

A STUDY ON THE FACTORS INFLUENCING TOURISTS' ACCOMMODATION DECISIONS IN OOTY

C.ARUNPRABA ^{1*}, Dr. P. AMUDHA ²,

¹Research Scholar, Post Graduate Department of Commerce RVS College of Arts and Science, Sulur, Coimbatore – 641402.

²Head and Associate professor, RVS College of Arts and Science, Sulur, Coimbatore- 641402.

*Corresponding Author

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Abstract: The study aimed to examine the key factors influencing tourists' accommodation decisions in Ooty and to assess the relative importance of these factors in shaping preferences. Primary data were collected from a sample of 200 tourists using structured questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods, including percentage analysis and one-way ANOVA, were employed to analyze the data. The results revealed that accommodation preferences were significantly influenced by travel companions, with tourists traveling with partners or in groups placing greater emphasis on factors such as safety, price, and amenities compared to those traveling alone or with friends. Resorts emerged as the most preferred type of accommodation, while family trips were the predominant purpose of visit. Online reviews, personal recommendations, and direct hotel bookings were identified as the most influential sources of information. The study also highlighted the role of service quality, location, and promotional efforts in decision-making. The results suggest that accommodation providers in Ooty should focus on enhancing safety, improving service standards, offering competitive pricing, and leveraging digital marketing strategies to attract and satisfy tourists.

Keywords: Accommodation preferences, Ooty, Safety, Service quality, Travel behaviour, Decision-making.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a vital sector that contributes significantly to the economic growth and development of a region. Accommodation forms a critical component of the tourism industry, as it directly impacts the overall travel experience and satisfaction of tourists. In popular destinations like Ooty, the diversity of lodging options, ranging from hotels and resorts to homestays and guesthouses, requires a thorough understanding of the factors that guide tourists' accommodation choices. These factors often include price, location, amenities, service quality, safety, and the influence of online reviews and recommendations. Understanding these determinants can help stakeholders design strategies that enhance guest experiences and foster loyalty.

Tourists' accommodation decisions are influenced by multiple dimensions, including personal preferences, travel purpose, duration of stay, and travel companions. Previous studies have highlighted the growing role of digital marketing, social media, and online travel platforms in shaping tourists' perceptions and choices. Safety, comfort, and cost-effectiveness remain key considerations, especially in destinations that attract diverse tourist segments, such as families, business travelers, and honeymooners. Therefore, analyzing the relative importance of these factors provides valuable insights for tourism managers and service providers to meet evolving expectations.

This study aimed to examine the critical factors influencing tourists' accommodation decisions in Ooty, with a focus on identifying the most preferred types of lodging and understanding the role of safety, amenities,

and marketing efforts in decision-making. By evaluating tourists' preferences and behaviours, the research seeks to offer practical recommendations to accommodation providers and tourism stakeholders to improve service quality, enhance satisfaction, and promote sustainable growth in the region. The findings are expected to contribute to both academic knowledge and practical applications in tourism management.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Tourists' accommodation choices play a crucial role in shaping their overall travel experience, yet many accommodation providers in Ooty face challenges in understanding the specific factors that influence these decisions. Despite the growing diversity of lodging options, there is limited research on how price, safety, amenities, service quality, and promotional efforts collectively impact tourists' preferences. Additionally, the influence of travel companions, duration of stay, and sources of information on accommodation selection remains underexplored. This gap makes it difficult for hotels, resorts, homestays, and guesthouses to tailor their services effectively, attract the right target segments, and enhance customer satisfaction. Therefore, this study seeks to identify and analyze the key factors affecting tourists' accommodation decisions in Ooty, providing actionable insights for tourism stakeholders to improve service quality, marketing strategies, and overall competitiveness in the region.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on examining the factors influencing tourists' accommodation decisions in Ooty, including aspects such as price, safety, amenities, service quality,

location, and promotional efforts. It explores tourists' preferences related to type of accommodation, duration of stay, travel companions, and sources of information. The research emphasizes the perspectives of tourists who visit Ooty for leisure, business, family trips, or honeymoon purposes. The findings are intended to provide practical insights for accommodation providers, including hotels, resorts, homestays, and guesthouses, enabling them to enhance service quality, improve customer satisfaction, and develop targeted marketing strategies. The study is geographically limited to Ooty and focuses on current trends and behaviours of tourists during their visits, without extending to long-term tourism patterns or other regions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Garg, A. (2015) explored tourists' emotional experiences during holidays and examined how perceptions of travel risks affect destination choices. Using quantitative methods and structured questionnaires, data were collected from respondents across various countries including Malaysia, India, China, Indonesia, Australia, and France. The results indicated that natural disasters, health crises (e.g., SARS, swine flu), and terrorism were seen as major risks. Safety, peace, and political stability were crucial factors in destination selection. Tourists' perceptions were shaped largely by media, word of mouth, guidebooks, and social contacts, leading many to prefer nearby or familiar destinations to minimize perceived risks.

Sirakaya, E., Sheppard, A. G., & McLellan, R. W. (1997) analyzed how perceived safety influences potential travelers' likelihood of visiting a destination. Using quantitative data from college students. The results showed that perceptions of safety significantly impacted travel intentions. It suggested that when destinations are viewed as unsafe, strategic marketing and policy efforts are needed to improve their image. Conversely, highlighting already safe destinations had limited effect. The study emphasized the role of safety perceptions in shaping consumer travel behaviour.

Shaikh, A. S., Dars, A., Memon, K., & Kazi, A. G. (2020) examined how travel decision-making, media, perceived risk, terrorism, and safety & security affect travel choices. Using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire and quantitative analysis (descriptive statistics and regression). The results revealed that media coverage, safety, and terrorism significantly influenced travel decisions. Terrorism was a major concern, and negative media portrayals further heightened perceived risks. Although perceived risk was higher than actual risk, it had less direct impact on decision-making compared to other factors.

Chili, N. S. (2018) investigated how perceptions of safety and security influence tourists' travel decisions in the context of township tourism in post-1994 South

Africa. Data were gathered through interviews and focus groups to explore tourists' feelings of uncertainty and doubt. Results revealed that safety concerns directly affected tourist behavior and indirectly impacted tourism demand. Township tourism demand was higher when safety measures were evident, while lack of protection led to reduced tourist interest.

Karl, M. (2018) analyzed the impact of perceived risk and uncertainty on destination choice among German tourists. Using an integrated research approach and survey data, it examined how individual characteristics (age, education, travel frequency) shaped risk attitudes. Educated and frequent travelers were more risk-tolerant, whereas older tourists were more risk-averse. The results indicated that destination preferences varied based on risk attitudes, final choices tended to converge, suggesting that practical considerations ultimately outweighed initial risk perceptions.

Afren (2024) analysed the risk and uncertainty on tourists' destination choices, focusing on individual characteristics and destination attributes. Surveys of German tourists were used to collect self-assessments of risk and uncertainty. An integrated research approach revealed that higher education levels and frequent travel correlated with risk-affinity, whereas older tourists were more risk-averse. The results indicated that variations in risk attitudes influencing early destination preferences, final choices among tourists remained similar across groups.

Deb, Nafi, and Valeri (2024) measured the intention to use digital marketing strategies to enhance tourism business performance and examined digital transformation applications in the post-pandemic "new normal." Drawing on 270 valid responses and prior literature, the researchers developed a conceptual framework tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Results indicated that perceived usefulness, ease of use, social media marketing, and business performance significantly influenced the adoption of digital marketing in tourism. The study concluded that tourism service providers' intentions positively affected tourists' satisfaction and the integration of digital marketing strategies.

Mallick (2023) assessed the potential of digital platforms in enhancing marketing initiatives within the tourism industry. The research reviewed existing literature, case studies, and industry data to evaluate marketing trends, audience segments, and strategies such as influencer marketing, content marketing, and social media advertising. Using both quantitative and qualitative analyses, the study found that digital platforms substantially improved marketing reach and engagement. The results showed that social media and influencer marketing were identified as the most effective tools for attracting audiences. However, challenges such as low digital literacy, budget

limitations, and inconsistent content strategies impeded effectiveness. The study concluded that overcoming these barriers could strengthen tourism businesses' competitiveness and marketing outcomes.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ **To examine** the key factors that influence tourists' accommodation preferences.
- ❖ **To evaluate the influence of safety, price and security considerations on tourists' decision-making.**
- ❖ To determine the role of promotional and digital marketing efforts in shaping tourists' accommodation decisions.
- ❖ To measure the level of satisfaction among tourists regarding their accommodation experiences in Ooty.
- ❖ To provide suggestions for accommodation providers to enhance customer satisfaction and attract more tourists.

AMATERIAL AND METHODS

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Type: Descriptive

Data Collection

Primary Data: Primary data for the study was collected directly from tourists visiting Ooty through a

structured questionnaire, focusing on accommodation preferences, factors influencing decisions, and sources of information.

Secondary Data: Secondary data comprised relevant literature, research articles, reports, and statistics from published journals, tourism boards, government publications, and online resources related to tourism trends and tourist behaviour.

Sampling Type: Convenience Sampling

Sampling Universe: The sampling universe includes all tourists visiting Ooty who have stayed or are potential users of hotels, resorts, homestays, and guesthouses.

Sample Size: 200

Statistical Tools Used: Percentage Analysis, Descriptive Statistics, One-Way ANOVA

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ The study was limited to tourists visiting Ooty and may not reflect the accommodation preferences of tourists in other destinations.
- ❖ The study did not explore in-depth qualitative insights, such as personal experiences or subjective perceptions of tourists.
- ❖ External factors like weather, local events, or transportation issues that could influence accommodation choices were not included.

RESULTS

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Demographic Variables of the Respondents

Demographic Variables	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	116	58.0
	Female	84	42.0
Age	25–30 years	44	22.0
	31–40 years	52	26.0
	41–50 years	56	28.0
	Above 50 years	48	24.0
Marital Status	Single	116	58.0
	Married	84	42.0
Educational Qualification	SSLC/HSLC	34	17.0
	Diploma	54	27.0
	UG	44	22.0
	PG	43	21.5
	Others	25	12.5
Occupation	Student	44	22.0
	Private/ Government Employee	50	25.0
	Business	34	17.0
	Self-employed	46	23.0
	Others	26	13.0
Monthly Income	Below Rs. 25,000	26	13.0
	Rs. 25,000-Rs. 50,000	77	38.5
	Rs. 50,000-Rs. 75,000	31	15.5
	Rs. 75,000-Rs. 1,00,000	42	21.0
	Above Rs. 1,00,000	24	12.0
	Total	200	100.0

In terms of age, 28% were between 41 and 50 years, 26% between 31 and 40 years, 24% above 50 years, and 22% between 25 and 30 years. 58% were single and 42% were married. Considering educational qualification, 17% had completed SSLC/HSLC, 27% held a diploma, 22% had an undergraduate degree, 21.5% possessed a postgraduate degree, and 12.5% reported other qualifications. In terms of occupation, 25% were private or government employees, 23% were self-employed, 22% were students, 17% were engaged in business, and 13% belonged to other categories. Regarding monthly income, 13% earned below ₹25,000, 38.5% earned between ₹25,000–₹50,000, 15.5% earned between ₹50,000–₹75,000, 21% earned between ₹75,000–₹1,00,000, and 12% earned above ₹1,00,000.

Sociographic Variables of the Respondents

Sociographic Variables	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Purpose of Visit	Leisure / Vacation	39	19.5
	Business	46	23.0
	Family Trip	51	25.5
	Honeymoon	43	21.5
	Others	21	10.5
Type of Accommodation Preferred	Hotel	23	11.5
	Resort	68	34.0
	Homestay	45	22.5
	Guesthouse	43	21.5
	Other	21	10.5
Duration of Stay	1–2 days	43	21.5
	2–3 days	34	17.0
	3–4 days	53	26.5
	4–5 days	44	22.0
	More than 5 days	26	13.0
Travel Companion	Alone	30	15.0
	Family	49	24.5
	Friends	37	18.5
	Partner	48	24.0
	Tour Group	36	18.0
Frequency of Travel	Rarely	39	19.5
	Once a year	58	29.0
	2–3 times a year	48	24.0
	More than 3 times a year	55	27.5
Mode of Booking	Online Travel Portal	36	18.0
	Direct Booking with Hotel	67	33.5
	Travel Agent	58	29.0
	Walk-in	39	19.5
Source of Information about Stay	Social Media	43	21.5
	Online Reviews / Travel Websites	34	17.0
	Friends / Family	53	26.5
	Advertisements	44	22.0
	Travel Agencies	26	13.0
	Total	200	100.0

In terms of the purpose of visit, 25.5% traveled for family trips, followed by business purposes (23.0%) and honeymoons (21.5%), 19.5% traveled for leisure or vacation, and 10.5% for other purposes. In terms of the type of accommodation preferred, 11.5% preferred hotels, 34% preferred resorts, 22.5% preferred homestays, 21.5% opted for guesthouses, and 10.5% selected other types of accommodation. 26.5% stayed for 3–4 days, 22% for 4–5 days, 21.5% for 1–2 days, 17% for 2–3 days, and 13% for more than 5 days.

Regarding travel companions, 24.5% traveled with family, 24% with a partner, 18.5% with friends, 18% as part of a tour group, and 15% traveled alone. In terms of frequency of travel, 19.5% traveled rarely, 29% traveled once a year, 24% traveled 2–3 times a year, and 27.5% traveled more than 3 times a year. 18% used online travel portals, 33.5% made direct bookings with hotels, 29% relied on travel agents, and 19.5% opted for walk-in bookings. Regarding sources of information about accommodations, 26.5% relied on friends or family, 22% on advertisements, 21.5% on social media, 17% on online reviews and travel websites, and 13% on travel agencies.

Descriptive Statistics for the Factors influencing Tourists' Accommodation Preferences in Ooty

Particulars	N	Mean	SD
I prefer accommodations that offer reasonable pricing.	200	3.06	1.346
Discounts or special offers influence my accommodation choice.	200	2.85	1.302
Cleanliness and maintenance influence my preference.	200	3.30	1.341
Quick and responsive service enhances my stay experience.	200	2.94	1.296
I avoid accommodations located in crowded or noisy areas.	200	3.02	1.282
I prefer accommodations that are centrally located within town.	200	2.95	1.342
Valid N (list wise)	200		

The above table indicates that the tourists disagree with discounts or special offers influence their accommodation choice (2.85), quick and responsive service enhances their stay experience (2.94) and preferring accommodations that are centrally located within town (2.95).

The Tourists agree with preferring accommodations that offer reasonable pricing (3.06), cleanliness and maintenance influence their preference (3.30) and avoiding accommodations located in crowded or noisy areas (3.02).

Descriptive Statistics for the Influence of Safety, Price, and Security Factors on Tourists' Accommodation Decision-Making in Ooty

Particulars	N	Mean	SD
I feel more confident choosing accommodations with visible safety measures.	200	2.90	1.274
I consider online reviews mentioning safety issues before booking.	200	2.89	1.324
I avoid staying in places located in areas that appear unsafe or isolated.	200	2.91	1.277
Security guards and surveillance increase my trust in a hotel or resort.	200	3.02	1.240
The reputation of an accommodation's safety record affects my decision.	200	2.79	1.283
I prefer accommodations that offer in-room safes or lockers for valuables.	200	3.02	1.305
Valid N (list wise)	200		

The above table indicates that the Tourists disagree with feeling more confident in choosing accommodations with visible safety measures (2.90), considering online reviews mentioning safety issues before booking (2.89), avoid staying in places located in areas that appear unsafe or isolated (2.91) and reputation of an accommodation's safety record affects their decision (2.79). The Tourists agree with Security guards and surveillance increase their trust in a hotel or resort (3.02) and preferring accommodations that offer in-room safes or lockers for valuables (3.02).

Descriptive Statistics for the Role of Promotional and Digital Marketing Efforts in Shaping Tourists' Accommodation Decisions

Particulars	N	Mean	SD
Online travel websites help me compare different accommodation options easily.	200	3.01	1.295
Positive reviews on travel portals increase my confidence in an accommodation.	200	2.86	1.306
Digital marketing campaigns help me discover new places to stay.	200	3.10	1.297
Promotional content helps me understand the amenities and services before booking.	200	3.00	1.328
Recommendations from friends and family on social media influence my choice.	200	2.96	1.320
Valid N (list wise)	200		

The above table indicates that the Tourists disagree with positive reviews on travel portals increase their confidence in an accommodation (2.86) and recommendations from friends and family on social media influence their choice (2.96). The Tourists agree with online travel websites help to compare different accommodation options (3.01) and digital marketing campaigns helped to discover new places to stay (3.10). The Tourists are neutral with promotional content which helps to understand the amenities and services before booking (3.00).

Descriptive Statistics for the Satisfaction among Tourists regarding their Accommodation Experiences in Ooty

Particulars	N	Mean	SD
I am satisfied with the overall accommodation experience during my stay in Ooty.	200	3.10	1.352
The cleanliness and hygiene standards of the accommodation were satisfactory.	200	2.96	1.267
The check-in and check-out processes were smooth and efficient.	200	2.89	1.291
The behaviour and professionalism of the staff were excellent.	200	2.87	1.240
I felt relaxed and comfortable throughout my time at the accommodation.	200	3.06	1.263

I would recommend this accommodation to other travelers visiting Ooty.	200	2.96	1.256
Valid N (list wise)	200		

The above table indicates that the tourists disagree with cleanliness and hygiene standards of the accommodation (2.96), hotel check-in and check-out processes were smooth and efficient (2.89), staff behaviour and professionalism were excellent (2.87) and recommending this accommodation to other travelers visiting Ooty (2.96). The Tourists agree with the overall accommodation experience during my stay in Ooty (3.10) and felt relaxed and comfortable throughout the accommodation (3.06).

Comparison between the Demographic Variables (Monthly Income) of the Respondents and Various Dimensions

Ho1: There is a substantial link between the demographic variables (monthly income) of the respondents and various dimensions.

Dimensions	Monthly Income	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Factors Influencing Tourists' Accommodation Preferences in Ooty	Below Rs. 25,000	26	3.12	0.563	0.953	0.434
	Rs. 25,000-Rs. 50,000	77	2.95	0.627		
	Rs. 50,000-Rs. 75,000	31	3.13	0.673		
	Rs. 75,000-Rs. 1,00,000	42	2.94	0.596		
	Above Rs. 1,00,000	24	3.11	0.562		
	Total	200	3.02	0.613		
Influence of Safety, Price, and Security Factors on Tourists' Accommodation Decision-Making in Ooty	Below Rs. 25,000	26	3.01	0.556	0.662	0.619
	Rs. 25,000-Rs. 50,000	77	2.89	0.534		
	Rs. 50,000-Rs. 75,000	31	2.81	0.505		
	Rs. 75,000-Rs. 1,00,000	42	2.95	0.644		
	Above Rs. 1,00,000	24	3.01	0.712		
	Total	200	2.92	0.579		
The Role of Promotional and Digital Marketing Efforts in Shaping Tourists' Accommodation Decisions	Below Rs. 25,000	26	3.07	0.657	0.472	0.756
	Rs. 25,000-Rs. 50,000	77	3.01	0.564		
	Rs. 50,000-Rs. 75,000	31	2.86	0.629		
	Rs. 75,000-Rs. 1,00,000	42	3.00	0.701		
	Above Rs. 1,00,000	24	2.98	0.629		
	Total	200	2.99	0.621		
Satisfaction among Tourists regarding their Accommodation Experiences in Ooty	Below Rs. 25,000	26	2.83	0.560	1.580	0.181
	Rs. 25,000-Rs. 50,000	77	3.04	0.546		
	Rs. 50,000-Rs. 75,000	31	2.80	0.560		
	Rs. 75,000-Rs. 1,00,000	42	3.05	0.601		
	Above Rs. 1,00,000	24	2.99	0.634		
	Total	200	2.97	0.576		

There is a substantial link between factors influencing tourists' accommodation preferences in Ooty (0.434), influence of safety, price, and security factors on tourists' accommodation decision-making in Ooty (0.619), the role of promotional and digital marketing efforts in shaping tourists' accommodation decisions (0.756), satisfaction among tourists regarding their accommodation experiences in Ooty (0.181) and the monthly income of the respondents.

Comparison between the Socio-graphic Variables (Travel Companion) of the Respondents and Various Dimensions

Ho2: There is a substantial link between the socio-graphic variables (travel companion) of the respondents and various dimensions.

Dimensions	Travel Companion	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Factors Influencing Tourists' Accommodation Preferences in Ooty	Alone	30	2.43	0.481	20.715	0.000
	Family	49	2.83	0.518		
	Friends	37	2.97	0.594		
	Partner	48	3.33	0.484		
	Tour Group	36	3.41	0.509		
	Total	200	3.02	0.613		
Influence of Safety, Price, and Security Factors on Tourists' Accommodation Decision-Making in Ooty	Alone	30	2.72	0.476	3.194	0.014
	Family	49	2.89	0.594		
	Friends	37	2.82	0.582		
	Partner	48	3.15	0.531		
	Tour Group	36	2.94	0.624		
	Total	200	2.92	0.579		
The Role of Promotional and	Alone	30	2.91	0.714	0.241	0.915

Digital Marketing Efforts in Shaping Tourists' Accommodation Decisions	Family	49	2.97	0.562		
	Friends	37	2.97	0.548		
	Partner	48	3.03	0.679		
	Tour Group	36	3.04	0.633		
	Total	200	2.99	0.621		
Satisfaction among Tourists regarding their Accommodation Experiences in Ooty	Alone	30	3.00	0.674	0.908	0.460
	Family	49	2.91	0.533		
	Friends	37	2.88	0.544		
	Partner	48	2.99	0.575		
	Tour Group	36	3.11	0.581		
	Total	200	2.97	0.576		

There is a substantial link between the role of promotional and digital marketing efforts in shaping tourists' accommodation decisions (0.915), satisfaction among tourists regarding their accommodation experiences in Ooty (0.460) and the travel companion of the respondents. There no substantial link between factors influencing tourists' accommodation preferences in Ooty (0.000), influence of safety, price, and security factors on tourists' accommodation decision-making in Ooty (0.014) and the travel companion of the respo

DISCUSSION

Factors Influencing Tourists' Accommodation Preferences in Ooty

Respondents traveling alone (2.43) disagreed that these factors influenced their accommodation choices. In contrast, those traveling with a partner (3.33) or a tour group (3.41) tended to agree, indicating that companions increase the perceived importance of accommodation factors.

Influence of Safety, Price, and Security Factors on Tourists' Accommodation Decision-Making in Ooty

Tourists traveling alone (2.72) or with friends (2.82) considered these factors less important, tending toward disagreement. Those traveling with family (2.89), a partner (3.15), or a tour group (2.94) rated these factors higher, showing that safety, price, and security are more influential when traveling with companions.

FINDINGS

Demographic Variables of the Respondents

Most of the respondents are male. Most of the respondents were aged 41–50 years. Most of the respondents were single. Most of the respondents completed diploma. Most of the respondents were employed in the private or government sector. Most of the respondents earned a monthly income between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 50,000.

Sociographic Variables of the Respondents

Most of the respondents visited ooty for a family trip. Most of the respondents preferred to stay in resorts. Most of the respondents stayed for 3–4 days. Most of the respondents traveled with their family. Most of the respondents traveled once a year. Most of the respondents booked their accommodation directly with the hotel. Most of the respondents received information about their stay from friends and family.

SUGGESTIONS

□ Accommodation providers should focus on enhancing safety and security measures, as these factors

strongly influence tourists' choice. Clear communication of these measures can increase tourists' confidence and preference.

□ Competitive pricing strategies can attract a wider range of tourists. Offering seasonal discounts or package deals may enhance booking rates.

□ Quality of amenities, such as Wi-Fi, cleanliness, and recreational facilities, should be prioritized. Tourists are more likely to choose accommodations that provide comfort and convenience.

□ Online reviews and ratings significantly impact tourists' decisions. Encouraging satisfied guests to leave positive feedback can boost reputation and bookings.

□ Digital marketing efforts, including social media promotion, should be strengthened. Engaging content can reach a larger audience and influence accommodation choices.

□ Providing personalized services, such as customized packages or special arrangements, can enhance guest satisfaction. Personalization helps in building loyalty among repeat tourists.

□ Location plays a key role in accommodation selection. Establishments near popular tourist attractions or transport hubs should highlight their accessibility.

□ Tourists value responsive and courteous service from staff. Training employees to maintain high service standards can improve overall satisfaction.

□ Collaboration with travel agents and online travel portals can expand reach. Offering exclusive deals through these channels may attract more bookings.

□ Sustainability practices, such as eco-friendly operations and energy conservation, appeal to environmentally conscious tourists. Promoting green initiatives can differentiate accommodations from competitors.

CONCLUSION

The study explored the key factors influencing tourists' accommodation decisions in Ooty, including price,

location, amenities, service quality, safety, and online reviews. The findings revealed that tourists traveling with partners or in groups placed greater importance on accommodation factors and safety considerations, while those traveling alone or with friends were less influenced by these aspects. Overall, resorts emerged as the most preferred type of accommodation, and family trips were the predominant purpose of visit.

The analysis also highlighted the role of promotional and digital marketing efforts, online reviews, and personal recommendations in shaping tourists' decisions. Tourists relied heavily on friends, family, and direct hotel bookings when planning their stay, indicating that word-of-mouth and trust play a significant role in the selection process. Additionally, factors such as duration of stay, travel frequency, and travel companions significantly influenced tourists' preferences and expectations from accommodations.

Based on the study, it is evident that accommodation providers in Ooty should focus on enhancing safety, improving service quality, offering competitive pricing, and leveraging digital marketing strategies to attract more tourists. Personalization, sustainable practices, and quality amenities can further enhance satisfaction and loyalty. By addressing these factors strategically, hotels, resorts, homestays, and guesthouses can improve guest experiences and strengthen their competitiveness in the growing tourism market of Ooty.

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