

## **“Walking” A Form of Sustainable Tourism: Perspectives of Locals and Visitors in Delhi And NCR Region”**

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**Abstract :** Many cities in India are walk able as this leads to more sustainable and prosperous for the communities. Walking friendly environment greatly cater for leisure and tourism as it has become an integral part of tourist experience .People are walking in downtown areas towards heritage monuments. In spite of walking being a beneficial option there are several barriers which pose a hindrance in people adopting it to explore the destinations. To determine the reasons for walking and perception of the quality of infrastructure for walking through the cities.

*This study emphasizes on walking to make it as sustainable form of tourism in Delhi and NCR region. In this competitive environment, tourism can be a competitive supplier to meet the visitor's expectations with a positive contribution towards the Delhi and NCR region.*

**Keywords:** *Walking, Sustainability, Visitor's expectations*

### **I. Introduction**

Exploring Delhi, and engaging with the capital city of India can be achieved by walking. In Delhi, travellers can experience city life of high intensity through walking. From temples to hawkers, cows and bicycles, Delhi is a city that enchants and entertains all at once .The national capital is a total treat for travellers. The hub of leisure travellers and business tourists, Delhi is the perfect destination. Delhi is the perfect amalgamation of the ancient historic legacy and modern day culture in Delhi. While Old Delhi offers a ride down the colonial times with its edifices and architecture, New Delhi captivates the heart of travellers with its paced up life and modern lifestyle. Few famous attraction points are Red Fort, Jama Masjid, Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb, Rashtrapati Bhawan, Mughal Garden, Lotus Temple and Akshardham Temple. In addition, a co-ordination committee comprising various industry segments is currently being set up by Delhi government under the Yamuna action plan. Besides the cleaning up of the river in New Delhi, exercise parks and cycling space will also be allotted besides the river.

In ancient time Delhi was the capital of several Mughal, Rajput, and Afghan empire. Due to which, Delhi has a unique history of blending itself with various different cultures .Museums in Delhi showcase the artefact's and scriptures from various areas. People from different parts of the country are attracted towards Delhi leading to the establishment of different cultural pockets. Cultural life of Delhi is highly influenced by the all incoming influences whether they are people, culture or languages. As Delhi is bound by four states namely Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, that's why Delhi has a high influence on varied culture. All major festivals are celebrated in cultural gatherings can be experienced through walking only.

The monuments of Delhi symbolises a rich and varied heritage can greatly influence the experiences those who walk, not only of residents, but also of tourists or travellers, who greatly occupy the cities worldwide. The majority of tourists who come to Delhi, chiefly to get a sight of these astonishing and royal heritage sites and want to. The Mughal reign gets a major credit for the construction of these splendid and eye catching royal monuments. Cities are both big emotive and receptive centres (Ashworth, Page, 2011), which offer a large variety of products to its visitors, namely activities and attractiveness of urban spaces.

### **II. Objectives**

To choose walking as an option to explore the various places, the tourists/people are facing so many obstacles .For this, some of the objectives are set to evaluate:

1. To understand the perspectives of Locals and Visitors towards “walking” as a component of tourism in Delhi and NCR region
2. To explore the degree of friendliness of the city infrastructure and environment towards the walking.

### **III. Literature Review**

Tourism is changing, not only in India but in the whole world. Furthermore, people are looking for legitimacy and greening and are focussed on well being and enhancing their quality life. As the health of people is decreasing, people are moving towards the various activities which can give enthusiasm to the life of the well being. Walking, in all its forms, is fast becoming one of the most popular activities that people undertake while on holiday or in the early mornings, this is all set to grow [1]. More people/tourists want to go for walking, as they are more health conscious today than ever before and care about natural and sustainable environments. Walkers just don't walk, they also want to explore various types of places. Walking tourism of all sorts is set to grow as the walkers are very independent and the internet is one of the main sources of information, especially in booking accommodation. Health outcomes may be a factor in modal choice decisions but is not necessarily the primary motivation for undertaking the trip.

Alfonzo's 'feasibility' and 'accessibility', the affordance an environment and an individual's personal circumstances present for a walking trip (Bell et al., 2001, p.66; Alfonso, 2005). Therefore consideration should be given to intentions and perceived barriers, both physical and social, when considering how walk able an individual perceives their environment. Space Syntax's (transportation) walk ability index developed for Transport for London shows the environmental variables which were identified as most important for walk ability (Stonor et al., 2003).

Alfonzo's (2005) hierarchy of walking needs, to create a comprehensive model for a main street setting includes the accessibility and feasibility affordances of a trip consistent with the perceived behavioural control as a determinant of behaviour.

Mehta (2008) combines the perceptual element of Ewing and Handy's (2009) conceptual model with an ecological model of walking behaviour, which incorporates Alfonso's (2005) hierarchy of walking needs, to create a comprehensive model for a main street setting. Mehta (2008) includes the accessibility and feasibility affordances of a trip consistent with the perceived behavioural control as a determinant of behaviour.

Delhi, a city of culture & heritage, people want to explore as it is a major part of golden triangle (Delhi, Agra and Jaipur). The weather conditions also support the tourists to walk during the winter season i.e. December to March. Seasons play a major role in increasing tourism of any city or place. In the period of May to August, the temperature exceed 43 degrees, during that time people explore only in the early morning or in the late night through walking. Delhi gave a soothing feeling to the people who walks, but after the heavy strike of air pollution in the national capital and its nearby regions people have a fear to experience the city culture through walking. After November 2017, walking conditions are highly affected by the weather conditions contributing to the dangerous smog are not expected to significantly improve to the end of the December, resulting in light winds and no rainfall. These weather conditions have also decreased the tourist's arrival in Delhi

Further research needs to be undertaken into the relationship between weather conditions and particular activities, especially walking.

### **IV. Research Methodology**

A specific questionnaire was designed for the purpose of this study. Survey of the tourists was done in the Delhi and NCR region (Gurugram) of India. Tourists/People gave the responses related to the places they explored while walking in these regions. The tourists were selected on the basis of random sampling. The sample size selected was of 200 participants. Out of which only 186 participants responded properly. The great majority was collected only from the Delhi region the main criterion used to select the respondents who walk at any certain destinations they visited or any of the purpose in Delhi or NCR region. The tourists gave the responses they explored while walking were Chandani Chowk, Sarojini Nagar, Lajpat nagar, Connaught Place, Palika Bazaar etc (especially for shopping), historical places, IARI campus, religious places etc.

A structured questionnaire was designed for the purpose of achieving the research objectives.

The first part of the questionnaire comprised a series of questions that were set to obtain general information about respondents regarding gender, age group, educational level, place of residence and reasons for staying in the cities. The second part of the questionnaire comprises of the questions was framed according to the main criteria that should be in the consideration when one tries to measure the perspectives of the perspectives of Locals and Visitors towards "walking" as a component of tourism in Delhi and NCR region Data collection was done recently in the month of February, 2018.

Descriptive statistic analysis was used to measure the perspectives of tourists towards walking. This measurement scale consisted of 15 items reflecting the perspectives of the tourists towards walking in Delhi and NCR region. Respondents were asked to provide answers on each item that was measured by a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree.

**V. Results And Discussions**

The general finding from the study suggests that dominant way of mobility in Delhi is walking for all the respondents. Tourists and visitors walk mainly to explore the city to experience the culture and heritage. The predominant reason for the residents and employees of Delhi is recreation and they walk in the morning for the health purpose.

Analysis of responses on dominant modes of transport in urban areas, shows that by far the highest average scalar value was related to walking, in spite of significant differences.

**Table1:** Average values of modes of transport which respondents of different categories use (One way Anova was performed)

Subject Status	N	Walking	Own car	Taxi	Motor cycle	Bicycle	Public Transport
Visitor	26	5.16	3.62	3.19	3.45	1.72	2.28
Tourist	44	5.23	3.54	4.18	3.05	1.58	3.87
Resident	97	5.26	3.23	3.23	3.78	1.37	3.42
Employee	19	5.73	3.18	3.77	3.21	1.23	4.56
Total	186						
F		0.487	5.908*	4.465*	4.562*	0.658	2.839
Sig.		0.692	0.001	0.005	0.443	0.322	0.008

**Independent sample t –test on Perception of the respondents towards walking**

The perception of the respondents were measured on the basis of the various factors related to emotional appeal, stability, self efficacy of the tourist destination, Delhi. The analysis was by applying t test in the framed questionnaire by the authors.

**Table 2:** Independent Sample t-test on Perception of Respondents towards Walking in Delhi and NCR Region

Group Statistics						
	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Value	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>Paths are not proper to walk.</b>	Visitor	26	3.78	1.070	1.057	.292**
	Tourist	44	3.58	1.216		
	Resident	97	3.63	1.314		
	Employee	19	3.27	1.008		
<b>There are fair number of benches and places where you can take rest while walking.</b>	Visitor	26	4.00	.943	1.499	.136**
	Tourist	44	3.73	1.197		
	Resident	97	3.28	1.235		
	Employee	19	3.41	.926		
<b>There are many trees and greenery in the town.</b>	Visitor	26	4.32	.956	.183	.855**
	Tourist	44	4.29	.780		
	Resident	97	4.21	1.486		
	Employee	19	4.23	.625		
<b>Paths for cyclists and pedestrians are separated .</b>	Visitor	26	4.10	1.016	2.132	.035*
	Tourist	44	3.71	1.106		
	Resident	97	3.83	1.776		
	Employee	19	4.02	.257		
<b>Walking paths are clean and maintained.</b>	Visitor	26	3.93	1.147	1.054	.294**
	Tourist	44	4.12	.953		
	Resident	97	4.36	1.965		
	Employee	19	3.08	.773		
<b>Paths are wide enough so that people/tourists can easily walk</b>	Visitor	26	2.19	.967	1.010	.314**
	Tourist	44	2.35	.850		
	Resident	97	2.04	1.339		
	Employee	19	2.77	.628		
<b>The crossings ,road signs and other signs are clear</b>	Visitor	26	4.04	1.195	1.354	.178**
	Tourist	44	3.77	1.134		
	Resident	97	2.26	1.289		
	Employee	19	2.45	.878		
<b>Walking allows to do something good for health</b>	Visitor	26	3.86	1.058	1.613	.109**
	Tourist	44	3.56	1.152		
	Resident	97	3.78	1.789		
	Employee	19	3.93	.336		

I only walk along the main streets in town.	Visitor	26	3.81	1.126	.187	.852**
	Tourist	44	3.77	1.107		
	Resident	97	4.32	1.732		
	Employee	19	4.33	.882		
Walking along the streets of Delhi and NCR region is a pleasant activity.	Visitor	26	3.73	1.146	1.313	.191**
	Tourist	44	3.45	1.291		
	Resident	97	3.67	1.986		
	Employee	19	3.78	.992		
Paths are well connected to the areas where there is something to see, or experience.	Visitor	26	3.88	.985	1.421	.157**
	Tourist	44	3.62	1.134		
	Resident	97	3.43	1.992		
	Employee	19	3.02	.986		
Paths are well connected to the areas where there is something to see, or experience.	Visitor	26	3.22	.886	2.414	.165**
	Tourist	44	3.23	1.765		
	Resident	97	4.23	1.998		
	Employee	19	2.61	.542		
I feel safe while walking in Delhi and NCR region.	Visitor	26	3.78	.863	1.434	.286**
	Tourist	44	3.27	1.119		
	Resident	97	4.89	.787		
	Employee	19	3.21	.329		
The behavior of local people is helping and friendly.	Visitor	26	3.45	.883	.196	.147**
	Tourist	44	3.78	.787		
	Resident	97	3.55	1.369		
	Employee	19	3.01	.662		
To explore the local markets, I would prefer to walk in Delhi and NCR region.	Visitor	26	4.26	.885	2.687	.168**
	Tourist	44	4.87	.997		
	Resident	97	4.98	1.998		
	Employee	19	4.01	.552		

df=137

\*\* no significant difference at .05 level ( $p > .05$ )

\*significant difference at .05 level ( $p < .05$ )

The above analysis shows that people mostly walk for shopping in all the regions of the Delhi and NCR region. It was logical that people walk for the concern of the health issue and to enjoy the greenery in the city. But the greenery across the path is not sufficient, for this people prefer to walk around the parks only where they can easily walk because of the sustainable environment. If tourists feel comfortable and secure in a city, the chances are they would spread a word about the city and would most probably repeat their visit, but here in Delhi people don't feel safe during the night hours.

To explore the sites, paths are well connected and also showing the signage and symbols at all the crossing, which creates a positive perception among the respondents towards Delhi.

## VI. Conclusion

Creating sustainable environment for walking requires an in depth study of the features of the walking and the need, abilities and wishes of the people living or visiting in Delhi. The various items selected in Table 1, does not successfully examine awareness of the preferable mode of visiting Delhi. Table 2, helps in generalising about the various items related to walking so that the attractiveness of the destinations/sites can be increased. To increase the walking as a predominant factor in Delhi, the paths should be redesigned so that there would be an ease in walking .Some places are restructured in Delhi to increase the sustainability of the people and the tourists. In the near future, the level of satisfaction will be explored with the environment for walking and how qualitatively it is affecting the tourist's experience in Delhi

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