

Study of the Profile of Chinese Outbound Tourists: An Emerging Segment in the Buddhist Sites of Uttar Pradesh

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Tourism plays an important role in contributing to cultural exchange and sustainable development. Tourism may increase recognition of the importance of respecting cultural diversity and developing an identity as a world citizen. Consumer can play a major role in the transformation of societies towards sustainability. Tourism is heterogeneous in nature, made up of many different types of traveler, seeking a wide range of tourism products. Tourist demand depends on the availability of time and money, on images, perceptions and attitudes. This paper has aimed to give demography's, motivations and behaviors of Chinese tourists visiting the Buddhist sites of Uttar Pradesh. The results of the analysis for the tourist's profile can be used by actors of tourism in the area, who are interested in marketing, planning and development of tourism in this promising sector. Most Chinese who visit these sites in Uttar Pradesh come here for paying homage to Lord Buddha since as their religion is Buddhism or they visit the places as pilgrims. It is essential then to compare religious tourism and pilgrimage before venturing on the profile studies.

Religious tourism

Religious tourism is a significant and rapidly growing segment within the tourism industry. It is sometimes referred to as faith tourism, faith-based travel, or any other religious denomination linked with the words 'travel' or 'tourism'. However, regardless of the name, the inference is that this is a form of tourism that is driven by a given faith. As a sector, religious tourism is not well researched and documented. Few reliable statistics are available regarding its size and value within the tourism sector as a whole, mainly because only a few countries measure tourist arrivals using a classification that refers to 'religion' or 'pilgrimage'. Consequently, most religious tourists are combined with 'other leisure' visitors, with most European countries classifying international inbound tourists into three purpose-of-visit groups: leisure/holiday; other leisure; and business/conference. There are some exceptions to this, mainly in destinations where religious tourism is highly popular such as Saudi Arabia and Israel. In Saudi Arabia, religious tourism is the most significant type of tourism, and consequently the authorities measure it as a clearly defined activity. Another

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common problem with the measurement of religious tourism relates to the inconsistent definition of the segment. Many statistics quoted by destinations and appearing in publications do not clearly identify whether they include only international religious tourists (ie those travelling from one country to another) or domestic religious tourists (ie those travelling to destinations within the same country in which they live) also. This probably generates the greatest misunderstandings when attempting to measure the volume and value of the sector.

Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage is a journey to one's religious sacred land and is thus an act performed out of religious devotion. The individual who engages in such a religious journey is called a pilgrim (Pavicic et al., 2007; Rotherham, 2007; Vukonic, 1996). Pilgrimage is one of the oldest forms of tourism and is an integral component of the tourist industry. Pilgrimage is a journey made by a pilgrim, who travels from place to place, usually journeying a long distance and to a sacred place as an act of devotion (Onions, 1983). Harvey (2000) describes religion as structured, orderly, socially sanctioned ways of reaching out for what people want most. Cohen (1992) raises important ideas, in particular noting relationships between pilgrim and tourist as travellers. Religious tourism - including pilgrimage - is embedded within a complex of heritage tourism and mass tourism activities and the interrelationships are complex.

Buddhism as a religion

The Buddhist cultural heritage has a long and special history that dates back more than 2,500 years and actually unites most of South, South-East and East Asia. The influence of Buddhism can be seen cross all Asian countries in terms of history and culture. Buddhism is a religion, which arose in and around ancient Magadha, India (Bihar), and is based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama (born in Lumbini, Nepal), who is known as the Buddha (literally the Enlightened One or Awakened One). It is a philosophy encompassing a variety of traditions, beliefs, and practices largely based on teachings attributed to Lord Buddha. There are two major branches of Buddhism: Theravada ("The School of the Elders") and Mahayana ("The Great Vehicle"). 1. Theravada has following in Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka, and Mahayana in west, north and later east throughout East Asia. 2. Initially, Buddhism remained one of the many small sects in India. The main breakthrough came when King Asoka (ca. 270-232 BCE) converted to Buddhism. He organized the spreading of Buddhism throughout India, but also beyond, most importantly to Sri Lanka.

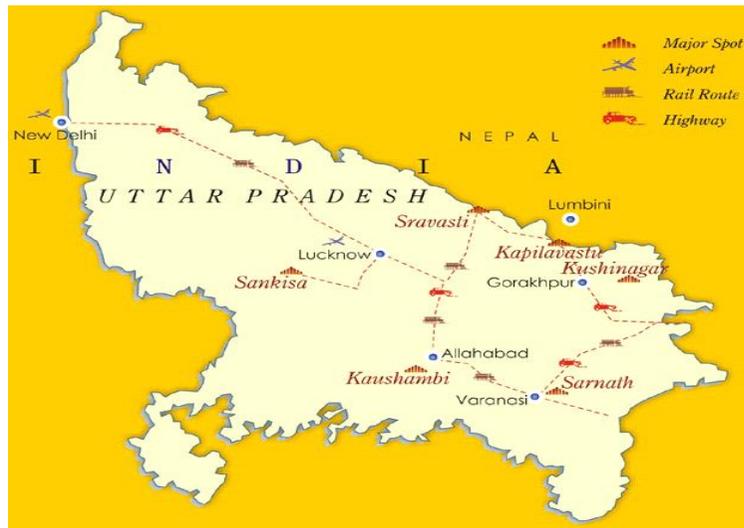
There are several Buddhist destinations all across India which is important from pilgrimage perspective. The four holy places associated with Gautam Buddha in India are - Bodhgaya, where he attained enlightenment; Sarnath, near Varanasi, where he preached his first sermon and Kushinagar, near Gorakhpur, where he achieved Mahanirvana.

At the core of Buddha's teaching are the Four Noble Truths. They are: (1) Life from birth to death is suffering; (2) Craving or desire leads to renewed existence and is the cause of suffering; (3) Craving or desire must be impeded to stop suffering; (4) Enlightenment can be reached by following the Path. It is the desire for self-satisfaction, self-existence and self-advancement that create pain and lead people to the eternal Wheel of Life and Death, from which they will never escape. Human beings are urged to seek emancipation and enlightenment in Buddhism, the superpower, in order to be saved.

Buddhism pilgrimage in uttar pradesh

A pilgrimage route of immense significance to the world's 500 million Buddhists, the circuit attracts religious and secular visitors alike interested in following the Buddha's footsteps across four locations that are now historical heritage sites. Despite the spiritual and cultural importance of the circuit, tourism infrastructure in these destinations remains

relatively undeveloped. The circuit has yet to become a key economic driver for the surrounding areas, which remain some of the poorest in India.



Kushinagar

Located about 53 km from Gorakhpur, the place is famed for its association with Lord Buddha who is believed to have attained 'Maharparinivana'- the highest stage of salvation. Although Lord Buddha is known to have preached his last sermon at Kushinagar in 543 B.C. and the city kept flourishing till about 12th century A.D., it was only in 1861 that extensive excavations at the site led to the resurfacing of the main stupas related to Buddha. Main existing tourist attractions in and around the place are:

- a) **Ramabhar Stupa:** This large stupa, estimated to be about 50 feet tall, is famed as the site where Lord Buddha was cremated.
- b) **Mahanirvana Temple:** This temple features a six meters long statue of Buddha in a reclining position and the statue is a representation of Buddha in his last hours.
- c) **Mathakuar Temple:** Located about 400 yards from the Nirvana stupa, this temple houses a black stone image of the Buddha and has inscriptions dating back to 10th-11th century.
- d) **Watt Thai Temple:** One of the most popular and visited tourist attractions in Kushinagar area, the Watt Thai temple is modeled on the Thai Buddhist architectural style.
- e) **Japanese Temple:** This temple attracts tourists for, among other reasons, its 'Ashta Dhatu' or 'Eight Metals' statue of Lord Buddha. This statue was initially brought from Japan in dismantled form and was reassembled in Kushinagar.
- f) **Chinese Temple:** This temple has a predominantly Chinese architectural style and is designed similar to temples found in China.

Kapilvastu

Commonly referred to as Piprahawa, Kapilvastu is a place with immense historical significance. The place was formerly the capital of the Shakya Dynasty where Lord Buddha was born. The place holds significant value for Buddhist pilgrims and has several Stupas. The archaeological excavations have revealed stone caskets containing relics believed to be that of Buddha. Main existing tourist attraction includes:

- a) **Stupa Complex:** This is the main archaeological site which was discovered during excavations in 1973-74. It is here that old inscriptions were found with references to 'Deoputra' (Kanishka of the Kushana Dynasty), a great patron of Buddhism who built the biggest Vihara at Kapilvastu and renovated the main stupa here. Additionally, this complex is an ASI protected monument.
- b) **Palace Site:** Another attraction of this place is the site of a palace believed to be the ruins of the palace of King Shuddhodhan, the father of Prince Gautam.

Sarnath

Located 10 km from the holy town of Varanasi, Sarnath is one of the most important and revered places that form part of the Buddhist Circuit. It is believed that after attaining enlightenment in Bodh Gaya, Lord Buddha came to Sarnath to deliver his first sermon more than 2500 years ago. Among the number of stupas that were erected here, one of the more famous ones was erected by Emperor Ashoka between the 3rd century BC and the 11th century AD. Major sites include:

- a) **Chaukhandi Stupa:** Believed to have been originally constructed during Emperor Ashoka's reign, the stupa is the first monument encountered after entering Sarnath. The Stupa is primarily made of a mound of bricks and an Octagonal tower surrounds the square edifice.
- b) **Dhamek Stupa:** An imposing conical structure, 28 mts in diameter at the base and 43.6 mts in height, the Dhamek stupa signifies the place where Buddha delivered his first teachings in the form of the Four Noble Truths. The stupa was constructed by Emperor Ashoka.
- c) **Mulagandha Kuti Vihar:** A modern temple erected by the Mahabodhi Society, the Mulagandha Kuti Vihar is a modern version of the older temple that lies in ruins today. A storehouse of Buddhist literature, the temple also has frescoes by Kosetsu Nosu, Japan's foremost painter.
- d) **Sarnath Museum:** There are numerous sculptures comprising numerous Buddha and Bodhisattva images spread over Sarnath. The Museum houses some of the finest specimens of Buddhist art adjacent to the site.
- e) **Ashoka Pillar:** Ashoka Pillar is one of the most famous and most visited tourist spot in India. It consists of a canopy representing an inverted bell-shaped lotus flower.

Sankisa

The town of Sankisa is located about 47 km from Farrukhabad, and is a place of tremendous importance for the Buddhists. It is believed to be the place where Buddha descended after giving sermons to his mother in heaven. There are ruins of many stupas and monasteries here from ancient. The place is also known for a temple dedicated to Bisari Devi and an excavated Ashokan ephant pillar. There is also colossal Shiva Linga here. A large fair is held at Sankisa in the month of Shravana (July-August) every year.

The Buddha Temple: This temple has become the most important attraction of Sankisa, as it is believed to be at the spot where Lord Buddha was supposed to have descended from heaven. The temple houses a statue of Buddha.

The Temple of Maya Devi: This temple is dedicated to the mother of Gautam Buddha who is regarded as the goddess of fertility by the people here. The walls of the temple bear Buddhist sculptures dating back to Mahayana age.

The Ruins of Ashokan Elephant Pillar: Another attraction of Sankisa is the ruins of the Ashokan Elephant Pillar. The uniqueness of the pillar is the presence of elephants instead of

lions. The elephant is believed to be symbolic of the white elephant of which the mother of Buddha had a vision at the time of conception of Siddhartha (Lord Buddha).

Sravasti

Sravasti (ancient Savatthi), which was the capital of ancient Kosala Mahajanapada, is an important Buddhist destination. Founded by the mythological King Sravasta, Lord Buddha and his disciples stayed and preached for 24 years in Sravasti. This ancient city has several age-old stupas, majestic monasteries and several temples. Some of the existing tourist attractions include:

a) Sahet

Sahet is a place of Buddhist importance and spread over 32 acres of land. The place is believed to be one where Anathapindak, a wealthy merchant, constructed the Jetavana Vihara. The Vihara is a holy place where the Buddha stayed for 24 years in Sravasti

b) Mahet

Located near Sahet, Mahet was once a fortified city whose ruins today include two Stupas.

c) Jain Temple

Another tourist attraction consists of the ruins of a Jain temple, the birthplace of the third Jain Tirthankara, Swayambunatha, which dates back to the medieval era and is a sacred place for the Jains.

d) Monasteries

There are a number of monasteries near Jetavana Vihara such as Sri Lankan, Chinese, Myanmar and Thai monasteries and temples, which perform meditation and other Buddhist practices. Nearby these monasteries lies another tourist attraction consisting of a huge World Peace Bell that was established with the help of the Japanese.

Importance of profiling tourists

One aim of the tourism is to raise the productivity and competitiveness of tourist destinations, private businesses and community organizations, in order to enhance tourist experience. Research into Tourist Profile and Satisfaction Level makes it possible to monitor how tourists perceive the quality of destination services and also serves as the basis for various actions to be taken, both at a government level as well as for private companies to improve various services offered to tourists.

The results of the Tourist Profile and Satisfaction Level can also be used as guidelines on which to base the development of promotional strategies in specific areas such as hospitality, hygiene and safety. They can be used as a reference point to refine the communications infrastructure improvement plans at destinations. The Tourist Profile and Satisfaction Level is based on an interview conducted at the tourist destination, based on a homogenous methodology for the sampling and collection of questionnaires which generate standardized satisfaction indexes by topic. It is important to realize that the management of tourism will be ineffective without an understanding of the way in which tourism consumers make decisions and act in relation to the consumption of tourism products.

Objective of the study

We need to study a tourist profile to be aware of:

- The needs, purchase motives and decision process associated with consumption of tourism
- The impact of the different effects of various promotional tactics.
- The possible perception of risk for tourism purchases

- The different market segments based upon purchase behavior
- How managers can improve their chance of marketing success

Further Tourism destinations appeal to a wide variety of different types of visitors who are often categorised by:

- Demographics
- Attitudes and values
- Type of holiday
- Duration of trip
- Purpose of travel
- Life stage

It is therefore essential that a tourism destination clearly understands their current and desired visitor markets to influence how a destination is developed, managed and marketed. Identifying and understanding a destination's visitor markets involves consideration of the following points:

- It is important to understand not only *who the current visitor markets are* but the *preferred future target market/s* for that destination as highlighted in the Grampians region where market research identified the opportunity to reposition the destination in order to attract the preferred target market;
- The development of a strategic direction for a destination should take into consideration *both the current and future visitor markets* to ensure that both short-term and long-term sustainability goals are achievable; Social trend analysis can be used to identify future visitor demands and potential new target markets for a destination.
- Market segmentation is important in identifying different characteristics and demands of visitor markets and to assist in the identification of a destination's *preferred target market*
- *Market segmentation* can be undertaken based on visitor *demographics, behaviours, preferences and interests*. The aim of better understanding a destination's current and future visitors is to get the best match between the aspirations and expectations of visitors, the host community's aspirations and the potential of the destination. For this reason *psychographic segmentation* (attitudes and values) is becoming increasingly used to find the perfect match.
- Identification of the preferred target market of a destination should be based on an assessment of the market segments against the *destination image, stakeholder vision and goals, product and experience offering*;
- Understanding the destination target market's *needs, behaviours, characteristics, preferences and decision-making processes* is important in developing appropriate strategies for destination development and marketing.

Methodology of research for the study

In realizing this study, a methodology mainly dependent on secondary data was used. A series of secondary sources, such reports from international organizations and other publications were provided through using electronic libraries and other sources like Internet and reports of important national and international organizations. Analysis of Consumers Profile is an Important Tool for Tourism Development. The questionnaire asked to tourists

provided general information on tourist market profile, considering the object of visiting the destination, the information source used.

Justification of Sample Selection: (Chinese Tourists)

The reason for choosing Chinese tourists visiting Uttar Pradesh is inspired by its sheer Buddhist population and the recent positive liberalised changes in its political scenario due to which Chinese are now allowed to travel outside their country.

In the 10 years from 1997 to 2007, the number of Chinese outbound visitors grew from 5.5 million to 40.9 million, averaging more than 20 percent growth each year. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2001) forecast, China will generate 100 million arrivals, ranking fourth in terms of outbound market size in the world in 2020. This will represent 6.4 percent of the global outbound tourism volume. UNWTO revised the forecast in 2007 bringing forward the timeframe by five years, indicating that China will reach the fourth position in 2015 (Tourism Forum 2007, 2007). With an average annual GDP growth of 7-8 percent in the past decade, Chinese have become much better-off and demand more leisure travel as part of their lifestyle. The growth potential of China's outbound tourism has been an area of great interest among academics and the industry in many destination countries.

About 160,000 Chinese tourists visited India in 2013. In 2009, 96,997 Chinese tourists made their way to India, accounting for 1.9 percent of total foreign arrivals in the country. About 41.5 percent of Chinese tourists came to India for leisure, holidays and recreation while 50.4 percent came for business and other professional reasons. A total of 4.1 percent were visiting friends and relatives, according to the Tourism Ministry of India.

Although China came in at 12th among the tourist generating markets for India, it is the fastest growing market with a compound annual growth rate of 16 percent. "The tourism market between China and India is developing really fast and we find the growth potential to be huge," quotes Zhuge Hong, general manager of Sanya Holiday Travel India Ltd. The Hainan-based Chinese tourism agency recently opened its first sales office in New Delhi, aiming to take advantage of the booming tourism between the two biggest Asian countries. Industry analysts predict that by 2020, the number of Chinese outbound travelers will grow to 100 million globally, making China the world's fourth largest outbound tourist market and the largest incoming tourism market. This explains why the Chinese market has become one of the most coveted, especially after India's inbound tourism was hit hard by the global financial crisis as the number of tourists from the US and Europe dropped sharply.

The Indian government opened its tourism office in Beijing in 2008, aiming to woo more Chinese tourists. With the opening of the office, people-to-people exchanges started to pick up, which has helped to heighten awareness on both sides. The Indian tourism office has a dedicated team of agents who have been trained to highlight India's cultural and tourist attractions. As a result, Chinese traffic is picking up for resorts, yoga and religious tourism.

As a close regional neighbour, with an estimated population of 1.3bn, China represents a valuable potential tourist market. However, in 2007 Chinese tourists comprised only 1.4% of total tourist arrivals to India, or 14th in the ranking of arrivals by country. As part of the drive to increase tourism from China, the Ministry of Tourism is running several programmes, including a familiarisation programme for Chinese travel agents and tour operators, and the introduction of tailor-made tours and websites for Chinese tourists. This initiative is likely to provide a valuable boost for the Indian tourism industry, by strengthening links between the two countries. The table below presents the total Chinese tourists visits to India.

Table 1: showing the International Tourist arrivals from China

Country of Nationality	No. of Arrivals		
	2010	2011	2012
China (Main)	119530	142218	168952
China (Taiwan)	23915	25916	31639

Source: Annual Report 2013, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India

M.V. Babu, assistant director of the India Tourism Office in New Delhi, said that the tourism office has stepped up an advertising campaign for the Chinese market termed "Walk with the Buddha" to promote sites connected to the life of the religious figurehead. "Buddhism has been the major focus of our promotional efforts to tap into the rising demand of Chinese tourists," Babu said. Zhuge, of Sanya Holiday Travel India Ltd, said that more airline flights will be launched between major Chinese and Indian cities which could substantially increase the bilateral tourism volume. The governments on both sides have also vowed to make the visa application process easier for each other in order to boost the number of travel groups. The possibility thus of attracting the Chinese to visit Uttar Pradesh is immense and as already shown earlier was the fact that Uttar Pradesh is the cradle of Buddhism. The data given below suggests that the Chinese tourists visiting Uttar Pradesh is extremely low.

Table 2: Tourist arrival in key Buddhist Destinations of Uttar Pradesh

Buddhist Destinations of Uttar Pradesh	Tourist Arrivals			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Sarnath	201725	215911	241891	284510
Kushinagar	13328	14128	26349	41638
Kapilvastu (Piprahawa)	18888	17566	18253	18483
Sravasti	28642	75428	75553	80757
Sankisa	5000	6000	195	210

Source: Uttar Pradesh Tourism Report

Notwithstanding the huge Chinese market it becomes extremely pertinent to profile these visitors so that future endeavours to increase the market size can become a reality.

Results of the study

The profile studies of the Chinese tourists first begin with the information on the significance of Buddhism for the people of China to understand why they should/would be motivated to visit India. The key factors shaping the trends and patterns of outbound international tourist flow from China explain the outbound tourism phenomenon in China. The result also outlines the socio-economic environment, cultural backdrop, state politics and other macro-issues. By understanding how these factors interact and affect China's

outbound tourism, the study will contribute to the understanding of outbound tourism as a whole, to India and to Uttar Pradesh.

Buddhism in china

Buddhism originated in India and took root in China during the Tang Dynasty 1,500 years ago.

Buddhism inspired men to undertake journeys, either in quest of the teaching at its source or, on the other hand, to carry the word to those suffering in ignorance abroad. The most famous of all was probably Hsuan-tsang (or Sanzang in pinyin), a Chinese monk who left Chang-an (known as Xian today) in 629 and spent more than a decade in Central Asia and India. When he returned to Chang-an in 645, he is said to have come home with 657 Buddhist books, 150 relics, and many images and pictures; he is usually portrayed carrying all this on a huge baggage rack strapped to his back. (Meskill 1973: 96).

In Hsuan-tsang's book "A record of the western regions", he gave a detailed account of conditions in India and its adjacent regions. His pilgrimage captured the imagination of many Chinese for centuries, and was developed as a novel called "Journey to the West" in the 1570s, and became one of the four classical novels of Chinese literature.

In an influential paper on pilgrimage, Turner says that there are two major types of motivations in the Chinese Buddhist pilgrimage, "... *hsu yuan* and *huan yuan*. *Hsu yuan* is the making of a wish before the God with the vow that, if the wish should come to be realised, one would come back to thank, worship and offer sacrifices.

Huan yuan is worship and sacrifice to the God as an expression of gratitude after the wish had come true" (V. Turner, 1973, pp. 197-198). Both these then become the reasons that motivate people to engage in Buddhist pilgrimage.

Chinese people pay respect to and worship multiple supreme powers; they always seek help from supernatural powers and *hsu yuan* is a form of rite, a process to pray for blessings and for being free from disasters, sufferings, to pray for getting something from any divinity or

In a Buddhist context, there are probably different terms to differentiate between the two groups of visitors - those who are in search for enlightenment versus those who are simply asking for favours from divinities. According to Venerable Master Hsingyun, "To believe in Buddhism, one must progress from beseeching, believing in and worshipping the Buddha to studying Buddhism and doing as the Buddha did to become a Buddha, which is the highest faith of all" (Hsingyun, 2005, p. 79).

The meaning of undertaking a pilgrimage for a Buddhist practitioner - as opposed to a mere worshipper - is to put all of Buddha's teaching into practice. Along the pilgrimage journey, one should maintain a mindset of being always in a serene state, with no sorrows and fears, by realising that emptiness is the real nature of everything. When one truly understands and applies this mindset along the journey, there is indeed no favour that one needs to ask for. A pilgrimage is then a process to awaken and practice inner Bodhi-wisdom (*prajna* 般若), the Buddha's intelligence, in order to achieve spiritual contentment and Buddhist enlightenment.

In such a Buddhist context, those who undertake a journey to a Buddhist place with the motivation of asking for a favour that concerns this lifetime's needs are still at the elementary level of learning Buddhism and perhaps they are called something else other than pilgrims (Hsingyun, 2005, 2006; Karmapa, 2008; Too, 2003).

The following literature review shows the huge interest among different countries and regions beginning 2001.

Behaviour of Chinese Tourists

Most studies on China's outbound tourism can be found only recently in and after 1999, when Chinese tourists become more noticeable and there is mounting interest in the potentially huge Chinese market. Mok & DeFranco (1999) developed a conceptual framework of dominant Chinese cultural values that influence the behavior of Chinese travellers. The six cultural values are: "respect for authority", "inter-dependence", "group orientation", "face", "harmony", and "external attribution". The authors suggest that understanding the cultural values and how they shape preferences and expectations is the first step of any business that wants a share of the Chinese market. The authors come up with the following eight hypotheses concerning Chinese tourist behaviour:

- Chinese tourists are likely to engage in shopping activities on their trips;
- Chinese consumers are more likely to be influenced by opinion leaders than westerners;
- Chinese consumers are more responsive to relationship marketing techniques;
- Chinese consumers are likely to be more consumer conscious than westerners;
- Tourism services consumption decisions for individual Chinese are the result of group decisions;
- Chinese consumers are less likely to complain to tourism suppliers about their dissatisfactions than westerners;
- Chinese are likely to be less responsive to advertisements that are openly critical of competitors and their products and services;
- Chinese consumers are sensitive to products and services that concern numbers.

Wang & Sheldon (1995) provided one of the earliest studies on China's outbound travel market, examining its determinants, trends and characteristics. The study found that the booming economy and the resultant emergence of a upper-middle class have made outbound travel financially accessible to larger sections of the population. The liberalization of policies and regulations from both China and its destination countries also pave the way for the growth. The authors analysed the economic and political factors underlying the growth, and concluded that if the expansion was to continue, given that no major economic or political shifts occur, certain strategies need to put in place...

First, as long as demand exceeds supply, it is recommended that more travel agencies handling outbound travel be created. Second, it would be advisable to streamline application procedures, including the possibility of paying for the package in China instead of in the destination by a relative. This would enable those who have no relatives in the destination area to travel. Third, further liberalization of restrictions for leisure travel is recommended. This would include cooperation with destination countries and regions on entry policies to facilitate travelling. Countries such as the US have been reticent to remove restrictions because of the concern that travellers may stay in the destination rather than returning home. (p. 52)

Zhang & Heung (2001) in their study of the emergence of the mainland Chinese outbound travel market suggested that the development follows the classic "ripple effect". The effect of outbound travel over time becomes more geographically distant, like dropping a pebble into a pond. The first ripple is the growth in domestic tourism. The second ripple is

outbound travel to Hong Kong as a proximate destination. The third ripple effect comprises intra-Asia travel. The fourth wave refers to travel beyond Asia. The authors suggest that in promoting a particular destination to China, it is important to highlight the destination features that would appeal to the Chinese visitors. The authors see the growth potential of outbound tourism in China under two conditions...

It is likely that the outbound travel market will continue to grow, provided that economic growth in China continues to raise people's incomes, particularly those of the middle class. A second provision is that the Chinese government does not continue artificially to limit outbound travel. If these two conditions are met, and they are certainly not guaranteed over the short term, there is no reason why China's outbound travellers would not become a major regional and global force, shaping the travel industry market in the next decade and beyond. (p. 12)

Arlt (2006) published the first ever book on China's outbound tourism. It discusses China's outbound tourism from the following angles: economic and social development, government policies, profile of Chinese travellers, motivations of Chinese travellers, marketing by National Tourism Organizations in China and the future development of China's outbound tourism.

China has a relatively short history of about 20 years of recorded outbound travel. The growth of outbound travel became significant in 1997, when China issued the "Temporary Regulations on Chinese Citizen Self-paid Outbound Leisure Travel", which signified the beginning of leisure travel. The temporary regulation was later superseded by the "Regulations on Chinese Citizen Outbound Leisure Travel" in 2002. "Self-paid" was removed from the title of the regulation, probably because by then it was commonly understood that Chinese citizens paid for their own travelling and no longer relied on travel expenses being paid by someone outside of the country. In order to better recognize the trends and patterns of outbound travel, it is important to understand the historical, socio-economic and political context of the tourism development. The geographical context of China's outbound tourism is also important because the economic and social situation in such a large country is uneven. Some regions are more advanced in terms of economic growth and travel experience, whereas other regions are less developed.

China's outbound international tourist flows in recent years will be compared with situations in Japan, Korea and Taiwan in the era when travel bans in the respective countries were lifted. Similarities and differences in the outbound travel patterns and travel policy in these countries will be discussed. The existence, trend and effect of suppressed travel among the four source markets will be compared and investigated. It seems possible that there is suppressed demand for outbound travel as the result of regulations on such travel and administrative obstacles to outbound travellers. How was the pent-up demand in China different to that in Japan, Korea and Taiwan?

Socio-economic environment of china

The factors in the socio-economic environment that are considered to have an effect on China's outbound tourism are: household income, education level, trade balance, leisure time, foreign exchange control, inbound tourism, use of credit cards, accession to World Trade Organization, restructuring of state-owned enterprises, Chinese populations outside of China, Beijing Olympic Games 2008 and Shanghai World Expo 2010. The above factors are discussed in this section.

Household income

Both urban and rural household income has increased steadily since the "open-door" policy was implemented in China. Per capita annual net income of rural households increased from RMB 709 in 1991 by four fold to RMB 3,255 in 2005. Per capita annual disposable income of urban households increased from RMB 1,701 in 1991 by more than six

fold to RMB 10,493 in 2005. As a result of the faster income growth in urban areas, the gap between urban and rural household income is widening. In 2005, urban household incomes were on average 3.2 times larger than those of rural households.

Education level

The level of education in China has improved steadily in the past decade. As an indication of education levels, the percentage of the population enrolled in higher education increased from 0.24 percent in 1995 to 1.19 percent in 2005. With an increasing level of education, more and more people in China will want to travel outside of the country for leisure purposes, for personal fulfilment or for economic reasons.

More leisure time

The “holiday economy” concept has been identified by the government as a means to boost the national economy, and the domestic tourism industry was the first to benefit from the implementation of more holidays. There is now more free time available in China, which makes leisure travel outside of the country feasible. China has been practicing a five-day week since 1993, and Golden Week holidays were introduced in 1999. The three Golden Week holidays are: Spring Festival in February; Labour Day in May and National Day in October. Together with Saturdays and Sundays, there are 117 days of public holiday in a year. Chinese citizens are encouraged to take their annual leave during the Golden Week holidays, making the three weeks the peak travel time, both for domestic and outbound tourism.

Relaxation of foreign exchange controls

The control on the amount of cash allowed to be carried by a Chinese traveller leaving the country has been relaxed from time to time. The current limit on foreign currency is US\$ 5,000 cash, and the limit on Chinese currency is RMB 20,000 cash (equivalent to about US\$ 2,500). The relaxation of foreign exchange controls is further exacerbated by the fact that renminbi are now freely convertible to Hong Kong dollars in Hong Kong and Macau, and most shops catering to Chinese tourists in Hong Kong accept renminbi. This phenomenon of renminbi being freely convertible in Hong Kong and Macau is significant because 70 percent of the departures have either Hong Kong or Macau as the destination.

Conclusion

It is evident from the above observations that if Uttar Pradesh has to optimise the opportunities presented by the Chinese market it needs to integrate all those elements that would encourage this market to visit the State. The destinations should be developed keeping in mind the profile of the Chinese outbound market. The destinations especially the Buddhist sites could be a major pull for Chinese pilgrims and religious tourists.

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