# MYSORE DUSSEHRA AS A CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM DESTINATION: EXPLORING COMPETITIVENESS IN TRAVEL AND TOURIST GRATIFICATION.

**Krishna Murthy B. Y.**

Assistant Professor

Dept of JMC

Indira Gandhi National Tribal University

Madhya Pradesh.

## ABSTRACT:

Cultural tourism has most potential impact on travelers and has a huge competition in tourism arcade. As we all know tourism industry was one of the most effected sector during pandemic period. In India, Mysore Dussera is one of the tourism destination center that stands as a beacon of cultural heritage, drawing tourists from across the globe to witness its ten-day extravaganza. This paper is an attempt to investigate on travel and tourism competitiveness and aims to examine the impact of experienced and inexperienced tourist gratification and perception. Adopting the survey method with structured questionnaires for the tourist's during 2023 (post pandemic era). In the conclusion, the study explores the most influential dimensions in tourism competitiveness and aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of tourist gratification on Mysore Dussera.

## KEYWORDS:

Cultural tourism, Mysore Dussera, Tourism Competitiveness, Tourist Gratification.

## INTRODUCTION:

### United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the United Nations' specialized agency, responsible for the promotion of sustainable, responsible, and universally accessible tourism. UNWTO works in six main areas: competitiveness, sustainability, poverty reduction, capacity building, partnerships, and mainstreaming. The Organization aims to maximize the positive economic, social, and cultural effects of tourism, while minimizing its negative impacts (Noel Healy and Sandra Carvao, 2016)[1]. According to the definition adopted by the UNWTO General Assembly, at its 22nd session (2017), Cultural Tourism implies "A type of tourism activity in which the visitor's essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions".

UNWTO invited UNESCO to contribute to this second set of guidelines relating to the sociocultural impacts of COVID-19. The literature draws on the insights of the two UN agencies to analyse the impact of the pandemic and suggests solutions for cultural tourism to prosper again…….greater inclusion[2]. Cultural heritage tourism is a dynamic and enriching sector of the travel industry that invites tourist to explore the diverse and often centuries-old legacies of societies around the world. It involves the exploration of places, artifacts, customs, and traditions that reflect the collective identity of a community or nation. This form of tourism offers a unique opportunity for travelers to engage with the past, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the cultural roots that shape contemporary.

## CULTURE HERITAGE:

UNESCO recognizes both tangible and intangible cultural heritage as integral aspects of global cultural diversity, aiming to safeguard and promote their significance. Tangible cultural heritage refers to physical artifacts, structures, and landscapes that hold cultural, historical, artistic, or scientific value. This includes monuments, archaeological sites, artifacts, and historic buildings. On the other hand, intangible cultural heritage encompasses living expressions and practices passed down from generation to generation, such as traditions, oral histories, performing arts, rituals, social practices, and traditional craftsmanship. UNESCO's recognition of intangible cultural heritage is aimed at preserving the diversity of cultural expressions and fostering awareness of the importance of these living traditions.

In the past, when anthropology emerged, the term 'culture' was linked to the traditions and behaviors of a society's residents (Scupin, 2020). National culture is influenced by people's exposure to a country's history, philosophy, religion, and social values (Vergori & Arima, 2020). According to the cultural model developed by Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010), there are six dimensions of national culture, namely power distance (PD), individualism versus collectivism (IND), uncertainty avoidance (UA), masculinity versus femininity (MAS), long-term orientation versus short-term orientation (LTO), and indulgence versus restraint (INL). In contemporary times, culture serves as a fundamental reservoir from which travel derives its essence, with a predominant focus on cultural heritage elements in numerous tourism attractions and destinations globally (Timothy, 2011, p. 3). Heritage tourism, a substantial component of cultural tourism (Seyfi, Hall, & Fagnoni, 2019), stands out as one of the most extensive and rapidly expanding sectors within the tourism industry (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009, p. 4). Apart from facilitating the cultivation of individual or collective identities among tourists, heritage tourism assumes particular importance for many developing countries, serving as a

potent instrument for poverty alleviation and community economic development (Garrod & Fyall, 2000; Poria et al., 2003; Seyfi et al., 2019; UNWTO, 2015). This growing significance is evident in the escalating number of sites attaining UNESCO World Heritage Site recognition. Park (2013) observes that heritage tourism holds special appeal for nations historically reliant on the "3s offerings" (sun, sand, and sea) as they strive to diversify their tourism offerings. The UNWTO (2015) underscores the substantial contribution of heritage tourism to international tourism consumption, constituting approximately 40% of global tourism. Timothy (2011) goes a step further, estimating that around 85% of the general population qualifies as current or potential heritage tourists. Consequently, many destinations have directed particular attention to leveraging their tangible and immutable cultural assets to gain a competitive edge in the increasingly fierce tourism marketplace. Recognizing the significance of enhancing the experiences and satisfaction of cultural heritage tourists, Seyfi, Hall, and Rasoolimanesh (2020) argue for an understanding of how tourists generate positive sentiments, thereby augmenting the likelihood of achieving Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTE) (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018).

## MYSORE DUSSERA: Rich Cultural Heritage Hub for Tourist

Indian travelers took approximately 2 billion domestic and international trips in 2018, spending nearly $94 billion on transportation, lodging and consumption during their travels. The travel and tourism industry is the seventh highest contributor to GDP and has increased from 6.7% in 2013 to 9.4%, nearing developed market levels such as the UK's 10.5%. The market is expected by grow by 13% CAGR to $136 billion in 2021 [3]. The culture & tradition promotion is an integral part of tourism industry.

Mysore Dussehra stands at the intersection of culture, history, and spirituality, making it a compelling destination for cultural heritage tourism. Its competitiveness in the travel and tourism industry is a testament to the meticulous preservation of its cultural identity, the grandeur of its celebrations, and the concerted efforts of

stakeholders. As Mysore Dussehra continues to evolve, it not only attracts tourists but also sustains the rich cultural legacy that defines the celebration. The illustrious ten-day celebration in the heart of Karnataka, South India, transcends mere festivity – it is a journey into the cultural richness and historical tapestry of the region. The tourist view to experience the rich tapestry of past layers of Mysore Dussehra's with mythological, historical roots, architectural splendor of the Mysore Palace, Jumbo Savari and cultural extravaganza. The infrastructure, marketing, and stakeholder collaboration enhance the cultural heritage and examine its competitiveness in the dynamic realm of travel and tourism. Both traditional and digital, showcase the unique cultural offerings of Mysore Dussehra that attract the global audience.

## TRAVEL AND TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS (TTC)

Competitiveness is defined as an organization's or entity's capacity to design, produce, and deliver market offerings in a manner that makes them more appealing than those of competitors (Fernández et al., 2020; Kubickova & Martin, 2020). It involves an ongoing effort to achieve profitability consistently, typically surpassing the industry average (De Souza et al., 2019). Similarly, destination competitiveness pertains to a specific destination's ability to ensure sustainable development (Clara et al., 2019; Kubickova & Martin, 2020). More precisely, scholars argue that destination competitiveness involves the destination's capability to generate and provide value while maintaining the balance of available resources and securing its market position in comparison to competitors (Croes et al., 2020; Goffi et al., 2019).

According to Ritchie and Crouch (1993) characterize tourism destination competitiveness as the "capacity to increase tourism spending, continually draw in visitors by providing them with satisfying and memorable experiences, and to do so in a profitable manner, all while enhancing the well-being of destination residents and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generations." In a similar vein, Dupeyras and MacCallum (2013)

define tourism competitiveness as "the ability of a place to maximize its appeal for both residents and non-residents, offer high-quality, innovative, and attractive tourism services to consumers, and gain market shares domestically and globally, all while ensuring efficient and sustainable use of the available resources supporting tourism.

The Heath's (2003) model exhibits a house-like framework comprising four fundamental components. The "Foundations," which represent pivotal factors influencing competitiveness, encompass elements such as culture, history, climate, business environment, security and health, transportation and communication infrastructure, location, added value of the destination, and amenities and services for tourists, among other considerations.

Competitiveness is defined as an organization or entity's proficiency in designing, producing, and delivering market offerings to surpass competitors, making their products more appealing (Fernández et al., 2020; Kubickova & Martin, 2020). The pursuit of competitiveness involves striving for continuous profitability, typically exceeding industry averages (De Souza et al., 2019). Similarly, destination competitiveness pertains to a specific destination's capacity for ensuring sustainable development (Clara et al., 2019; Kubickova & Martin, 2020). Scholars argue that destination competitiveness involves the destination's ability to generate and deliver value while responsibly managing available resources and maintaining its market position relative to competitors (Croes et al., 2020; Goffi et al., 2019). Consequently, this study aims to provide a cultural explanation of destination competitiveness and its interconnectedness with general competitiveness.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) calculates these indicators, pillars, and Travel and Tourism Competitiveness (TTC) values using datasets from international organizations, including but not limited to the United Nations Educational, World Bank, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the World Health Organization. Furthermore, the WEF gathers survey data from over 16,000 business executives and leaders to integrate into the evaluation of

TTC. These indicators, pillars, and factors have been formulated to assess TTCs and provide a comparative analysis of the travel and tourism standings across different countries.

## PERCEIVED GRATIFICATION

Perceived gratification in the context of user experience refers to an individual's mental state wherein the acquired information fulfills specific motives. The assessment of satisfaction occurs subsequent to the user's interaction with the information. For instance, in the context of a tourist evaluating a visit of the tourist place, the information presented on the website serves as an indicator of potential gratification. This preliminary assessment is termed perceived gratification. Subsequently, when the tourist physically visits and stays at the tourist place, the information gleaned from the website is corroborated, leading to actual gratification

Perceived Gratification: As elucidated by Lee, Hoe, Chua, and Ang (2009, p. 185), the realm of mobile content sharing has evolved beyond ubiquitous content creation to encompass context-aware, location-based information services. This advancement enables users to link digital content with tangible objects and real-world locations, facilitating the reception of customized content aligned with their specific requirements. Perceived gratification denotes a contentment that remains unconfirmed until an individual has personally encountered the associated experience. The tourism experience is defined as a multi-phase phenomenon related to the pre-trip planning experience, en-route (travel to the destination and return travel) experience, on-site experience, and after-trip reflection (Jennings & Weiler, 2006; Vitterso et al., 2000; Clawson & Knetsch, 1966; Killion, 1992; Laws, 1995).

## MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY:
## OBJECTIVES:

a)  To explore the perceived competitiveness in travel and tourism in post covid at Mysore.

b)  To identify the experience and gratification of tourist destinations

in Mysore.

c)  To analysis the ranking of travel and tourism competitiveness (TTC) in Mysore.

The research delves into an analysis of the competitiveness in travel and tourism within Mysore, specifically focusing on its cultural heritage tourism destination aspect during the Dussehra festival. Grounded in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index model developed by José Antonio Salinas Fernández (2019), the study identifies key pillars for evaluating tourism competitiveness, including "Air transport infrastructure," "Cultural resources and business travel," "ICT readiness," "Tourist service infrastructure," "International openness," "Natural resources," and "Ground and port infrastructure." In contrast, less pertinent factors related to the environmental impact, such as "Business environment," "Health and hygiene," "Human resources and labor market," and "Safety and security," are considered less influential. Additionally, aspects affecting the development of the travel and tourism sector, like "Environmental sustainability," "Prioritization of travel & tourism," and "Price competitiveness," are deemed less significant in this context according to José Antonio Salinas Fernández et al. (2019).

The study specifically focuses on Mysore to fulfill its objectives, aiming to understand the perception of tourists in the post-COVID period of 2023. The assessment of the competitiveness of tourism destinations in Mysore revolves around the identified key pillars. Employing a survey method with Likert scales, structured questionnaires were distributed to collect a sample of 230 responses. However, only 174 responses were gathered, consisting predominantly of travel couples and their friends who possess purchasing power. The survey period extended into the post-Mysore Dussehra 2023, specifically during the first week of November. The collected data is divided into two parts, encompassing demographics, perceived destination competitiveness, and gratification ranking. This selective sampling approach and focused survey timeline aim to provide insights into the specific context of Mysore's tourism

landscape.

## DATA ANALYSIS:

By identifying the pillars exerting the most significant influence on determining the tourism competitiveness of the top 80 countries attracting international tourists, published by the author (José Antonio Salinas Fernández et al, 2019). Our study motivates and confines to India (Mysore) out of nine top south east countries and analysis will focus on the classification of these countries based on the synthetic index of tourism competitiveness (TTCI-DP2) and aggregate data across major geographical regions.



**Source:** José Antonio Salinas Fernández et al, 2019, * No are in thousands.

The table presented above displays these countries, arranged in order from the greatest to the least distance from a hypothetical country wherein all partial indicators linked to various pillars or dimensions of tourism competitiveness assume the minimum value, resulting in a DP2 synthetic index of zero. The majority of international tourist are attracted to Singapore (12,051.93), followed by Malaysia (25,721.25), Thailand (29,923.19), Indonesia (10,406.76), Philippines (5360.68), Vietnam (7943.6), India (8027.13), Laopor (3543.33) and minimum in Cambodia (4775.230.

## Table 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GENERAL TRAVEL BEHAVIOR OF THE RESPONDENTS:

| Sl.no | Questions |
|---|---|
| 1 | Gender: Male: 89 (51.14%) Female: 85 (48.85%), N=174 |

| 2 | Indians Tourist: 108 (62.06%) | Male: 59 (54.62%) (of Indian Tourist) | Female: 49 (45.37%) (of Indian Tourist) |
| | International Tourist: 66 (37.93%) | Male:35 (53.03%)(of International Tourist) | Female:31(46.96%) (of International Tourist |
| 3 | Age: | N = 172 | |
| | 18-20 | 24 | (13.95%) |
| | 20-30 | 56 | (32.55%) |
| | 30-40 | 37 | (21.51%) |
| | 40-50 | 25 | (14.79%) |
| | 50-60 | 22 | (12.79%) |
| | 60 above | 08 | (04.65%) |
| 4 | Material Status: | N=173 | |
| | Un-married Couples | 45 | (26.01%) |
| | Married Couples | 120 | (69.36%) |
| | LG Partner (Live in relationship) | 08 | (04.62%) |
| 5 | Income Level: | N=174 | |
| | 10,000 – 50,000 | 07 | (04.02%) |
| | 51,000 – 1lakh | 10 | (05.74%) |
| | 1lakh – 1.5 lakh | 26 | (14.94%) |
| | 1.5 -2 lakh | 11 | (06.32%) |
| | 2 lakh -3 lakh | 33 | (18.96%) |
| | 3 lakh -5 lakh | 48 | (27.58%) |
| | 5 lakh above | 39 | (22.41%) |
| 6 | Education: | N=174 | |
| | Below 12th | 43 | (24.71%) |
| | Under Graduate | 74 | (42.52%) |
| | Post Graduate | 32 | (18.39%) |
| | Post Graduate above | 11 | (06.32%) |
| | Others | 14 | (08.04%) |

| 7 | Traveling Nature: | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Group/Family | 103 | (59.19%) |
| | Couples/Friends | 71 | (40.80%) |

**From the table-1** : According to the data presented in Table 1, the majority of respondents identified as male, constituting 51.14%, while females represented 48.85% of the participants. Further examination within the gender category revealed that 54.62% of males and 45.37% of females were Indian tourists. In terms of international tourists, 53.03% were recorded as opposed to 46.96%. The age group of 20-30 accounted for 32.55% of the respondents, with a significant portion (69.36%) being married couples. Regarding income distribution, 27.58% fell within the 3-5 lakh income group. In terms of educational qualifications, 42.52% held undergraduate degrees. Additionally, 59.19% of respondents indicated that they were traveling in groups or with family. A minority of respondents fell into the age group above 60, constituting 4.65%, and 4.62% identified as being in a Live-in Relationship (LG Partner) under the marital status category. Only 4.02% fell into the specified income group, 6.32% had attained post-graduate qualifications, and 40.80% of the tourist travelers were journeying with couples and friends.
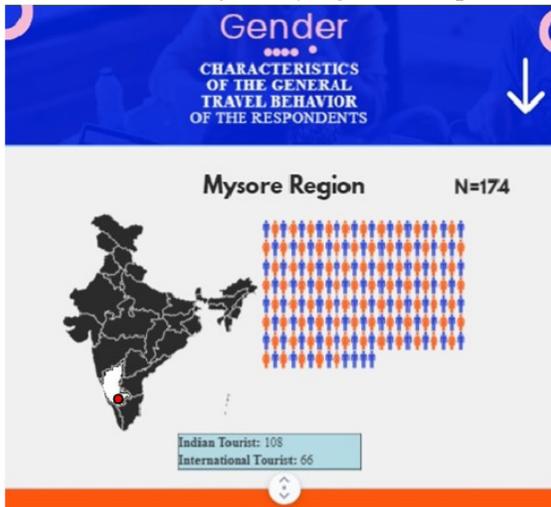
## Table 2: MYSORE TOURISM: PERCEIVED DESTINATIONS COMPETITIVENESS

| Sl.No | Tourist Experience Factors | Low | Medium | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Cultural resources and business travel | 0.114943 | 0.33908 | 0.545977 |
| 2 | Air transport infrastructure | 0.109195 | 0.41954 | 0.471264 |
| 3 | Ground and port infrastructure | 0.103448 | 0.304598 | 0.591954 |
| 4 | Natural resources | 0.08046 | 0.252874 | 0.666667 |
| 5 | Tourist service infrastructure | 0.109195 | 0.327586 | 0.563218 |
| 6 | International openness | 0.252874 | 0.218391 | 0.528736 |
| 7 | Safety and security | 0.12069 | 0.264368 | 0.614943 |
| 8 | ICT readiness | 0.109195 | 0.172414 | 0.718391 |
| 9 | Human resources and labor market | 0.195402 | 0.275862 | 0.528736 |
| 10 | Prioritization of travel & tourism | 0.022989 | 0.304598 | 0.672414 |
| 11 | Price competitiveness | 0.051724 | 0.367816 | 0.58046 |
| 12 | Business environment | 0.045977 | 0.224138 | 0.729885 |
| 13 | Environmental sustainability | 0.166667 | 0.321839 | 0.511494 |
| 14 | Health and hygiene | 0.126437 | 0.402299 | 0.471264 |
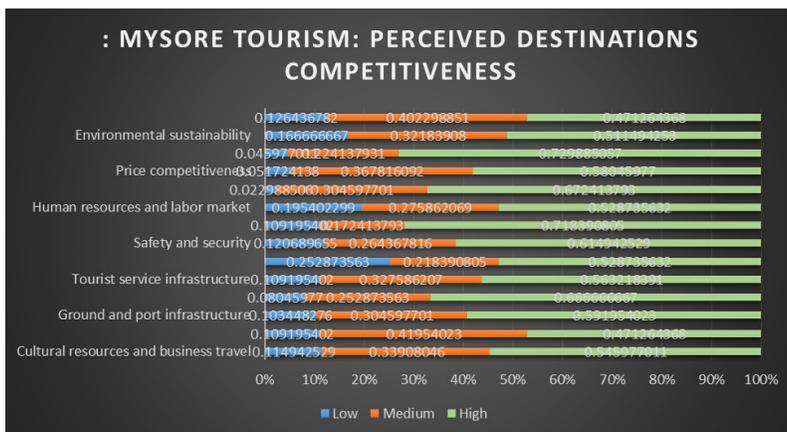


**Table 2.1:** This data analysis provides valuable insights into the nuanced perceptions of tourists regarding various factors that contribute to their overall experience. Across all factors, this data analysis offers a nuanced understanding of how tourists perceive various aspects of their experience, allowing for a comprehensive

evaluation of the distribution and variability of responses across the Low, Medium, and High categories. Cultural resources and business travel, Ground and port infrastructure and ICT are perceived as High by a majority of respondents, suggesting a significant emphasis on these factors for a positive tourist experience. International openness and HR and Labor market show a balanced distribution, indicating moderate importance across all three levels. Factors such as Natural resources and Business environment have a substantial percentage categorized as High, suggesting their notable impact on a positive tourist experience. Prioritization of travel and tourism stands out as a factor where the majority of respondents perceive it as High, emphasizing the prioritization of travel in the destination's overall strategy. Air transport infrastructure, Safety and security and Health and hygiene show a more distributed pattern across Low, Medium, and High, indicating a mixed perception among respondents regarding their impact on tourist experiences. The distribution across Low, Medium, and High levels allows for a more granular understanding of the importance attached to each factor in the context of tourism.

### Table 3: RANKING: GRATIFICATION AND ATTRACTIVENESS
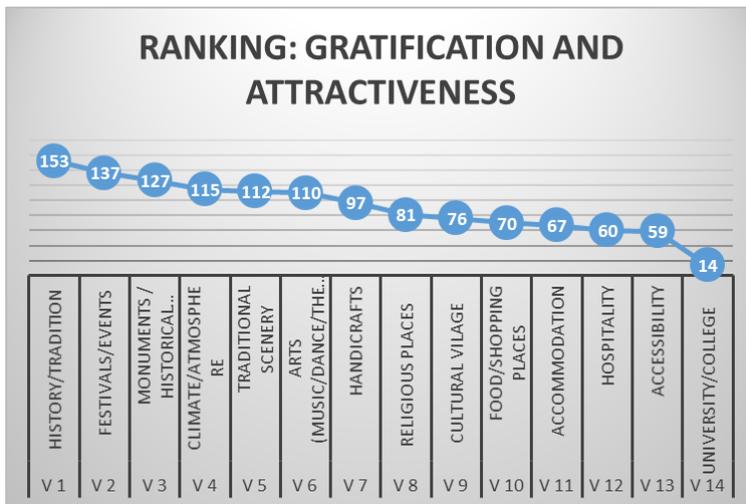
**From table 3:** The presented data reflects the respondents' preferences and perceptions concerning various aspects of a destination, categorized into different variables (V). These variables are evaluated based on the number of responses associated with each category. The following is a summary of the data analysis: V1 History/Tradition (153) this category received the highest number of responses, indicating a significant interest among respondents in the historical and traditional aspects of the destination. Followed by, V2: Festivals and events (137), Festivals and events also garnered considerable attention, suggesting that respondents value cultural celebrations and communal activities when selecting a destination. V3: Monuments / Historical buildings /Architecture Museums/ Galleries (127) the appreciation for historical landmarks, architecture, and cultural institutions is evident, with a substantial number of responses in this category. V4: Climate/Atmosphere (115) the climate and overall atmosphere of the destination are considered important by a noteworthy portion of respondents, emphasizing the role of weather and ambiance in travel decision-making. V5: Traditional scenery (112) Respondents express a significant interest in destinations offering traditional and scenic landscapes, showcasing an appreciation for cultural aesthetics. V 6: Arts (music/dance/theater, 110) The arts, including music, dance, and theater, hold importance for a considerable number of respondents, indicating an inclination towards cultural and artistic experiences. Followed by Handicrafts (97), Handicrafts contribute to the appeal of a destination for a substantial number of respondents, highlighting the significance of local craftsmanship in the overall travel experience. Religious places (81) Respondents show interest in visiting religious sites, emphasizing the cultural and spiritual dimensions of their travel preferences, Cultural village (76) Cultural villages are recognized as a noteworthy aspect, suggesting that respondents value immersive cultural experiences offered by such settings., Food/Shopping Places(70) Culinary and shopping experiences contribute significantly to destination preferences, with respondents expressing interest in the gastronomic and retail

offerings., Accommodation (67) options play a role in travel decisions, with respondents considering the quality and variety of places to stay., Hospitality(60), Accessibility(59),Only (14) minimum respondents ranked they less consider to visit University/ College while travelling.

## CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into tourists' nuanced perceptions across various factors influencing their overall experience. It provides a detailed understanding of how tourists perceive different aspects, facilitating a comprehensive assessment of response distribution across Low, Medium, and High categories. Key factors such as Cultural resources and business travel, Ground and port infrastructure, and ICT are predominantly deemed High, signifying their considerable importance for a positive tourist experience. The prioritization of travel and tourism emerges as a standout factor, with a majority perceiving it as High, highlighting its strategic importance in the destination's overall strategy. This nuanced distribution across Low, Medium, and High levels enhances our understanding of the varying importance attached to each factor in the tourism context. The presented encapsulates respondents' ranking preferences and gratification perceptions regarding diverse aspects of a destination, categorized into different variables (V). This evaluation is based on the number of responses associated with each category, revealing a summary of the data analysis. Notably, emphasizing respondents' inclination towards cultural, aesthetic, and artistic experiences. The summary of respondents' preferences concerning various destination aspects further underlines the significance of historical, cultural, and aesthetic elements, as well as the appeal of local craftsmanship and spiritual dimensions in travel decision-making.

# References:

1.  World Tourism Organization Noel Healy1 and Sandra Carvao2 1 Department of Geography, Salem State University, Salem, USA 2 UNWTO, Madrid, Spain.

2.  https://www.unwto.org/tourism-and-culture

3.  https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/_qs/documents/8090/How_Does_India_Travel_.pdf

4.  Sinibaldi, Elena, Parente, Antonio. 2020. UNESCO's tangible and intangible cultural heritage: Sustainable development perspectives. Pravovedenie 64 (1): 47–56.

5.  Abreu-Novais, M., Ruhanen, L., & Arcodia, C. (2015). Destination competitiveness: What weknow,whatweknowbutshouldn'tandwhatwedon'tknowbutshould.Current Issues inTourism,19(6),1–21.

6.  De Souza, J., Mendes-Filho, L., & Buhalis, D. (2019). Evaluating the effectiveness of tourist advertising to improve the competitiveness of destinations. Tourism Economics. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354816619846748

7.  Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(1). https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014 Hofstede. (2019). National culture: The 6 dimensions of national culture. Retrieved 25.11.19 from: https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/national-culture/.

8.  McKercher, B. (2020). Cultural tourism market: A perspective paper. Tourism Review (in press) https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-03-2019-0096.

9.  New Indian Express. (2018). Brand Odisha push fails to attract tourists. Retrieved 15.02.19 from https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/2018/may/16/brand-odi sha-push-fails-to-attract-tourists-1815216.html.

10. Segre, S. (2019). Bauman and contemporary sociology: A critical analysis. Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews. https://doi.org/10.1177/0094306118815500ee Shoval, N., & Birenboim, A. (2019). Customization and augmentation of experiences through mobile technologies: A paradigm shift in the analysis of destination competitiveness. Tourism Economics, 25(5), 661–669.

11. Tracey, B., & Swart, M. P. N. (2020). Training and development research in tourism and hospitality: A perspective paper. Tourism review. https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-06-2019- 0206 (in press).

12. World Economic Forum. (2019). The travel & tourism competitiveness report 2019-travel and tourism at a tipping point. Retrieved 12.12.19 from: http://www3.weforum.org/ docs/WEF_TTCR_2019.pdf.