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**BEHAVIORAL DRIVERS OF TOURIST CHOICES: AN  
INVESTIGATION INTO LONAVALA'S  
ATTRACTIVENESS THROUGH THEORY OF  
PLANNED BEHAVIOUR**

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**Keywords**

Tourist behaviour,  
Theory of Planned  
Theory, TPB

**Abstract**

**Purpose-** The purpose of this paper is to examine the tourist behaviour of individual towards Lonavala hill station using theory of planned behaviour.

**Design/methodology/approach-** Data was collected from 200 respondents of Mumbai region. The proposed study uses SEM in SPSS AMOS 24.

**Findings-** There was a positive influence of subjective norms on intention to use the services. Practical implication- The research helps to determine the factors that affects the tourist behaviour towards Lonavala. Tourist behaviour can be highly influenced by mouth publicity, perceptions of friends & family, Review, Influencer marketing etc. so marketer can use this as a promotion tool to attract the individuals.

**Originality/Value-** The study extend the literature by validating theory of purchase behaviour in the novel context.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Humans tender for traveling around the globe. While making plans for outdoor we have ideas to travel to some hill stations or hilly areas. Typically hill station is surrounded by mountains and valleys which adores everyone. The word hill stations or hilly areas mostly used by Asian and African residents. Generally, the hill station is made for enjoyment, relaxation with our loved ones and several times used as a traveling destination. Mostly hills station become everyone weekend enjoyment time. A plan for hill stations with family helps to spend quality time with our dear ones. Every hill station or hilly areas are most popular and occupied in their hot seasons. The greenery and beauty of nature adore everyone and remembers till our life long. The surrounding and geographical area of hilly areas is broader and diversify with mountains, valleys, and rivers.



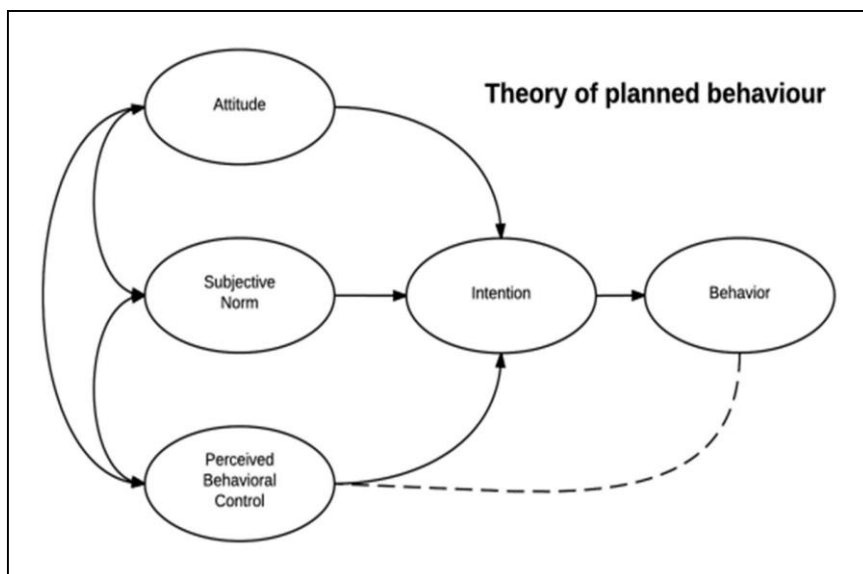
**Figure 1:** Hill station lonavala

Every Mumbaikars love to visit hill station such as Matheran, Lonavala, Mahableshwar, etc. The overview of Lonavala can be a highlight as a fun-size hill station located near Mumbai-Pune highway which attracts large tourists during their peak seasons. As such, there is no pick or hot season to visit any hilly stations. The temperature of Lonavala hill station is around 36 degrees in summer and around minus 12 degrees during winter. The best time to visit the hill station is when

the hot climate carries the day which gets subsumed with their surroundings. Traveling to Lonavala suits everyone is cheaper and affordable. Lonavala being affordable and safe has various landmarks and point of interest such as Ryewood garden, Tiger point, lakes and rivers which become the center of attractions for tourist who loves to travel across these hilly areas.

The traveling options available suit every person being affordable by air, by rail, or by road through Mumbai-Pune highway. As per one view of Mumbaikars when you visit Mumbai then one must visit Matheran, Lonavala, or Kandala. These places at large have great scenery and the beauty of nature. The Bhaja Caves is another center of attraction for tourists being one of the oldest caves during Buddhism. Hotels booking and offers available are well in our budgets which are climate free environment. Sightseeing has become popular which cater to many tourist attractions it includes a visit to Ryewood Park, Karla caves which are located since ancient time any many more. One can books hotels through an online portal and can take advantage of offers available at that time. One can visit the Wildlife sanctuary which is surrounded by greenery and forests.

Campfire and tenting also attract tourists. One can celebrate their anniversary to make a remember trip. Tree plantation can be conducted with officials who can guide the surrounding areas which are not properly planned with trees to improve the natural beauty. Lonavala is famous for chikki one can visit " Chikki market" and "Lonavala Bazaar" for their shopping as well. The love for hills station and hilly areas is being increased in the past few years due to proper caring of the environment and assistance received by many Nongovernment organizations to protect and preserve nature. Policies of government help to maintain all tourist places in the proper and visible condition which attract all tourist.



**Figure 2:** Theory of planned behaviour

## 1.1 THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

This theory helps to understand one's behavior and helps to predict what a person will feel about certain things. The behavior can be understood at certain places according to specific times. The theory was formulated in 1985 by Icek Ajzen. Certain components help to understand one's behavior are listed below.

### 1.1.1 Attitude

It means the person has a certain kind of favorable and unfavorable circumstances which helps to understand the behavior. Attitude consists of trust and belief which has certain outcomes and estimations.

### 1.1.2 Subjective Norms

It means the person will have certain hopes and beliefs which will hold definite behavior about the person. Subjective norms can be set based on some social pressure from family and friends to behave exactly in the same manner what others behave.

### 1.1.3 Perceived Behavioral Control {PBC}

It helps to show that behavior can be recognized. Behavior can be both internal and external. PCB has two components that help to understand one's behavior i.e. self-efficacy and control which helps to assess one's behavior.

### 1.1.4 Intentions

Intentions are closely associated with behavior. Intention means to play with mental ability of person to identify behavior. The above factors also contribute to identify person intension and willingness to do job

### 1.1.5 Behavior

Behavior is impacted through Perceived Behavior control which helps to assess one's behavior.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Cathy H C (2004)** has studied the behavior model for tourists. The theory has been used to identify tourist behavior. The model is being used to identify relations that enhance actual behavior among tourists. Data were collected in two stages. There is a need for extension in the TPB model. The finding helps to calculate relationships by using regression analysis. These models can be used by the government to make various tourist spot attractive by implementing policies and regulations

**Lijuan Wang et al. (2015)** have studied the physical activity of children using the Theory of Planned Behavior. The study was conducted in China with three hundred and fifty-three children. The questionnaire was used to identify gender differences. Physical activity has been a decline over a period. The study reveals that only eight percent of students are engaged outside school. The models were used to upgrade the understanding among children to accept physical activities and identify psychological factors.

**Joey F George (2004)** has studied the planned behavior among internet users. The theory was applied to identify the relationship between beliefs trust and solitude. Data was collected from ninety-three students to identify beliefs regarding internet buying behavior. The behavior can be increased by identifying customer expectations which helps to understand the customer perspective. In other words, a customer who understands assurance can help to improve buying behavior for the internet.

**Qunital Vanessa et al. (2010)** have studied risk and uncertainty through the theory of planned behavior. The study was conducted with an example of the tourism sector. Data were collected from Korea, China, and Japan. Subjective Norms and PCB were used to analyze the attitude of tourists in the above countries. The behavior expectation was around forty-four percent explaining the variance of tourists. Samples collected from Japan were from international tourists to study the belief and behavior among tourists.

**Mei- Fang Chen et al. (2014)** the model was used to forecast the customer behavior to visit hotel. The study was conducted in Taiwan which include all conditions and environment friendly to identify customer behavior to visit green hotel in Taiwan. Data were collected from five hundred and



fifty nine respondents. Structural equation was used to identify positive attitude and perceived behavior. The hotel administration needs to bring certain changes in their surroundings to attract customers which results in positive behavior to increase admired choice towards hotels.

**Roger March et al. (2005)** has studied the testing behavior of planned and actual among the tourist. The study was made to compare both actual and planned behavior among tourist which include their plans, needs and experience. The intension was compared among the tourist to identify behavior. Tourist always explores the plans which help to identify the interest and pattern of behavior. Survey was conducted decade ago with two thousand two hundred and thirty nine respondents to compare both behaviors with along with nine interviewers. There were certain variable which are common in both phase such as experience, stimulation and structure of group.

**Susan E Collins (2012)** has predicted increasing drinking by college students. The TPB components were used to predict the growth of drinking in the future. The study was conducted in the US and data were collected from college students through the questionnaire. Chi-square test was used to determine variables with expected and actual results which to predict an increase in drinkers case. Research suggests there can be other factors which can contribute to an increase in drinkers case.

Yuko Health (2006) has extended the scope of TPB in usage of public transportation sector. The transportation is well used by college and university students. Mostly bus is used by students as their means of transportation due to application of universal passes. These have changed the behavior among students to use bus due to its belief and attitudes. The sudden change in behavior was identify by Theory of Planned behavior which can be improved by making certain additions in variables to the theory.

### 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Examine validity of theory of planned behaviour model
2. To study the impact of attitude on intention to Use the services
3. To study the impact of subjective norms on intention to Use the services
4. To study the impact of Perceived behaviour control on intention to Use the services

### 4. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

**H-1:** Attitude towards purchasing have impact on intention to use the services.

**H-02:** Subjective norms are positively related towards intention to use the services.

**H-03:** Perceived behaviour control influences intention to use the services.



## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

The researcher uses both descriptive and exploratory research design. Researcher adopts well known theory of planned behaviour measurement. Under survey method non-probability Purposive sampling method was used for data collection. Data was collected for the period of two months from the individual of Mumbai region. Data were collected by the means of structured questionnaire. There was total two parts in the questionnaire. Part I was related to the demographic profile of the individuals and part II was related to the parameters of theory of planned behaviour measured on a five-point Likert type scale with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree”.

### 5.2 SAMPLE SIZE

Nunnally (1978) provides the basic rule for the sample size calculation and that is ten times as compared to the number of indicators. Also as per Soper (2024) at effect size 0.3, statistical power=0.9, latent variable =4 , Observed variable=14 and Level of significance=5% the minimum required sample size to build SEM model=173.

Anticipated effect size:	<input type="text" value="0.3"/>	?
Desired statistical power level:	<input type="text" value="0.9"/>	?
Number of latent variables:	<input type="text" value="4"/>	?
Number of observed variables:	<input type="text" value="14"/>	?
Probability level:	<input type="text" value="0.05"/>	?
<input type="button" value="Calculate!"/>		
Minimum sample size to detect effect:	173	
Minimum sample size for model structure:	138	
Recommended minimum sample size:	173	

So, by following the guidelines of the above authors total sample size for the study was set as 200.

### 5.3 DATA ANALYSIS AND TOOL

For current analysis researcher uses various techniques such as Structural equation model, Measurement model through SPSS 24 and AMOS 24

## 6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

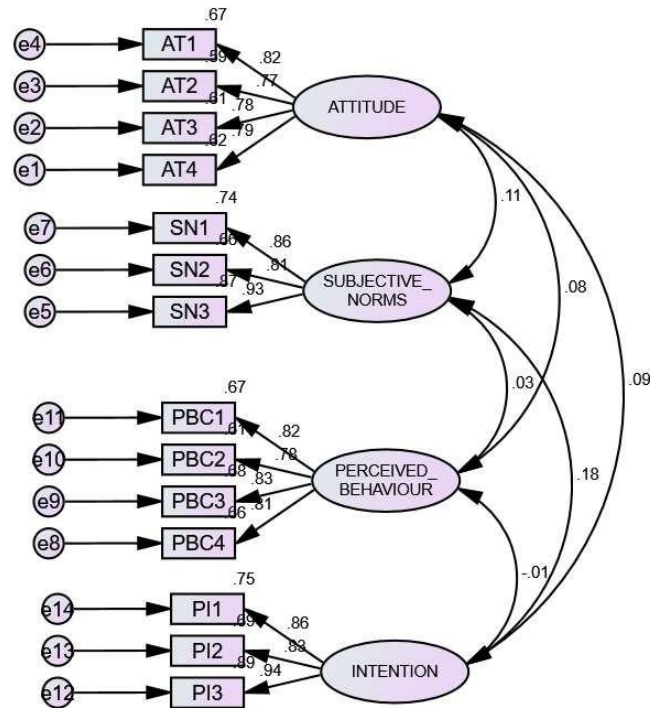


Figure 1: Measurement model

Table 2: Goodness of fit statistics

Goodness of fit model index	Recommended value	Model
CMIN/df	$\leq 5.00$	1.350
GFI	$\geq 0.90$	0.956
AGFI	$\geq 0.80$	0.935
NFI	$\geq 0.90$	0.962
CFI	$\geq 0.90$	0.990
RMSEA	$\leq 0.05$	0.034

These criteria 's are according to Hair et al (2010) and wothke (1995)

The score obtained shows that an excellent fit between data and the model. (chi-square/df=1.350,



GFI=0.956, AGFI=0.935, NFI=0.962, CFI=0.990, RMSEA=0.034). All the default values are complying with the recommended values according to Hair et al (2010) and wothke (1995).

**Table 3:** Output of CFA (construct validity) Convergent validity

Constructs	Items	Factor loadings	t values	Composite reliability	AVE
Attitude	AT1	0.816	-	0.866	0.620
	AT2	0.768	13.799		
	AT3	0.778	13.996		
	AT4	0.786	14.140		
Subjective norms	SN1	0.862	-	0.903	0.757
	SN2	0.810	17.315		
	SN3	0.934	20.025		
Perceived behaviour	PBC1	0.820	-	0.884	0.655
	PBC2	0.779	14.552		
	PBC3	0.827	15.617		
	PBC4	0.810	15.251		
Intention	PI1	0.865	-	0.911	0.774
	PI2	0.828	18.261		
	PI3	0.943	21.095		

As per table 2 all the beta values are above .70, AVE> .50, Composite reliability >.70 & t-values are significant indicating that each construct strongly relates to its construct i.e.) overall measurement model exhibited adequate convergent validity.

**Table 4:** Discriminant validity

	Attitude	Subjective norms	Perceived behaviour control	intention
Attitude	<b>0.620</b>			
Subjective norms	0.11	<b>0.757</b>		
Perceived behaviour control	0.004	0.005	<b>0.655</b>	
Intention	0.007	0.033	0.002	<b>0.774</b>

As per the above table all the inter-construct square correlation is less that average variance extracted indicating high level of uniqueness among the constructs.

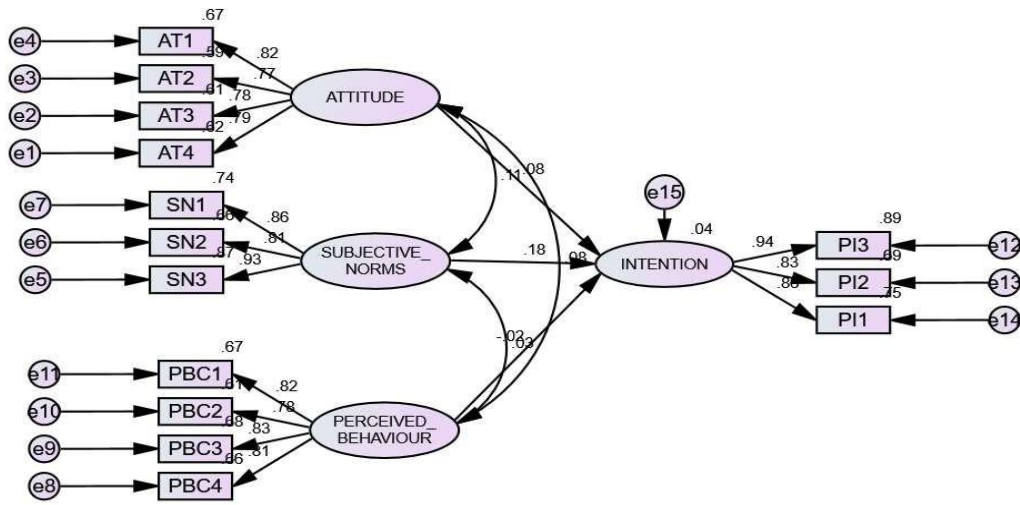


Figure2: structural equation model

Table 4: Hypotheses Testing

Constructs	Estimates	S. E	C.R	P	Result
INTENTION ←ATTITUDE	.104	.101	1.121	.221	Not supported
INTENTION ←SUBJECTIVE NORMS	.117	.056	2.705	.005	Supported
INTENTION ←PERCEIVED BEHAVIOUR CONTROL	-0.32	0.88	-0.33	.709	Not supported

## 7. CONCLUSION

The study evaluating factors influencing tourist behavior towards Lonavala using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) provides valuable insights into understanding tourist decision-making processes. By identifying factors such as attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, it offers a comprehensive framework for destination managers to tailor marketing strategies effectively. This research contributes to the tourism industry by offering actionable insights to enhance visitor experiences and optimize destination management practices in Lonavala. Additionally, it aids in fostering sustainable tourism practices by addressing potential barriers and promoting positive attitudes towards responsible travel behaviors. Ultimately, the significance of this study lies in its potential to enhance destination competitiveness, visitor satisfaction, and overall economic benefits for Lonavala. The study pointed out various implications for tourist marketer for promoting the tourist destination. It is seen that individuals are highly impacted by the words of close relative, friends, family Etc. Various change in marketing strategy can be adopted by the marketers to attract the individual towards the tourist destination. Further studies can be conducted by incorporating more factors that affects the tourist behaviour of the customers. Also, moderating, and mediating constructs can be added to build a higher order model by extending the previous literature.

## 8. SUGGESTIONS

1. Develop programs that involve residents in welcoming tourists and sharing positive experiences, thereby creating a sense of community endorsement that influences visitors' perceptions
2. Recruit and train local ambassadors or volunteers to serve as guides and hosts for tourists, emphasizing the importance of hospitality and creating a welcoming atmosphere based on social norms.
3. Encourage satisfied tourists to share their experiences through testimonials, reviews, and social media posts, leveraging the influence of peer recommendations on prospective visitors' perceptions.
4. Collaborate with celebrities or influencers who have a connection to Lonavala to promote the destination and shape tourists' perceptions through their social influence and endorsement.
5. Showcase and promote authentic local cultural experiences, such as traditional performances, artisan workshops, and culinary tours, to highlight the social norms and values of the community.

## 9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Nil

**10.SOURCES OF FUNDING:** This research work is not funded by any national and international government body or organization.



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