and plan has been successful in the western world (cf. Hester, 1993: 294). In future the behavioural study of human cognition in association with spatial attributes and cultural variation, like imageability, will add a new perspective in its application for the comprehensive planning (cf. Golledge, 2002).

The measurement of tourists' satisfaction with a particular destination involves more than simply measuring the level of satisfaction with the services delivered by individual enterprises. Concerning the level of satisfaction, most of the tourists express their experiences as satisfactory, and also felt that local people have been 'hospitable', however the pace of market view and money-motto ideologies together changing the harmony of cultural interaction between the local people and the tourists. The question of measuring satisfaction involves an assessment of whether the experiences have resulted in the desired benefits sought by the individual, moreover it also depends upon how well desired outcomes are realised (cf. Wagar, 1966). About a quarter of century ago most of the tourists has expressed their feeling toward the people as 'hospitable, charming and cheerful, and mostly calm' (cf. Kayastha and Singh, 1977: 148-149). The rapidly changing society towards modernisation and more economic consciousness resulting to 'individualism' that also having drastic effect on the tourists, especially treating them as a resource to exploit.

It has rightly been remarked by Kevin Lynch (1976: vii) that "The diverse ways in which different groups see the same place are important for public policy. Critical for public policy also are the fascinating similarities, arising from features of the environment itself....".

One of the main objectives of behavioural survey of tourists was to solve their problems and provide suggestion to public and private sector for further tourism development. The results of this study will help the host population, visitors, and tourism development to make co-ordination between them for the different problems. During the personal discourses tourism authorities have accepted that this study will help to understand and sort out the problems faced by tourists and help in formulating policy and planning for development of tourism in Banaras. It has been now accepted that "the human body is the first landscape we encounter and explore. It is likely that we carry the cognitive imagery in our heads as well as the actuality of our own bodies as we approach the external environment. Landscape is our second major encounter" (Porteous, 1986: 10). In the light of history the common cognitive view has been ever changing with the fact that man is becoming more individualistic. The bridge between the cognitive view and actuality can be made in the perspective of planning cultural heritage. In this line of thought Master Plan of the Greater Varanasi (2011) needs re-orientation with an aim to preserve the cultural heritage and its aesthetic values.

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