International Journal of Future Generation Communication and Networking
Vol. 14, No. 1, (2021), pp. 2352-2397

Scope of Domestic Tourism in New Normal Post COVID - 19

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Abstract

Impact of novel corona virus (COVID -19) has been seen all over the world and in almost every sector globally. Tourism sector is not the exception to affect due to COVID -19. Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world and plays an important role in economic growth of any nation. Furthermore, the industry earns foreign currency for the nation, creates large number of jobs (for both formally educated and illiterate but skilled person). On the other hand, Tourism industry is highly sensitive in nature. Many events namely terrorist's attack, war, economic crisis, epidemics, social conflicts, natural disasters and so on. These types of events have long term influence on tourists and their motivations to travel.

Keywords: Domestic Tourism, Tourist, New Normal, COVID - 19

Introduction:

Impact of novel corona virus (COVID -19) has been seen all over the world and in almost every sector globally. Tourism sector is not the exception to affect due to COVID -19. Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world and plays an important role in economic growth of any nation. Furthermore, the industry earns foreign currency for the nation, creates large number of jobs (for both formally educated and illiterate but skilled person). On the other hand, Tourism industry is highly sensitive in nature. Many events namely terrorist's attack, war, economic crisis, epidemics, social conflicts, natural disasters and so on. These types of events have long term influence on tourists and their motivations to travel.

Outbreak of corona virus has built enormous fear on tourists worldwide. Many nations declared lockdown as a strategy to control the spread of corona virus. Lockdowns further resulted in unaccountable job losses recorded in tourism sector in the year 2020.[i]

Tourism sector functioning depends on number of industries namely transportation, attractions (recreation and entertainment), accommodations, food and beverage service etc. Due to COVID – 19 all these industries shut during lockdown period and started operating with reduced capacity during unlock phase. Even though the unlock phase is allowing many industries to operate with a restriction, during initial phases of unlock it was necessary for tourists to self-quarantine at the destination which he/she is travelling. Some nations and states have made it compulsory to do the COVID – 19 swab tests before travelling. Even after reaching at desired destination asking for a specific period quarantine for tourists. All the expenses of swab tests or cost of quarantine period stay in hotel room have to bear by tourists himself / herself which ultimately increasing the overall cost of travelling for tourists. Beyond this tourist have to consider the additional cost enforced by hotels and lodging as additional beds or sharing of room by two or

ISSN: 2233-7857 IJFGCN

more persons is not allowed now. Food costs has compulsorily added in room rents by hotels and lodges on an a la carte basis as the buffet system is not operational considering hygiene and safety of tourists due to COVID – 19 spreads.

In India, domestic tourism has a significant value. Thousands of years ago people used to travel domestically for pilgrimage, education, trades or just visit people (family and friends). Family vacation trips are part of life style for the various purposes. Family trips are planned either to visit relatives and friends, for religious or pilgrimage purpose, to enjoy domestic cuisine at host destination, for sightseeing of attractions at the host destinations or even just to relax and leisure purpose.

Table 1.1 shows data available on the website of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, published in August 2020. Number of domestic tourists visits to all states and Union Territories in India in past 20 years showing a constant growth every year. It highlights importance of domestic tourism for all stakeholders in India.

Table 1.1 Number of Domestic Tourist visits to all States/UT's in India, 2000 - 2019

Year	**No. of Domestic Tourist Visits (in million) to States/UT's**	**entage (%) change the previous year**
2000	220.11	15.4
2001	236.47	7.4
2002	269.60	14.0
2003	309.04	14.6
2004	366.27	18.5
2005	392.04	7.0
2006	462.44	18.0
2007	526.70	13.9
2008	563.03	6.9
2009	668.80	18.8
2010	747.70	11.8
2011	864.53	15.6
2012	1045.05	20.9
2013	1142.53	9.3
2014	1282.80	12.3
2015	1431.97	11.6
2016	1615.39	12.8
*2017**	1657.55	2.6
2018#	1853.79	11.8
2019 (P)	2321.98	25.3

Source: State/ Union Territory Tourism Departments.
*: Revised in August, 2019, P: Provisional, # Revised in June 2020

ISSN: 2233-7857 IJFGCN

During and post COVID -19 in case of family vacations, tourists have to consider other restrictions like old age members (60 and above age) or small children's in the family are not allowed to travel, especially for long distance trips. Many restrictions are already relaxed by domestic governments and the trend will continue in near future (considering the pattern of COVID – 19 spreads in the respective regions). Even though in current situation most people may prefer and feel more comfortable to take short trips within the state, which is much better and easy to travel.

COVID-19 pandemic is the worst hit to the Tourism industry. Hospitality and Tourism industry is the first to stop its operations and last to reopen because of its nature. There are hopes for a bounce back in the tourism industry post COVID – 19. It is predicted that this pandemic will help in increasing domestic tourism. People will take travel soon once the pandemic is over. This research is aiming to learn more about impact of COVID – 19 outbreaks as a pandemic and its influence on Indian Tourists perception towards travelling domestic destinations post COVID – 19. The result of the study will be helpful for all stakeholders in Travel and Tourism sector to serve Indian Tourists better post COVID – 19.

As per the information given to Hindustan Times by Mr. Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog,[ii] COVID – 19 is a temporary crisis in tourism sector. According to tourism ministry and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), there will be a loss of revenue to tourism that can range between Rs 72,000 crore and Rs 1.58 lakh crores in 2020-21. He predicted tourism sector will bounce back and flourish as the people are wishing to travel around and explore as soon as travelling is allowed more liberally. Post COVID there will be enormous opportunity in India and tourists will incline towards experiential and short trips. He further added that, domestic tourism will be the first driver of recovery post COVID and this will provide a chance to the states in India to build a great infrastructure with top class products for tourism sector. Considering the severe nature of COVID – 19 pandemic India took instant steps and imposed biggest lockdown in the world for almost 1.3 billion people. This was very important and early response to control as well as reduce the number of infected people. It was an attempt to minimise the spread of viral infection among others. Considering all these facts, lockdown were essential. As unlock phases are now allowing many activities to redstart including tourism and hospitality industry, next 8-9 months are crucial. Industry should not focus for making high profits but utilise this opportunity to survive and revive. Thousands of people are associated with the tourism industry may overcome slowly by serving in the industry. It will take some time the normalcy restored in our social life and economy. Government can help by funding the tourism sector in terms of soft loans, working capital and deferment on loan repayments. We may expect that economic activity would start again with new norms of social distancing.

Objectives of the study:

1. To study the scenario of domestic tourism in new normal post COVID – 19
2. To understand whether the tourists are more inclined towards domestic tourist's destinations and short trips post COVID – 19.

Hypotheses of the Study:

***H_1*: Pre-pandemic people used to prefer long distance and long haul travels.

***H_2*: Post pandemic the tourists prefer short trips at domestic tourist destinations.

Research Methodology:

The researchers have used both primary and secondary data sources to collect information. Structured questionnaire was designed by researchers to obtain the primary data related to the research topic. While preparing the questionnaire two sections are made one covering domestic travel preferences and concerns

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pre COVID – 19 and section two dealing with post COVID – 19 domestic travel scenarios. Convenience sampling technique is used to collect the sample size for the research. While collecting sample size it was aimed that population from various age groups namely Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z and senior citizens are included in the sample size so that the findings could be universally applicable.

Researchers have also collected the secondary data through books, research articles, industry literatures and online reports of various research and government organizations.

Literature Review:

Pre COVID – 19 Tourism Scenario:

As per research paper titled, "Role of Travel Agencies in Promotion of Domestic Tourism "written by Dr. Suvarna Sathe and Mr. Mahesh Randhave published in *Mahratta Multi-Disciplinary Journal.*[iii] The research paper reveals that it is necessity of all individuals to travel at least once in a year and get a break from daily busy schedule to get rejuvenate. There are many tourist places available to travel but most of the tourists prefer to visit beaches as a first preference in selecting domestic tourist destination. Hill stations are the next popular amongst domestic tourists followed by historical places. Family vacations is the topmost reason for opting domestic tourism by the people followed by religious tourism, leisure trips and business trips in Indian scenario. Easy access to destination or affordability is no more primary criterions while selecting the domestic destination for tourists now-a- days. Instead facilities at a destination, guest services, safety and security, comfortable transportation are of more concern for the domestic tourists.

In every decade the tourism industry faces various unforeseen challenges, calamities, economic turbulences, epidemics which bring about dramatic changes in tourism demand. In addition to the above globalisation, user friendly internet, travelers need to take up frequent holiday breaks and tourism branding campaigns help in restoring the tourism demand but the changes are fundamental in consumer behavior and different travel patterns slowly emerge as a result of both phenomenons together.[iv] Today COVID – 19 is also gripping the tourism industry so strongly that it is bound to bring changes in tourists' consumption and travel pattern. Hence, to understand these changes, the research is required.

COVID – 19 Pandemic

The article published by Guo et al. (2020),[v] in Military Medical Research reveals that COVID-19as an emerging acute respiratory infectious disease and mainly spreads through the respiratory tract in the form of droplets, respiratory secretions. COVID-19 is highly transmissible in humans, especially in the elderly and in those people with certain underlying medical conditions. Fever, sickness and cough are the symptoms of COVID-19 patients as per the study. Most of the COVID-19 infections look like mild flu symptoms and few patients rapidly develop acute respiratory syndrome and enters in critical physical condition which may further lead to respiratory failure, multiple organ failure and even death.

As stated by Pyrc, K. et al. (2004), "There are three corona viruses are known to exist". Corona virus disease has instigated serious problems in humans and animals in recent decades. These viruses are capable in mutation and recombination and due to which they have high survival rate for long duration of time. Considering the facts these viruses are pathogens to humans and animals.[vi]

According to Lau & Chan (2015)[vii], mortality rate caused by the pandemics like severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) that MERS has a higher mortality rate (>35%)than SARS (9.6%). Similarly, relative data of Asian Development Bank (2020),

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suggests that the fatality rate of COVID-19 as compared to other epidemics is lower; but, the infection rate is rather higher which has created a more fear to travelers.

According to article written by Morens and Fauci (2013), [viii]pandemics are the state of disease that sharply increases in populations around the world with infections. The article is about the rapid global spread of a novelH1N1 influenza virus in the year 2009. There was confusion about the meaning of "pandemic" and how to recognize pandemics when they occur.

According to Hughes, J. M., et al (2010),[ix] outbreaks and pandemics like H1N1influenza pandemic, as well as the emergence of SARS associated corona virus are reminders of our global vulnerability to emergent threats to human health and our current inability to predict or prevent such events. The article is highlighting on unpredictable nature of disease emergence in the past history as a lesson to be learned from the origins of recently emerged disease as identify practical solutions and strategies aimed at detecting and halting future threats.

Effect of CORONA VIRUS on Tourism Industry:

As CORONA virus has taken a toll on all industries globally; India is not an exception. Tourism industry which is heavily dependent on various cross linkages is worst affected. For buying a tourism product a tourist always considers the potential risks such as crime at a potential destination, natural calamities, political instability, terrorist threats and health to name a few. The one which is of the utmost concern, now for any tourist is health as the Pandemic with its deadly effect is sparing nobody.

Globally the travel restrictions, quarantine procedures and new normal SOPs have restricted tourist movement. In India, in addition there is precautionary instruction issued by the Government to avoid movement of children below 10 years and senior citizens unless it is absolutely necessary as these age groups are more vulnerable to CORONA virus infection. In Indian scenario travel is often taken as an opportunity to spend quality time with family. VFR is a popular travel pattern in India. In given Pandemic situation travelling with children or elderly in the family implies restrictions on number of days one can travel, travel mode and destination choice.

Though other forms of tourism like business tourism, health tourism, and educational tourism are prevailing in India which is mostly not family oriented tourism choice, due to Pandemic there is a curb in the above mentioned activities. Many colleges and schools are still going online without students coming to campus. Doctors are advising to avoid less urgent surgeries and business houses are not encouraging business travel. What one can look forward in the current scenario can be youngsters taking up hobby based travel, solo travellers, families taking up travel.

Though domestic destinations in India are opening up slowly there are restrictions on number of people visiting a tourist destination namely temples, shrines, heritage sites. Also the modes of transports to reach a destination are limited as all flights, railways and state transport are not fully operational. Though travelling by one's won vehicle can be considered as a good option, it has a limitation of taking up long distance travels, which may require a night halt adding to the risk of exposing to CORONA virus infection. At certain places all local transport are not fully opened up for locals as well as the tourists (local trains in Mumbai, Metro in Delhi) whereby local transportation may pose a problem for smooth tourist movement.

The researcher would like to understand the current mindset of travellers, in order to foresee the trends that would prevail until the Pandemic lasts. The literature review would be an effort to see how

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globally the travellers are gearing up to take up the travel, what are the tourism choices in this critical time, any psychological aspects pertaining to the same. Is it contributing to take up local tourism or the travellers are willing to take the risks in long haul trips.

According to Pravin Kumar Patel et al in their research paper titled, "The Effects of Nobel Corona Virus (Covid-19) in the Tourism Industry in India" published in International Journal of Engineering & Technology (IJERT), summer is usually a peak of tourism activity in India has hampered severely due to Pandemic. Let it be a leisure travel, business travel or adventure travel all have seen a major dip in domestic well as international tourist arrivals. As per the policy of Government of India, in order to curb the spread of CORONA virus tourist visas were suspended till April 2020.[x] The researcher are suggesting that as the global tourism fraternity would take some time to settle after the aftermath of the Pandemic, the tourism sector in India should focus on domestic tourism in order to survive. The tourists would be more comfortable taking up a travel within the country rather than taking up a holily abroad. This could be the scope for Indian tourism industry to develop alternative tourist spots and market them to the domestic tourist segment.

In an Empirical survey conducted by Wachyuni, S. S., & Kusumaningrum, D. A. published in *Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science* with the title "The Effect of COVID-19 Pandemic: How are the Future Tourist Behaviour?" reveals that in Indonesia it was observed that majority of the respondents would take up a travel (78%). It was also encouraging signal for the tourism industry that (65%) planned to take up a trip in the near future that is 0-6 months from the time the Pandemic would be declared over. Also the tourists showed the inclination for short haul holidays ranging from 1-4 days.[xi]

It was also noted that the intention to travel is more prevailing than the anxiety which is a positive point about tourist behaviour post Pandemic. It can be thus said that the tourism will recover faster as majority of sample size is willing to take up travelling immediately after COVID-19 pandemic.

Research titled, "A Preliminary Study of Novel Corona virus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak: A Pandemic Leading Crisis in Tourism Industry of Nepal" by Nimesh Ulak in Journal of Tourism & Hospitality Education enlightens the information on COVID – 19 pandemic and crisis in tourism industry of Nepal. Nepal which is neighbouring State to India heavily depends on tourism, needs to assess the situation arising out of Corona Virus outbreak.[xii] According to the researcher the Pandemic will have its short term and long term impacts on global Tourism Industry. However, as travelling being dream of human beings the tourism activity will revive. As in the past various manmade, natural calamities have hit this industry brutally, it has bounced back every time in due course of time. The author refers to some scholars stating that post Pandemic first the domestic tourism sector will show the mobility which would later percolate down to regional and international arena. But there will be changes in tourism behaviour as a aftermath of Covid-19.

The article published by Amina Chebli et al is an attempt to find out the behavioural changes in tourist consumption. The author has discussed 5 concerns namely choosing destination which is closer, choosing off beat/less known destination, group travel, opting for travel insurance, search for precise information, and off season travel.[xiii] In order to attempt the behavioural changes in tourist consumption the author has discussed 5 concerns namely choosing destination which is closer, choosing off beat/less known destination, group travel, opting for travel insurance, search for precise information, and off season travel. It was observed that the tourists desire to travel will not be hampered by the Pandemic. People will still choose to travel away from their homes. After the travel restrictions are lifted the long haul travel will gear

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up. Though the tourists may be more cautious the willingness to travel is encouraging for tourism industry. The study also shows that post pandemic the mass tourism would be declining drastically which would later the face of popular destinations which were once flooded with tourists. New locations promoting responsible tourism would be the need of hour. As tourists are not willing to take unnecessary health risks during travel they will opt for travel insurance which was once a neglected part of travel. Travel is a leisure activity and disposable income contributes to travel choices. As due to Pandemic many people have suffered economic looses it would certainly affect the consumption pattern of tourists. Effort would be to reduce costs where ever possible.

The study analyses the impact of COVID-19 on Chinese tourists during and post Pandemic. The researcher identifies crisis sensitive tourists whose behaviour is modified due to intra pandemic experiences, such behaviour is reflected in post Pandemic response in the form of choosing own transport rather than a public transport, cutting short the trip duration to name a few. Also it was observed by the researcher that people would prolong their travel decision due to uncertain conditions.[xiv] The research also suggests that there would be an external crisis resistant group of tourists with characteristics such as living without dependents, having higher level of education and being older in age. This group may not show any change in the behaviour pattern post COVID -19.The tourism suppliers are advised to take note of behavioural change in crisis sensitive tourists to avoid any business losses in these critical times. Further the researcher suggests that if the current crisis continues to grow and situation becomes more complex, long term and medium term effects of the phenomenon need to be studied.

The author has compiled a literature review covering effect of COVID-19 on different aspects such as response of different countries to COVID crisis, changes in human behaviour and life style brought by this Pandemic, changes predicted in world order, changes in governance, effect on civil and human rights, nature and climate, tourism to name a few.[xv] While discussing effects of Pandemic on Tourism the author has compiled following points through literature review:

- Some believe that this would be a dooms day for tourism and allied industries such as air travel, cruise liners.
- Many popular destinations would discourage tourism and will improve quality of life of people at the destination.
- According to some experts' tourism and in that domestic tourism would boom as long haul travel will be hectic, more expensive, more time consuming.
- Some industries like cruise are reporting surge in booking number for next year summer, mainly form young population who are not caring much about Pandemic.
- There would a drastic change in pattern of travelling and mode of travelling with people having their own interpretation of living with virus.

Article titled, "What are the Factors affecting Tourist Behaviour based on the Perception of Risk? Romanian and Serbian Tourists' perspective in the aftermath of the recent Floods and Wildfires in Greece" published in August 2020. The study is based on the assumption that in spite of natural or manmade calamities there would be some courageous tourists who would still venture out for tourism at such risky destinations where as some would deter form travelling.[xvi] The study is based on the assumption that in spite of natural or manmade calamities there would be some courageous tourists who would still venture out for tourism at such risky destinations where as some would deter form travelling. The research sample was inbound tourists visiting Greece from 2 different nations, further analysing socio -demographic characteristics influencing tourist behaviour towards taking travelling risk. The study provides important information about which travellers can take risks accordingly such groups can be targeted in tourism crisis.

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The research claims to be the first of its kind confirming the role of nationality in tourist behaviour based on the perceived risks and worries of tourists, the author further suggests that every nationality would have unique response which needs to be studied separately. As the study is in pre pandemic period the equations ablaut risks and worry can be totally different now.

The research published in Journal *of Destination Marketing & Management* by Karl, M. et al examining "Which travel risks are more salient for destination choice? An examination of the tourist's decision-making process" indicates that the past travel experiences of tourists shape the risk perceptions in tourism, and it affects tourists' future destination choice. The research also recommends on managing travel risks and decision making behaviour post COVID-19.[xvii] The risk perception influences the tourist decision making at various stages. Some tourists are risk resilient and are less likely to change their travel plans and do travel considering risk as a low probability. Such travellers can choose high risk destinations. Further, at a later stage of the destination choice process the risk perception plays a role with previous travel experience to a particular destination and experience taken at that time. Socio demographic factors play a major role in risk perception and travel decision making behaviour. Mostly the tourists are willing to take travel risks as a part of travel process and are willing to take up destinations with some risks. Further research is required as COVID-19 has put the health risk in the front seat for travellers. Also this research is limited to German tourists and other tourists may refer to risks differently.

The research study undertaken by Turnšek, M. et al about, "Perceived threat of COVID-19 and future travel avoidance: Results from an early convenient sample in Slovenia" published in *Academica Turistica-Tourism and Innovation Journal* aimed at finding out Slovenian tourists' inclination about avoiding future travel in the early stages of COVID-19. The two factors which are considered impacting the travel decision are demography and past travel experience. It was observed that age wise there is no marked difference in men but the risk perception was more amongst the women. It was observed that, the educated travellers perceiving risks more.[xviii] Study also indicated that the Slovenian tourists' are more intending to take up domestic tourism in near future rather than taking up long haul travel. Also the frequent travellers were for travelling and were less inclined towards avoiding travel.

According to Chan, J. K. L., & King, V. T., Malaysian tourism industry which is heavily depending on inbound tourists from China and Korean tourists, specially Sabah region is suffering major recession and set back. The article reviews the measures that can help the region regain its tourism balance post COVID-19.[xix] It suggests adopting digital marketing to reach more people and shift from mass tourism to high-yielding, high quality tourism. Encouraging domestic tourism to reduce dependability on inbound tourists is also suggested, as for some more period people would be wary of taking up flights and trains to cover long distances. Come to think of a long range tourism planning it is suggested that diverting to more sustainable forms of tourism activity with wider range of outbound tourists from various countries is desirable.

The article titled, "The Impacts of COVID-19 Crisis over the Tourism Expectations of the Azores Archipelago Residents (Portugal)" is about tourism impact of COVID-19 on expectations of residents residing on islands of the Azores Archipelago. Majority of the residents have cancelled their trips or rescheduled to a further date. They have also cancelled the holiday plans for 2020 considering the health risks. Many have opted to stay back at Azores fearing the Pandemic. Government has introduces incentives for locals who are taking up domestic holidays in order to promote tourism. Domestic tourism could be a way out to save the tourism industry.[xx] The domestic tourists are expecting clean, safe and hygienic environment at the destination, they have also expressed will to take up holiday at an island other than their

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own residence. Their time and type of holiday preference has been observed to change to more sustainable forms of tourism with less people catering at one time.

Safety and sanitation needs to be the main agenda for near future. Still taking up COVID-19 test before travelling and some other travel restrictions as per government norms for local population is an obstacle for domestic tourists. As this study is limited to a small region a wider population with different backgrounds may produce different results. Hence the author suggests further study on the topic.

Research published by Rui Carvalho titled, "The need for creative actions in tourism in the Post-COVID 19 pandemic world" suggests that, COVID-19 has changed the face of tourism industry globally. To recover from this crisis the tourism marketers must take drastic measures. They need to involve local communalities into tourism planning and decision making. One must develop sustainable tourism practices while promoting destinations.[xxi] Tourism experts are suggesting that domestic tourism will recover first from the crisis. Hence the tourism products must be designed for the consumption of local population. Also responsible tourism must be promoted for further sustenance of tourism in the long run.

Usually in tourism development the needs and demands of local population are not taken into consideration. Tourists may be visiting a place only once for one day but overall business in tourism revolves around the floating population. But with changing scenario due to COVID-19 one needs to rethink about such business strategies in tourism.[xxii] Even locals may realize that for tourism they can look into their own neighbourhood for lesser known destinations rather than searching for exotic somewhere else. One might also need to rethink about the popular and obvious gains of tourism seen in the past namely regional economic development through tourism and a source of FX contributor to the economy. Nations which were once depending heavily on tourism must find out ways to survive without tourism for some time. Especially, when there are restrictions on movements across the border of many nations. The reflections on the current scenario in tourism in Pandemic through various references are surely contributing to the understanding of urgent situation. But as the Pandemic is taking a new face every day, the new dimensions need to be added.

Research Gap:

The researcher had tried to encompass various regions in the world in order to understand how the tourism industry is coping up with the pandemic situation across the globe. The literature review includes Asian countries like Nepal, Indonesia, China, Suriname and Malaysia, European countries like Greece, Slovenia and Portugal. Other continents covered are Australia, Africa, and America.

Various approaches pertaining to COVID – 19 pandemic and tourism are carefully included in the literature review.

Following were some important points noted from the tourism industry point of view,

1. Domestic tourism is often neglected in tourism planning and development
2. More importance is given to inbound tourists needs over the local population
3. To survive the pandemic crisis the tourism industry needs to shift its attention for a while from international to regional and local tourism
4. New tourism products keeping in mind the shift in the target market must be developed
5. One needs to keep in mind, sustainable tourism products is the need of an hour
6. Over relying on tourism as the only revenue generating activity can prove disastrous considering the various natural and manmade crises in the world, and not only the pandemic.

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Tourism being dynamic industry having interface with human being, human behaviour matters the most in predicting consumption behaviour of tourism products. For any traveller safety is usually important while taking up a travel; any crisis situation, threat may alter the behaviour and consumption pattern

Some interesting observations regarding the same were noted,

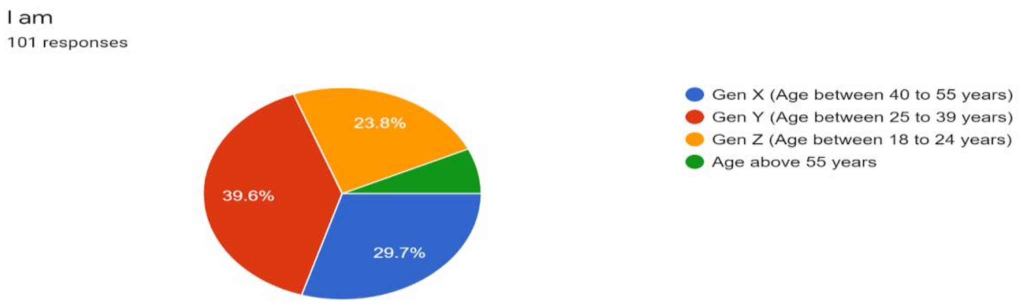
1. Some tourists are more adventurous and would not perceive the risk so severely than the others and will keep their travel plans going without any change.
2. Considering the travel restrictions and risks some tourists may alter their travel choices, time to travel and mode of travelling. Some might totally keep the travel plans on hold till the situation is normal.
3. Past travel experiences play a major role in decision making, in risky and crisis situations. Positive prior travel experience may lead to taking up a travel in risky situations.
4. Sooner or later people would travel, but how soon is undetermined.
5. Post pandemic one would see drastic changes in tourism consumption and preferences; hence tourism players need to pay attention to this angle.

The pandemic (COVID – 19) crisis is totally unforeseen phenomenon and a normal response cannot be expected, neither can one foresee accurately how the situation may take a turn.

Currently as a new mutation of COVID – 19 is found in UK, again travel restrictions for international tourists are freshly revised. In such uncertain inbound travel situations and outbound travel restrictions one needs to consider domestic tourism seriously

The researchers have observed that there is a “Research Gap” in the area of possibility of domestic and short haul local holidays post pandemic in Indian context.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:
Data collected from Tourists with the help of Questionnaire:
Demography:



For understanding the need of domestic tourism all the age groups across the demography were selected. Gen X contributed to 29.7%, Gen Y contributed to 39.6% and Gen Z contributed to 23.8%; senior citizens population was 6.9%.
Researchers have segregated preferences and concerns pre and post COVID – 19 of the various age groups in order to analyse in detail the pandemic effect on domestic tourism of each Gen.

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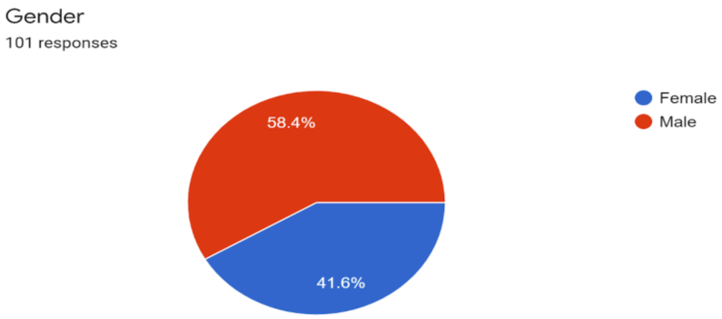
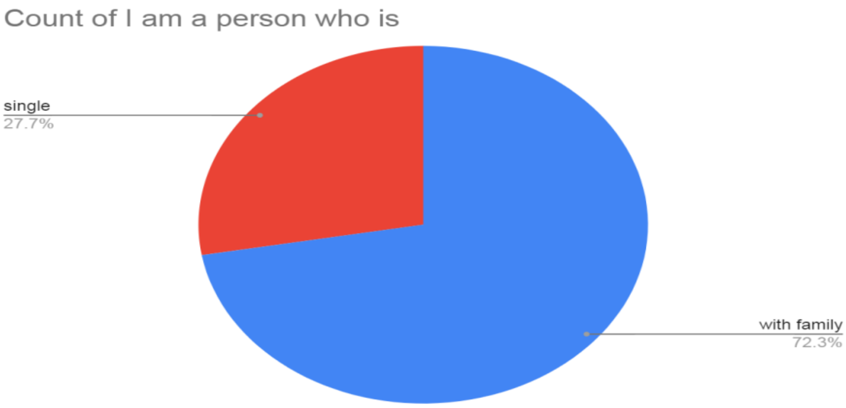


Of the total 101 responses 58.4% are male and 41.6% are female respondents. This will ensure that male and female preferences are taken into consideration regarding the travel preferences and concerns.



The research population also covers travellers with family and also single travellers thereby understanding if these two groups have any different preferences or needs pre and post COVID – 19 while taking up a domestic travel. Of the total respondents 72.3% are with family and 27.7% are single travellers.

The analysis put forth further is identifying four different Gens namely Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z and Senior citizens. The researcher aims to understand how each age group is coping up with their travel decisions and preferences pre and post COVID – 19 in the context of domestic tourism.

Section I: Pre COVID – 19 Tourism Scenarios

Gen X:

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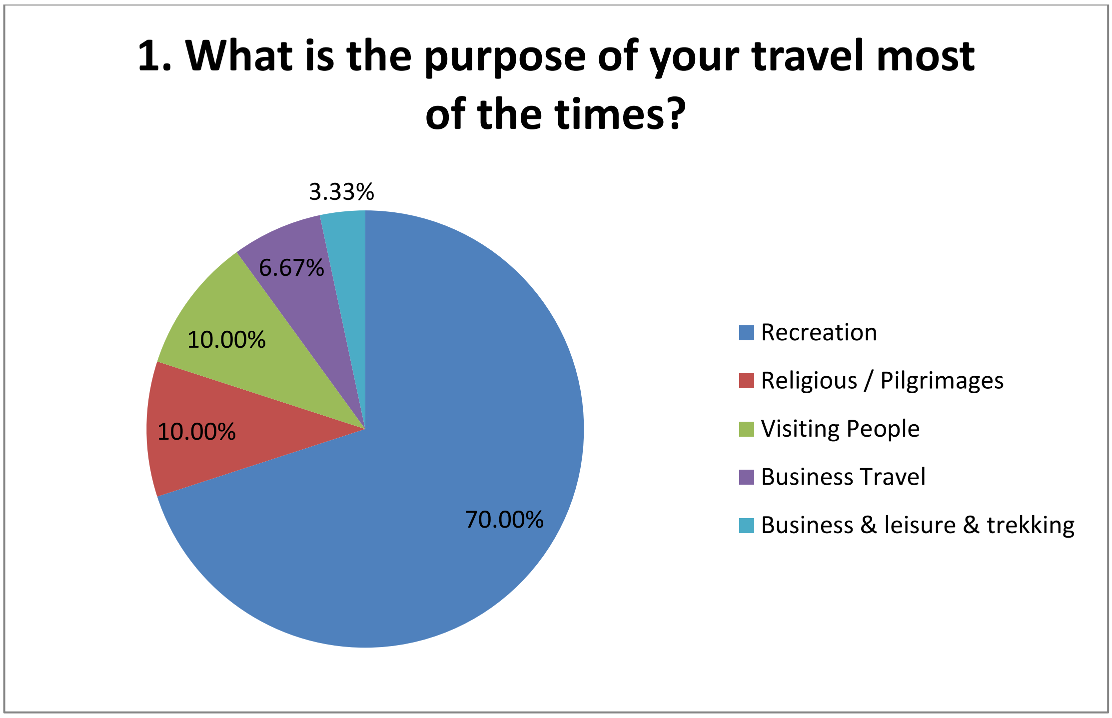
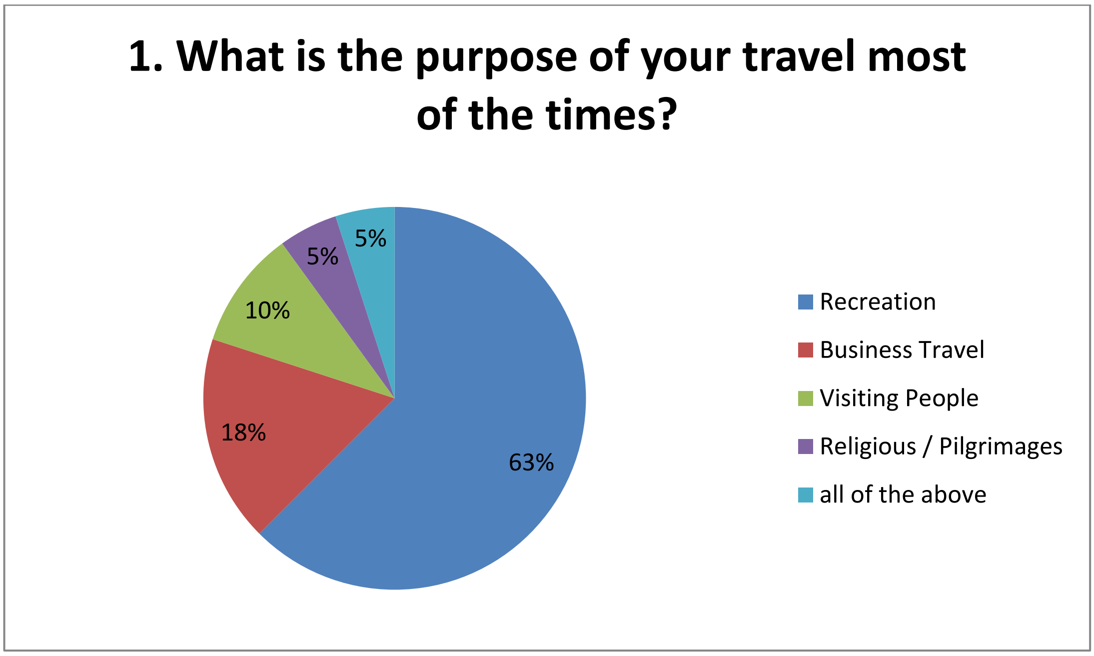


Most of the Gen X population preferred to take a travel for the purpose of recreation at 70%. The second preference observed was equally for religious as well as VFR with 10% each. Third purpose was business travel at 7% and merely 3% mixed business, leisure and adventure together in the domestic tourism context.

Gen Y:



Like Gen X, Gen Y also prefers travel for recreation purpose for most of the times and accounted 63% for the same. 18% of Gen Y travelling for the business purpose as a second preference and third prfered purpose of travel is VFR at 10%. Visiting for pilgrimage and mixed purposes together for demostic travelling both accounted 5% each by Gen Y.

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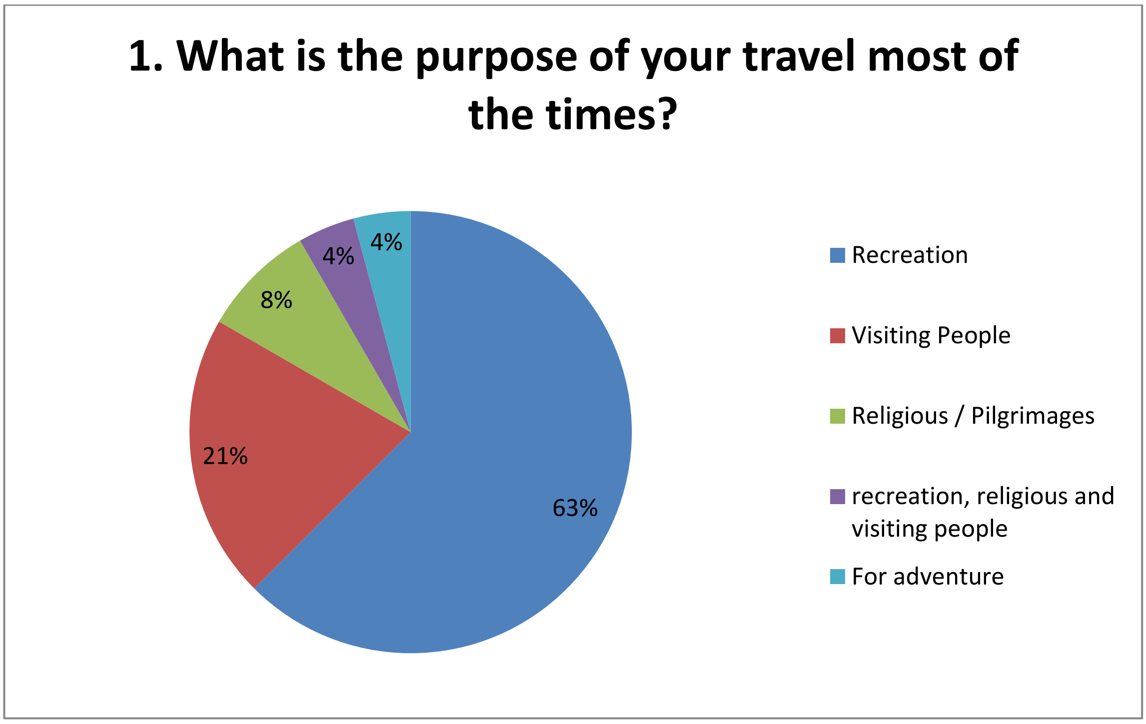
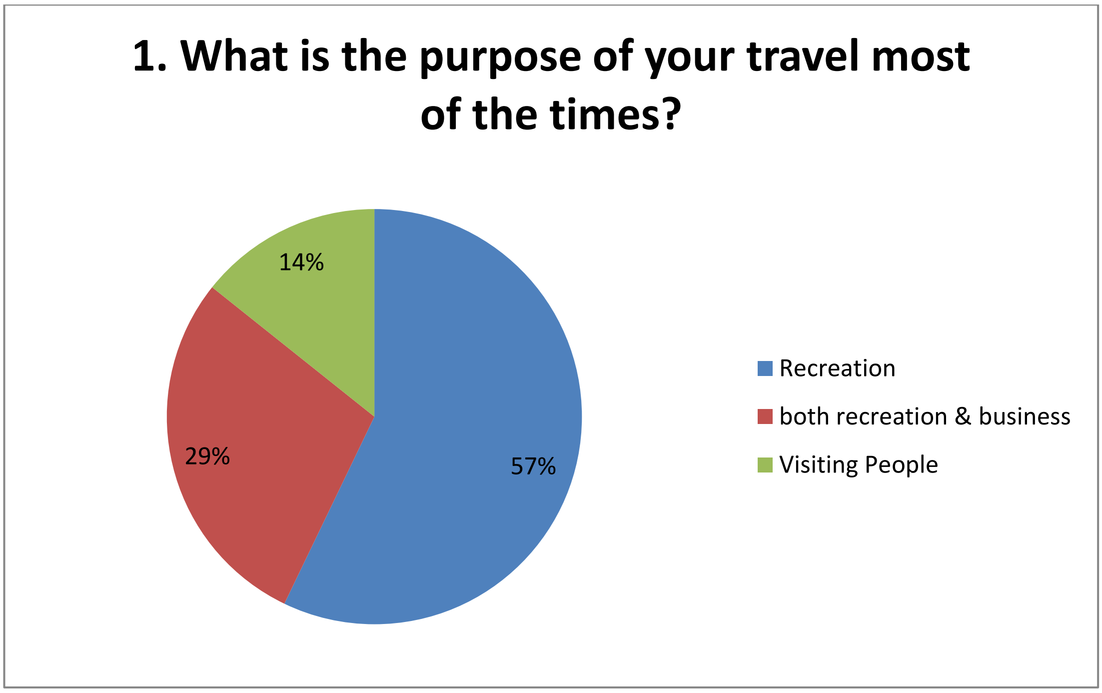
Gen Z:



Gen Z mostly travel for recreational purposes at 63%, VFR at 21%, religious travel or pilgrimage was third choice at 8%.
4% each was for adventure based travel and mixed purposes respectively.

Senior Citizens:



For senior citizens recreation was the travel motive at 57%, business plus recreation was at 29% and VFR at 14%

Gen X:

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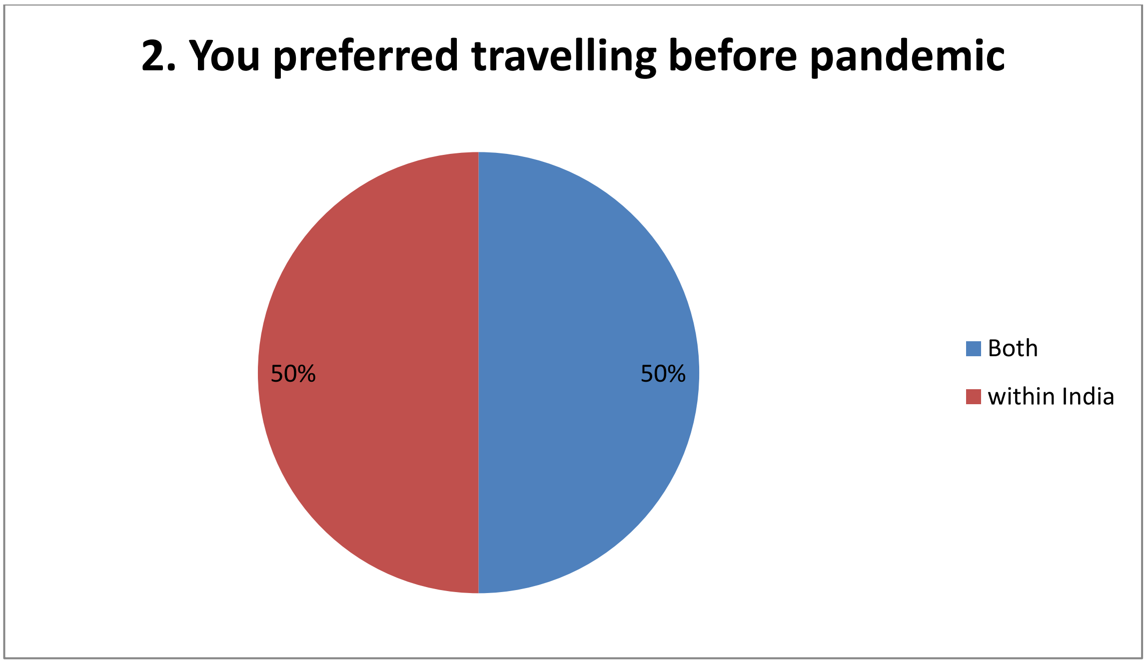
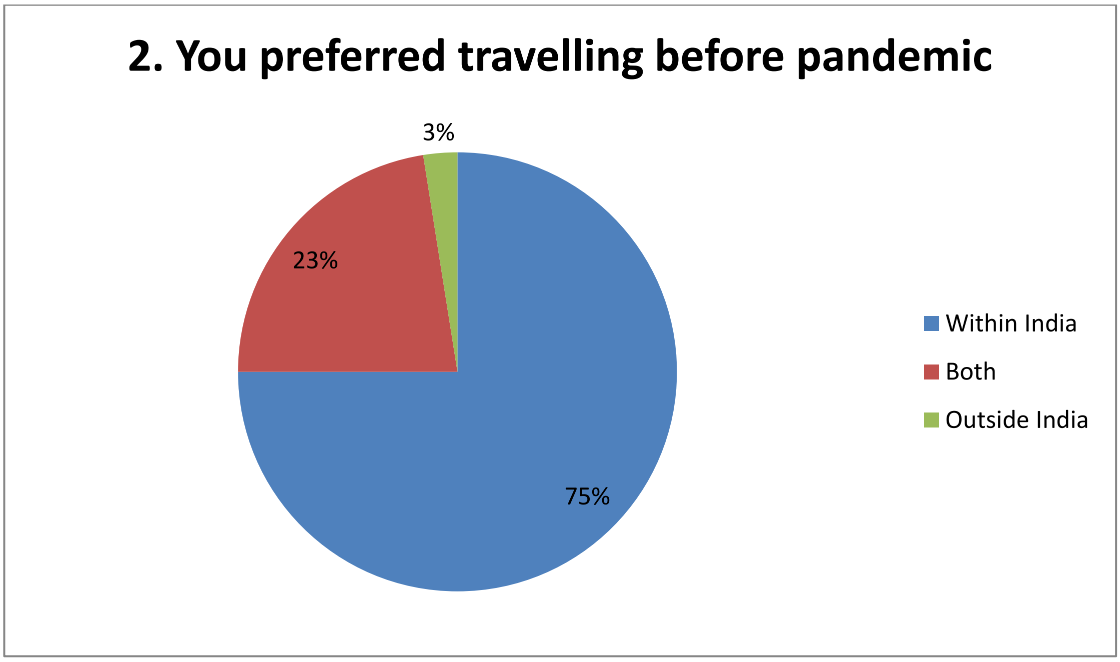


Pre pandemic Gen X was equally interested in taking up travel within India (Dometic tourism) and also 50% showed inclination towards opting for both (Domestic and Intenational Travel).

Gen Y:



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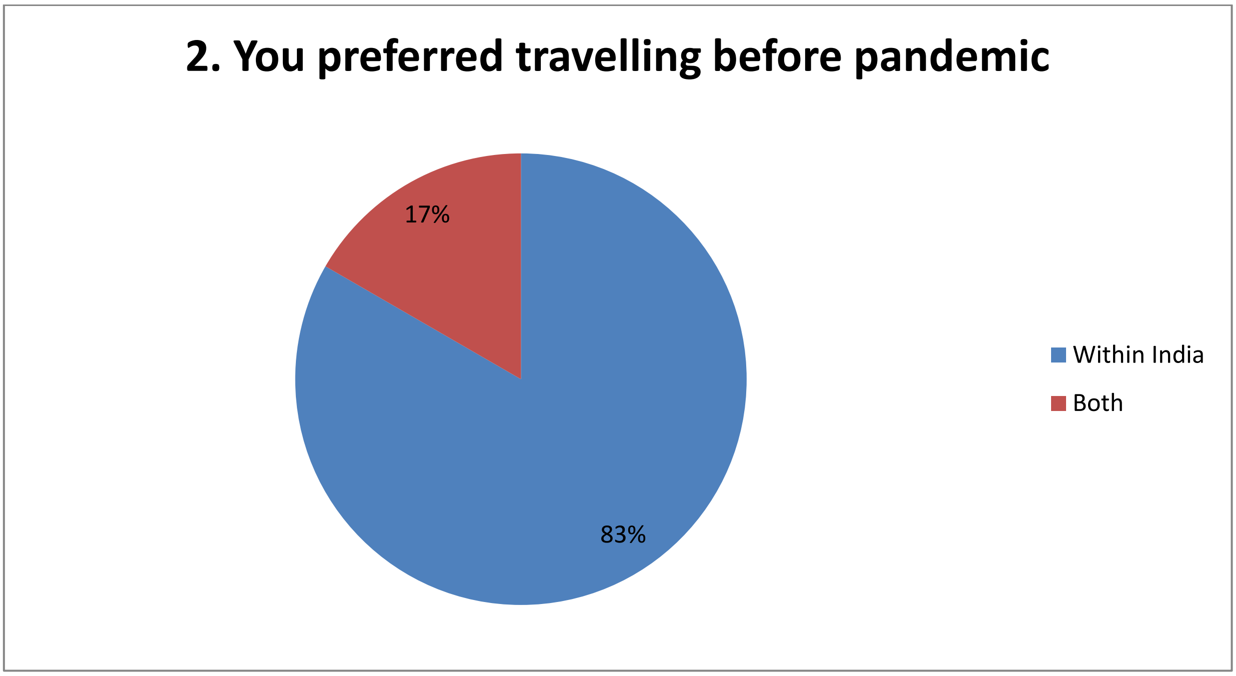
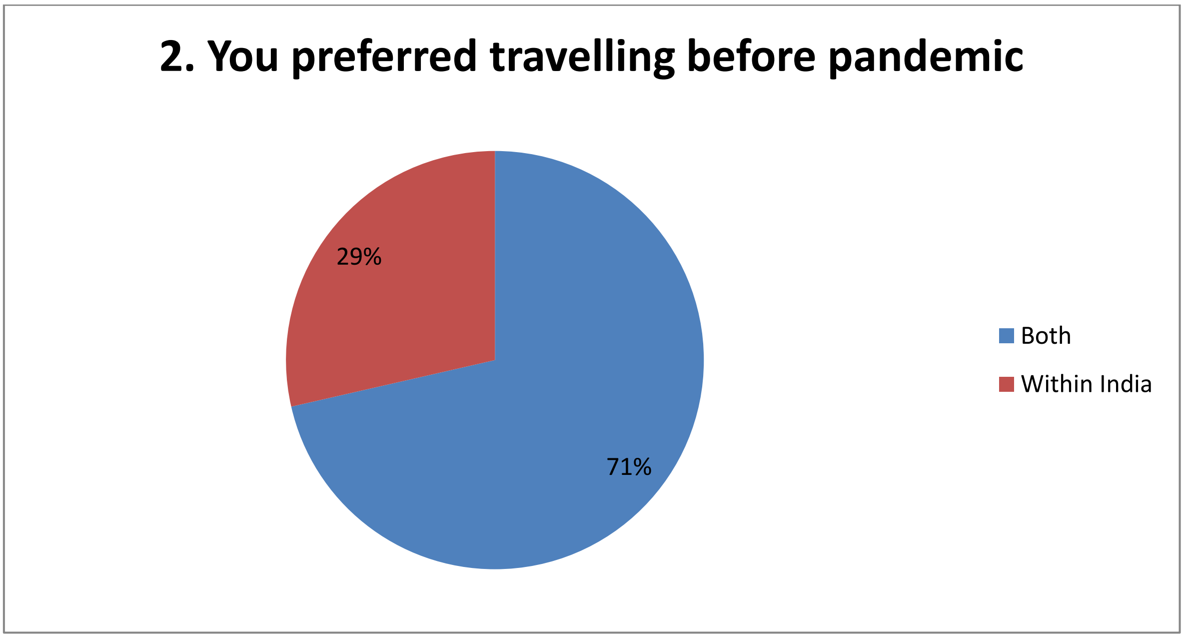
Alomost 75% of the Gen Y prfered domestic traveling before pandemic and merely 3% prefered international travels. On the other hand, 23% of Gen Y prefered travelling both domestic as well as international travels.

Gen Z:



83% of Gen Z preferred taking up domestic travel and merely 17% were for taking up international travel pre COVID – 19.

Senior Citizens:



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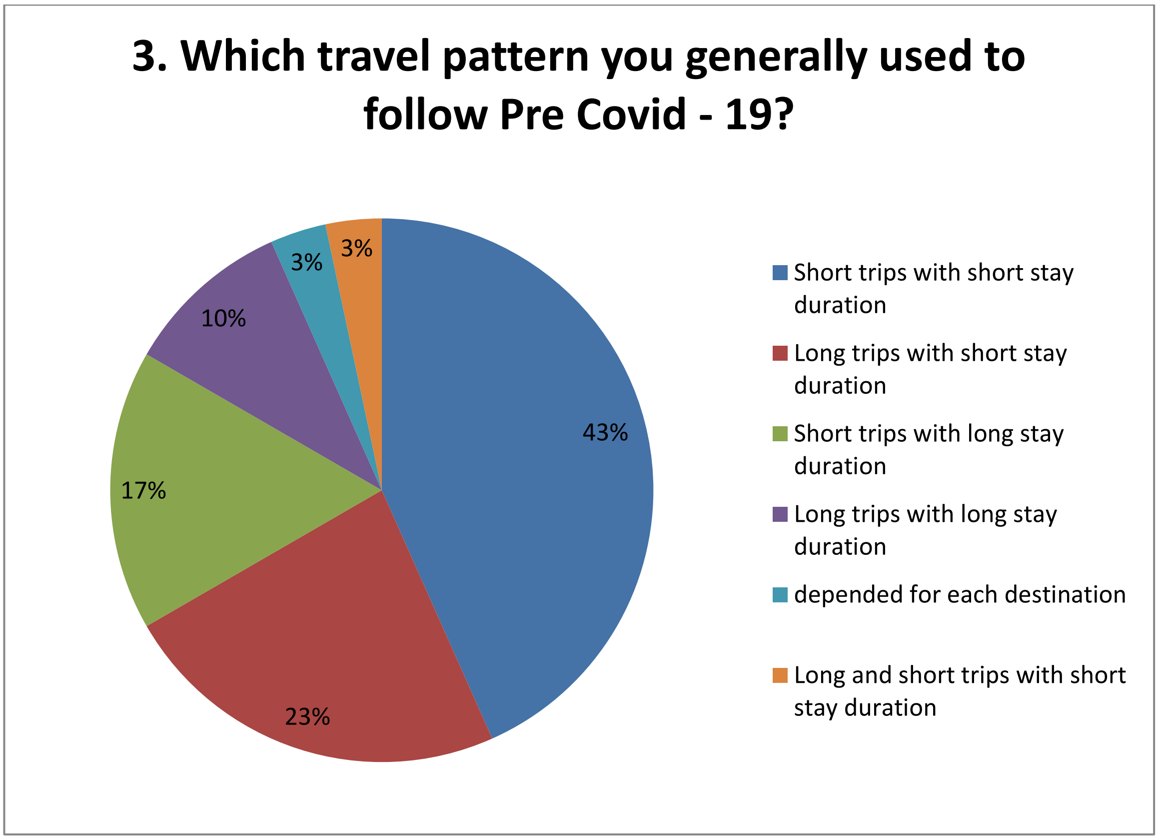
For senior citizens the percentage preferring to travel only within India is 29% whereas, 71% prefer travelling abroad and in India both.

Gen X:



As far as duration of the travel was concerned the Gen X prefered short trips with short durations at 43% followed by long trips with short stay at 23% and short trips with long stay at 17%. Also some preffered long trips with long trips with long stay at 10% and whereas 6% were in the category of others having their own travel patterns.

Gen Y:

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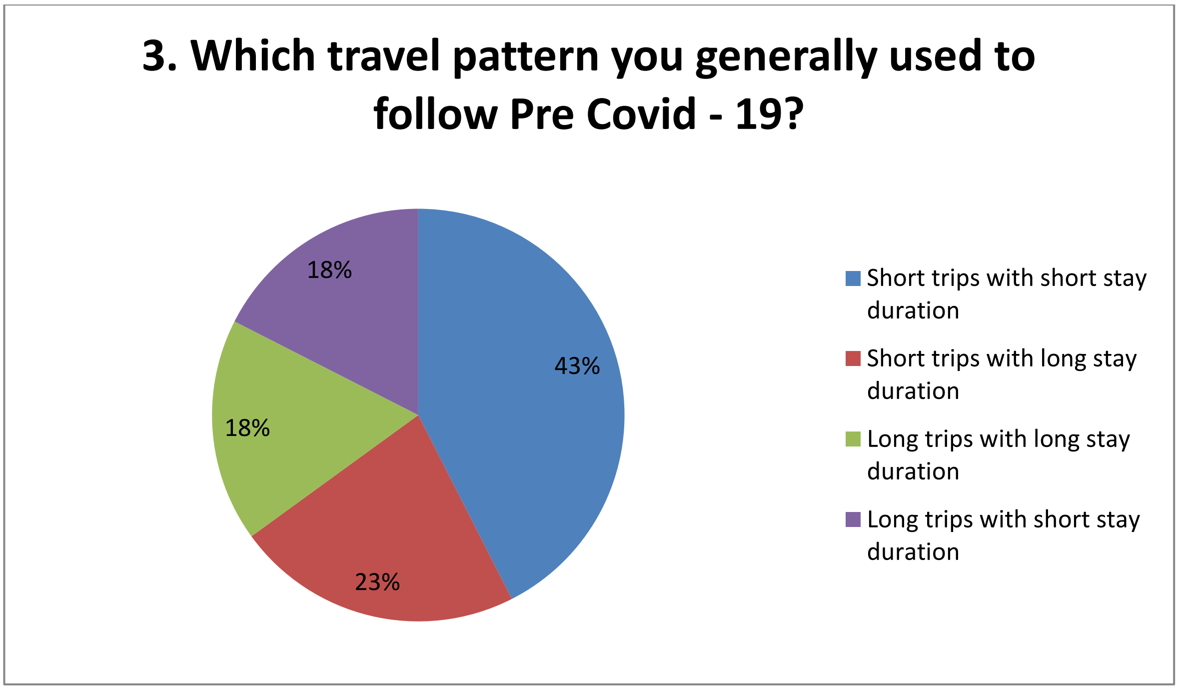
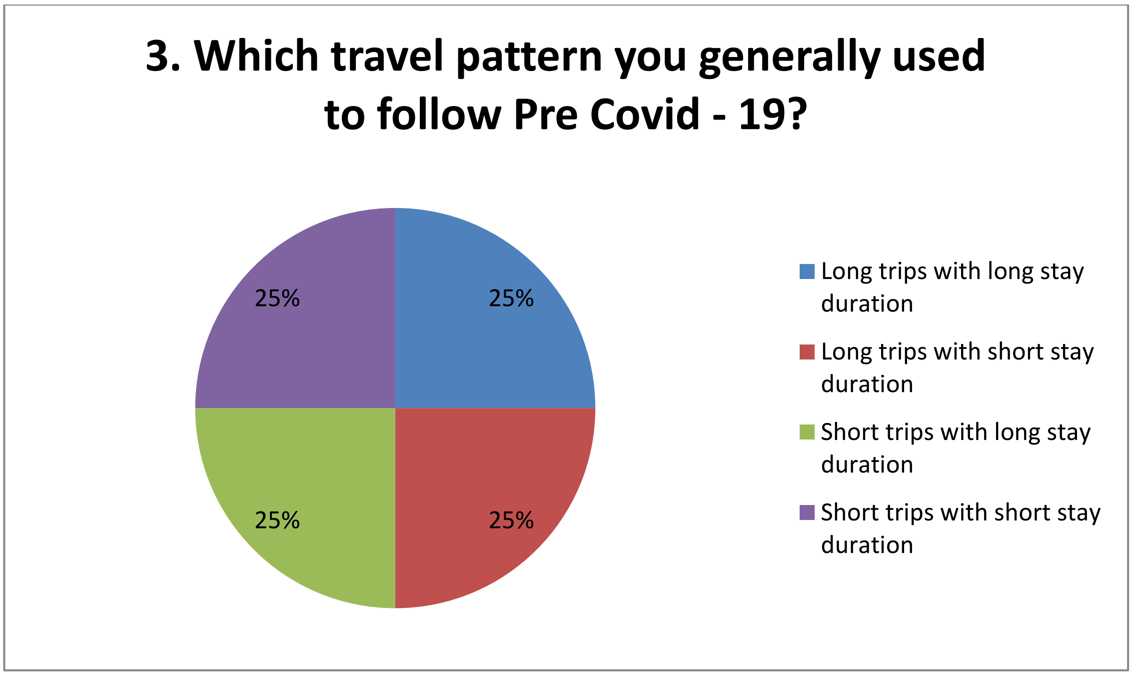


Gen Y 43 % respondents preferred short trips with short duration of stay also 23% preferred short trips with long stay. Whereas for long trip preference it is at par with 18% for both long trips with short stay and long trip with long stay.

Gen Z:



Gen Z equally preferred long and short haul travel at 50% each further short trip with short duration and short trips with long stay are also equally preferred at 25% each. Similarly long trips with long duration and long trips with short duration are with 25% each.

Senior Citizens:

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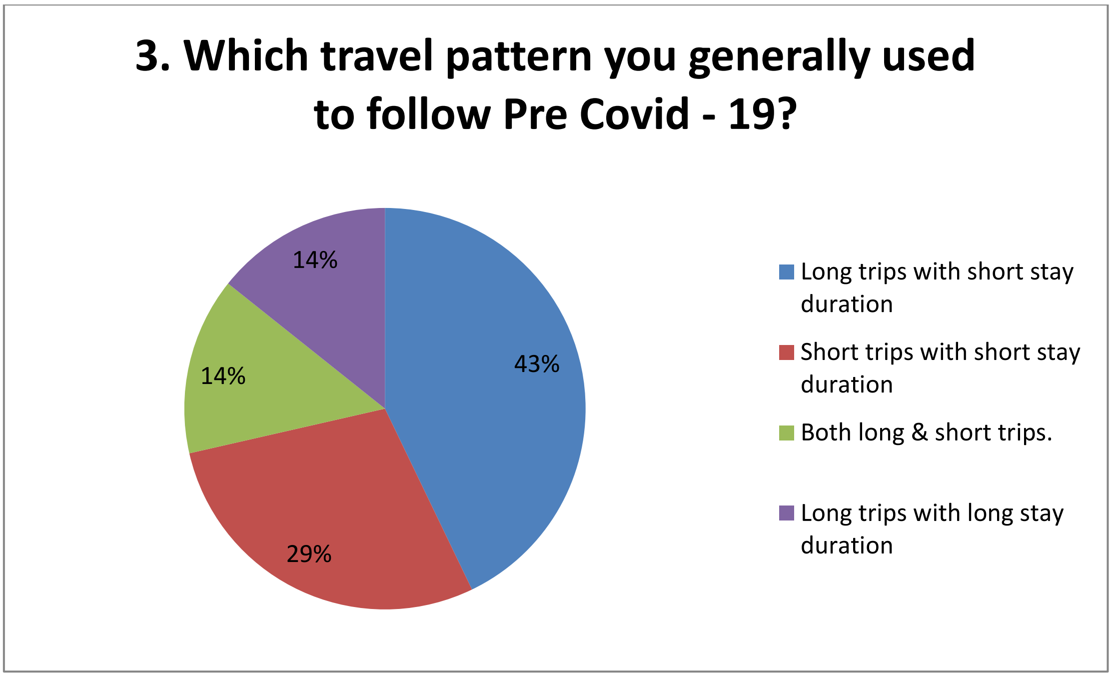
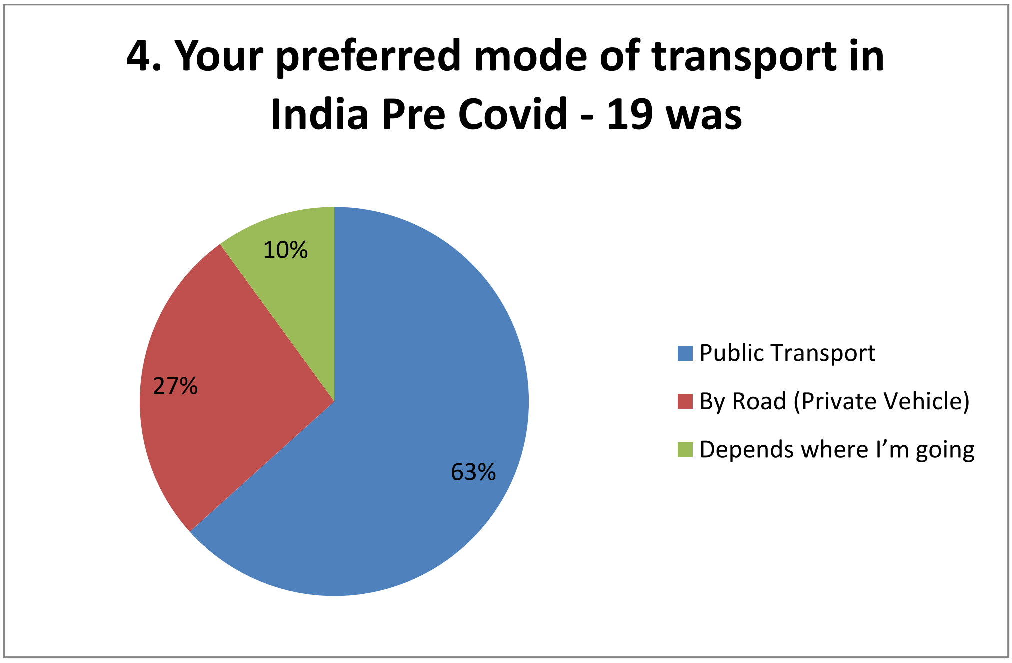


Senior citizen used to take up long trips more than short trips. In that 43% preferred long trips with short stay and 14% liked long trips with long stay pre COVID – 19. Whereas, only short trips with short stay was choice of 29% and 14% preferred both long and short trips equally.

Gen X:



63% of Gen X preferd various modes of public transport for domestic tourism which include railway, airway and road transport. 27% prefered taking up domestic tour by their own private vehicles pre COVID-19. Remaining 10% were flexible depending on the accesiblity and convenience to reach a destination.

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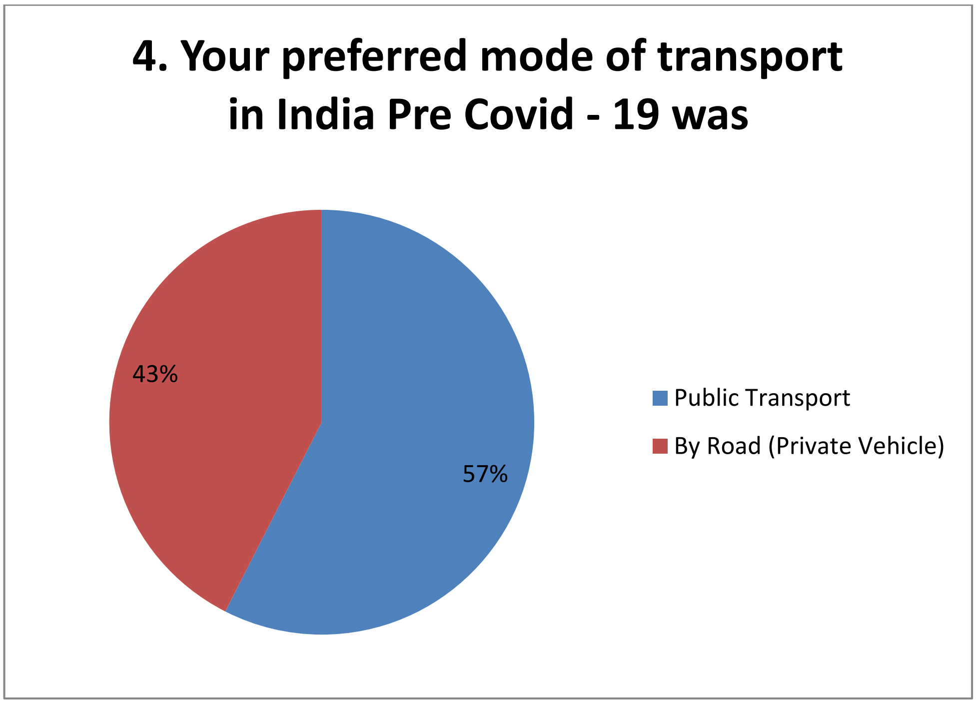
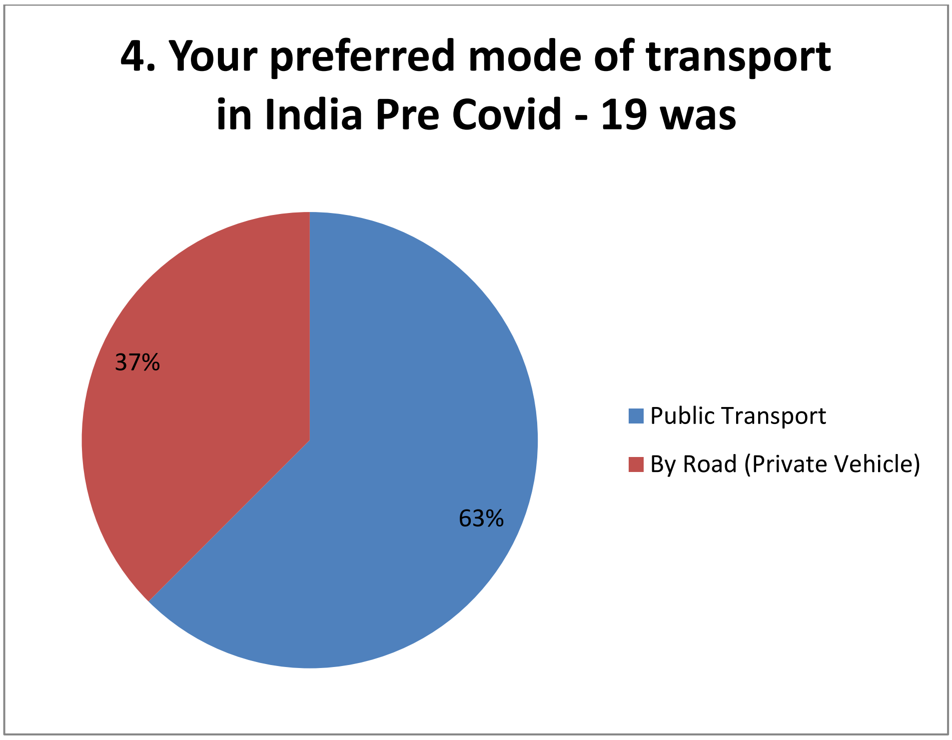
Gen Y:



While travelling in India Gen Y preferred public transport at 57% to reach a destination whereas 43% preferred to take private vehicle by road to reach a domestic destination.

Gen Z:



The preferred mode of transport pre COVID – 19 for Gen Z was public transport at 63% and 37% preferred taking private vehicle and travel by road for domestic tourism.

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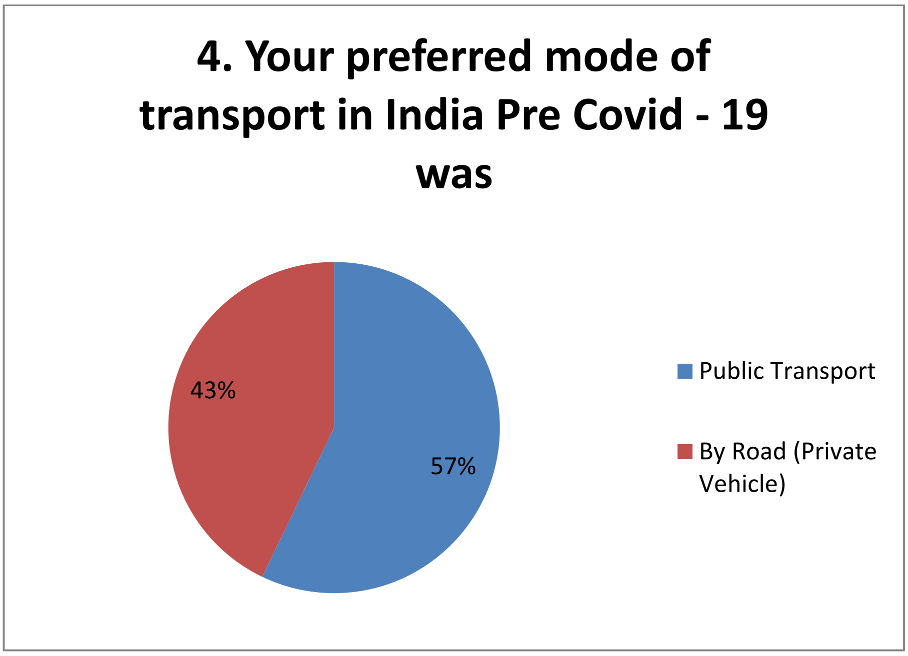
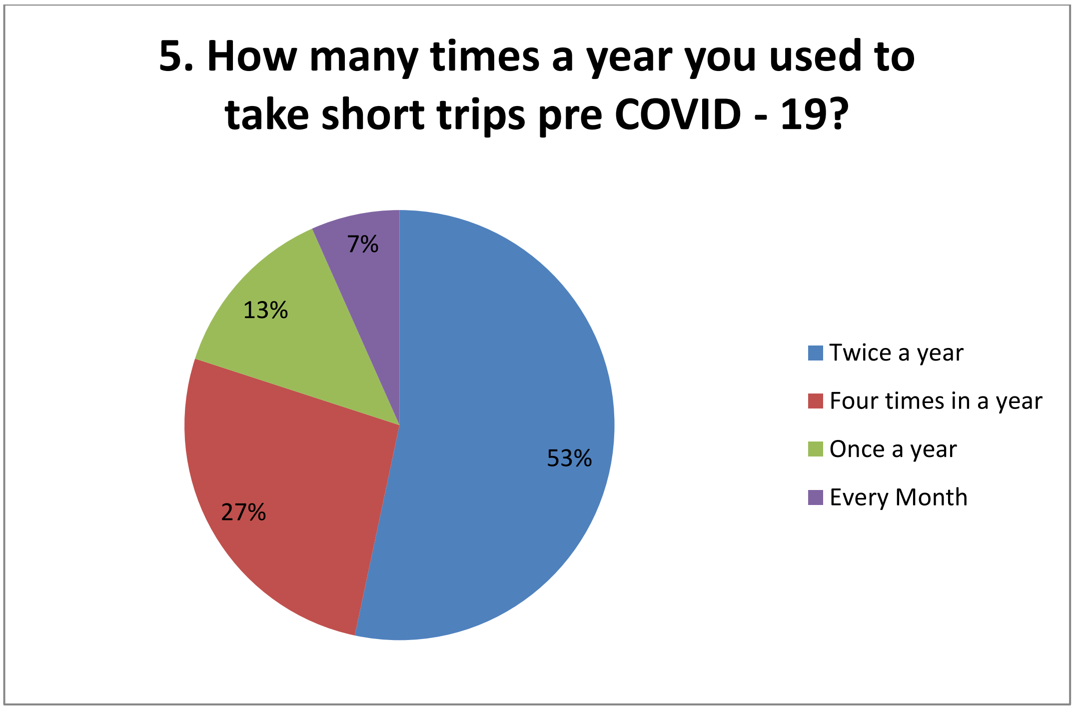
Senior Citizens:



57% senior citizens took public transport as their preferred mode of transport pre COVID-19 and 43% took private vehicle by road to reach a destination in India.

Gen X:



53% Gen X took two domestic holidays in a year, 27% travelled four times in a year in india, wheras 13% traveled only one a year to domestic destinationa and 7% were frequent domestic tourists taking up travel everymonth.

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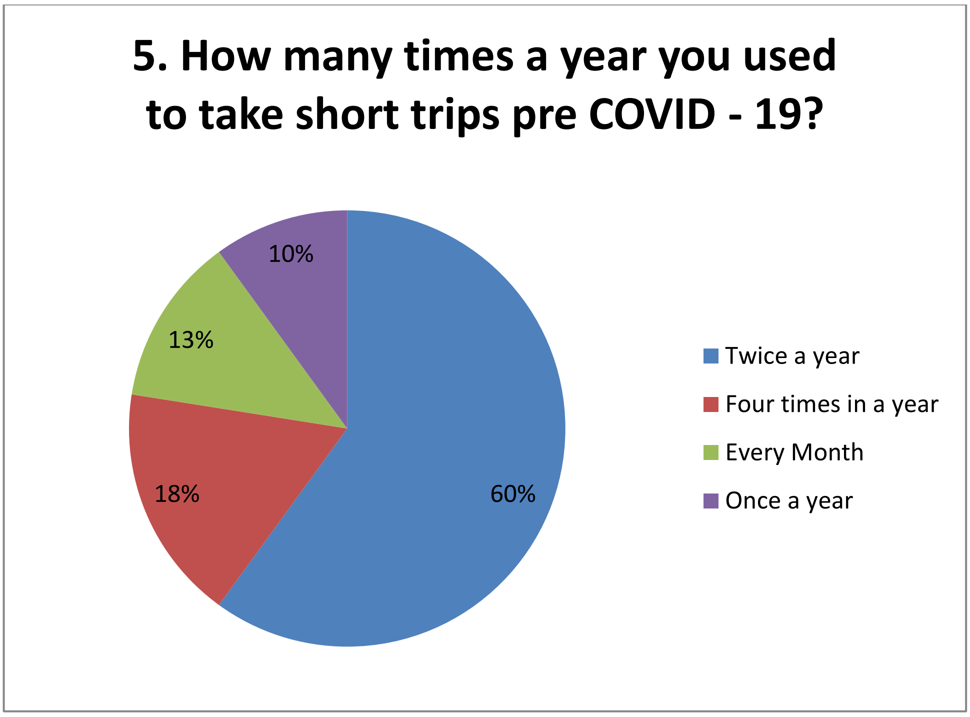
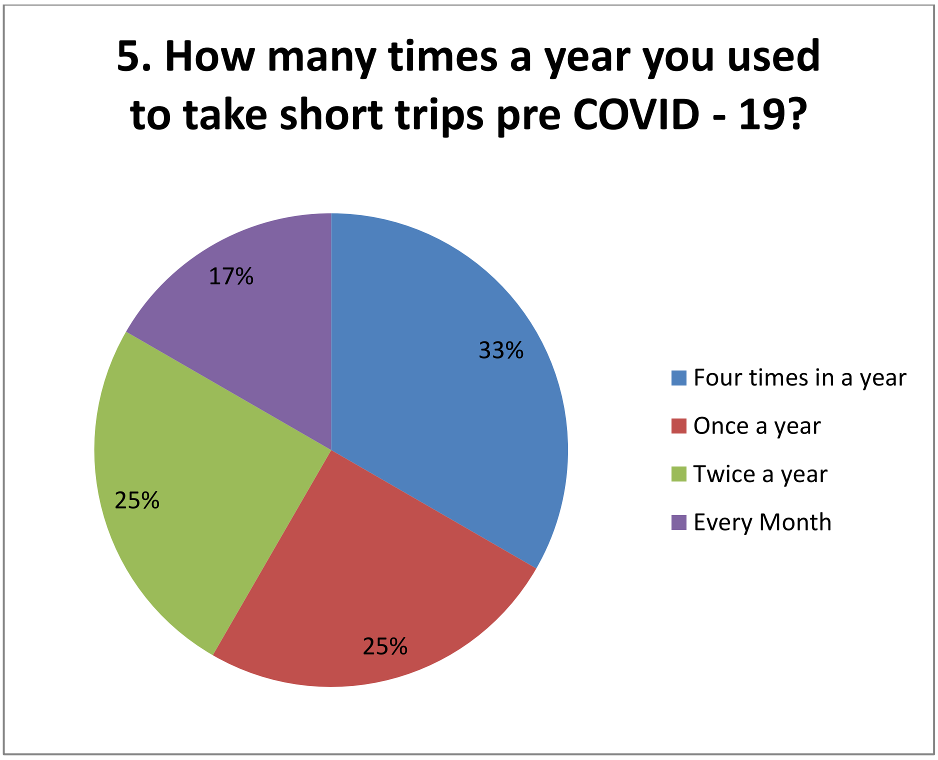
Gen Y:



About 60% of Gen Y used to take short trips twice a year pre COVID – 19, 18% used to travel four times in a year taking short trips. Many used to take a short trip every month contributing to 13% and 10% were not very frequent travellers taking up only one short trip annually.

Gen Z:



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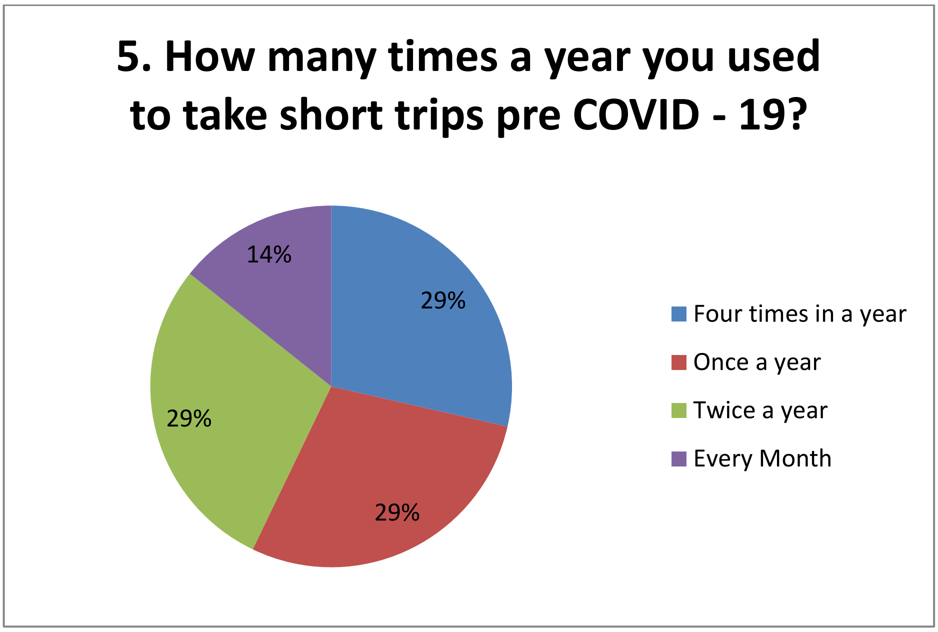
The frequency of domestic travel pre COVID –19 for Gen Z was noted as follows,

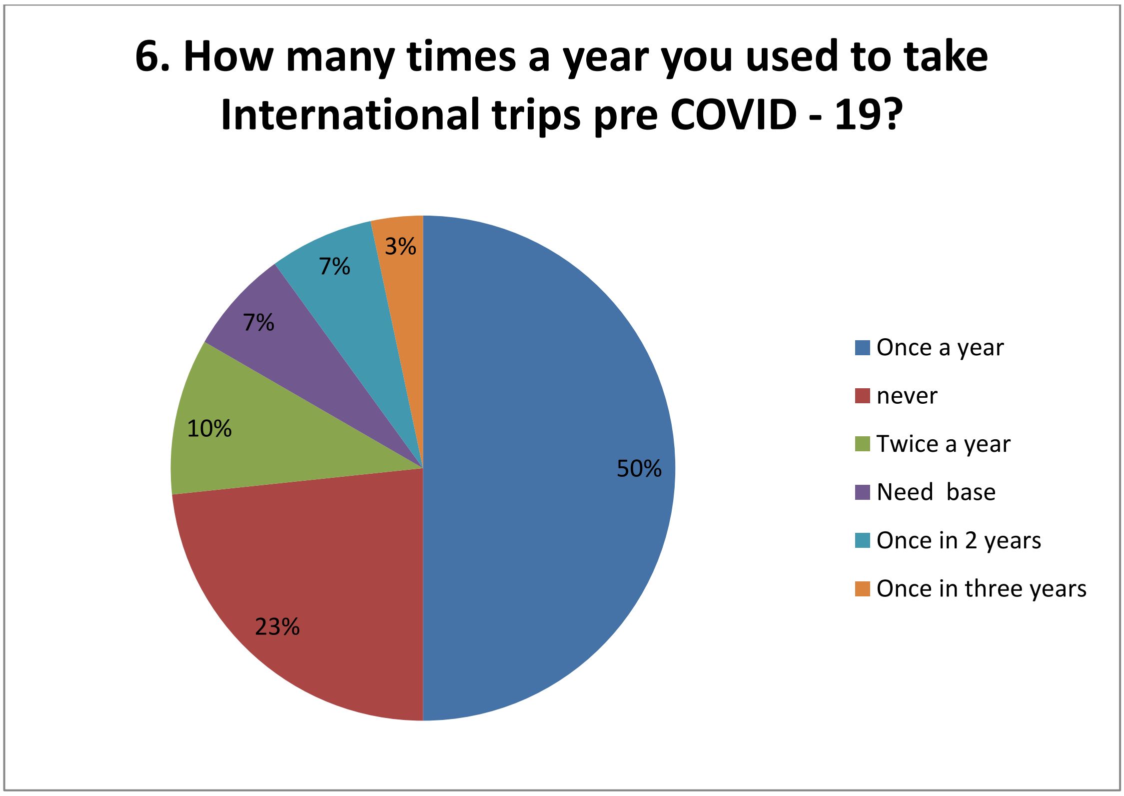
33% travelling four times in a year, 25% once a year, 25% twice a year and 17% travelled every month.

Senior Citizens:



29% of the senior citizen took short trips four times in a year, once a year and twice a year respectively and 14% took short trips frequently as good as every month pre COVID – 19.

Gen X:



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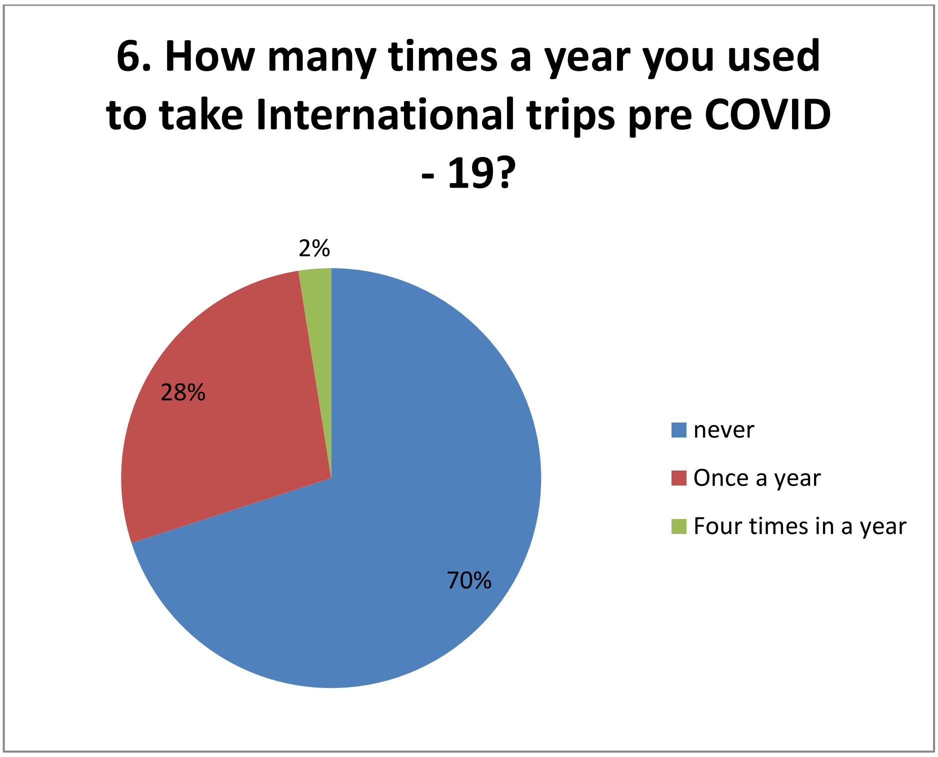
50% of Gen X was taking an international trip at least once in a year, 10% were travelling twice a year and 7% once in two year while 3% once in three years. Whereas 23% never travelled abroad and for 7% it was need based.

Gen Y:



About 70% of Gen Y has never taken up international travel pre COVID – 19. Just 28% used to take it once a year and 2% were taking it four times in a year.

Gen Z:

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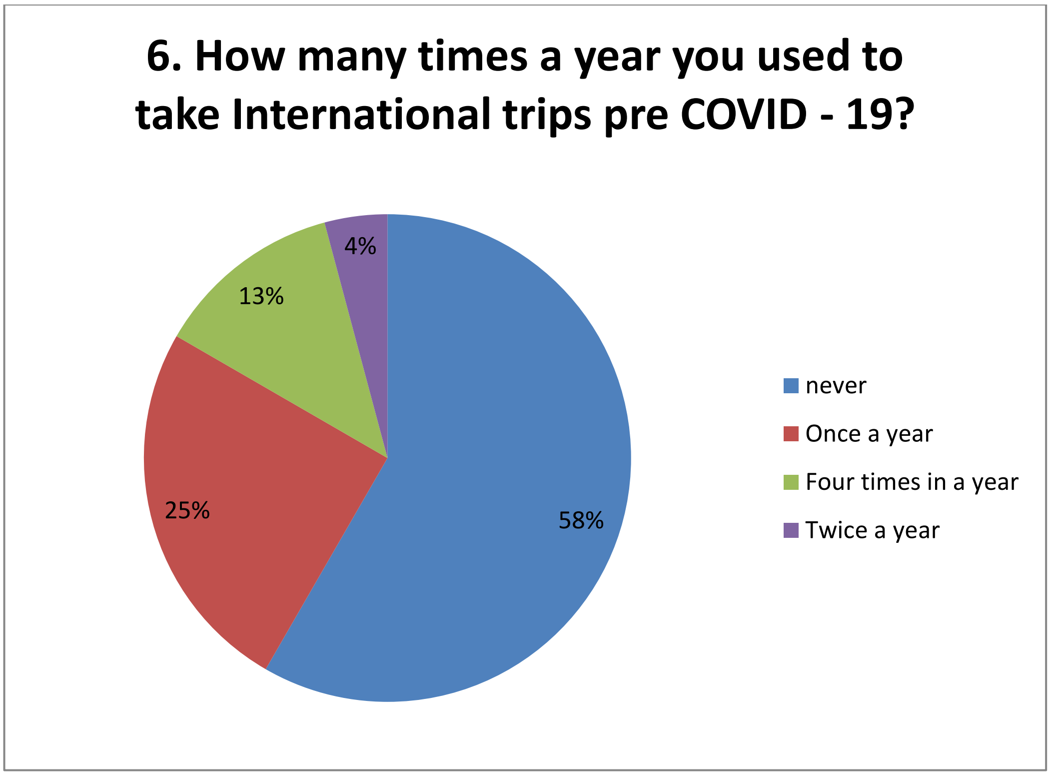
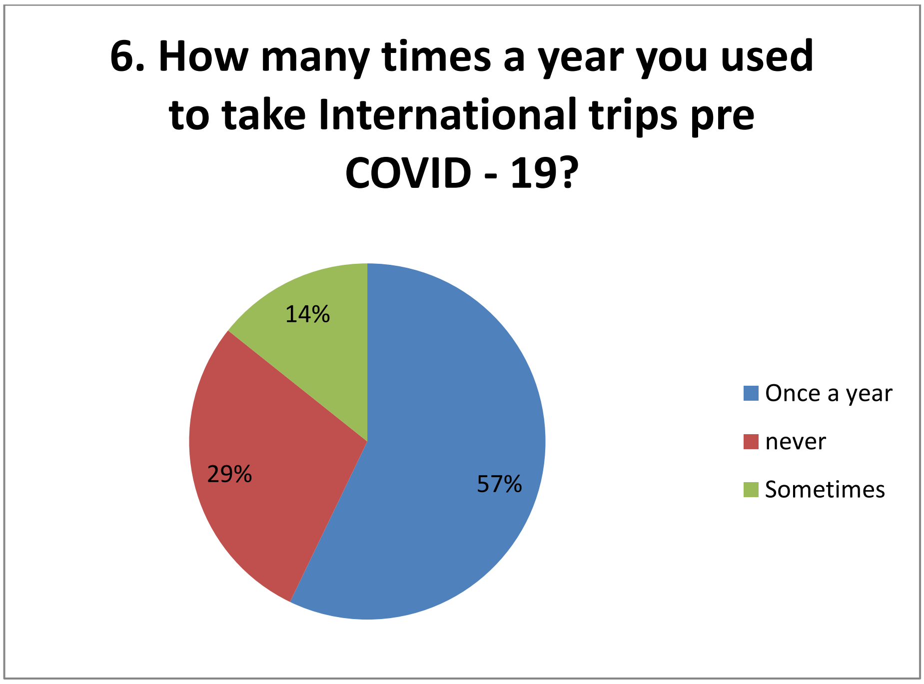


The frequency of taking up international travel with Gen Z is as follows,
58% never took up international travel pre COVID – 19, 25% travelled once a year, 13% travelled four times in a year and 4% travelled twice a year.

Senior Citizens:



57% of the senior citizens took international trips pre COVID – 19 once a year.
29% said they have never taken up international travel and 14% would sometimes take international travel before pandemic.

Gen X:

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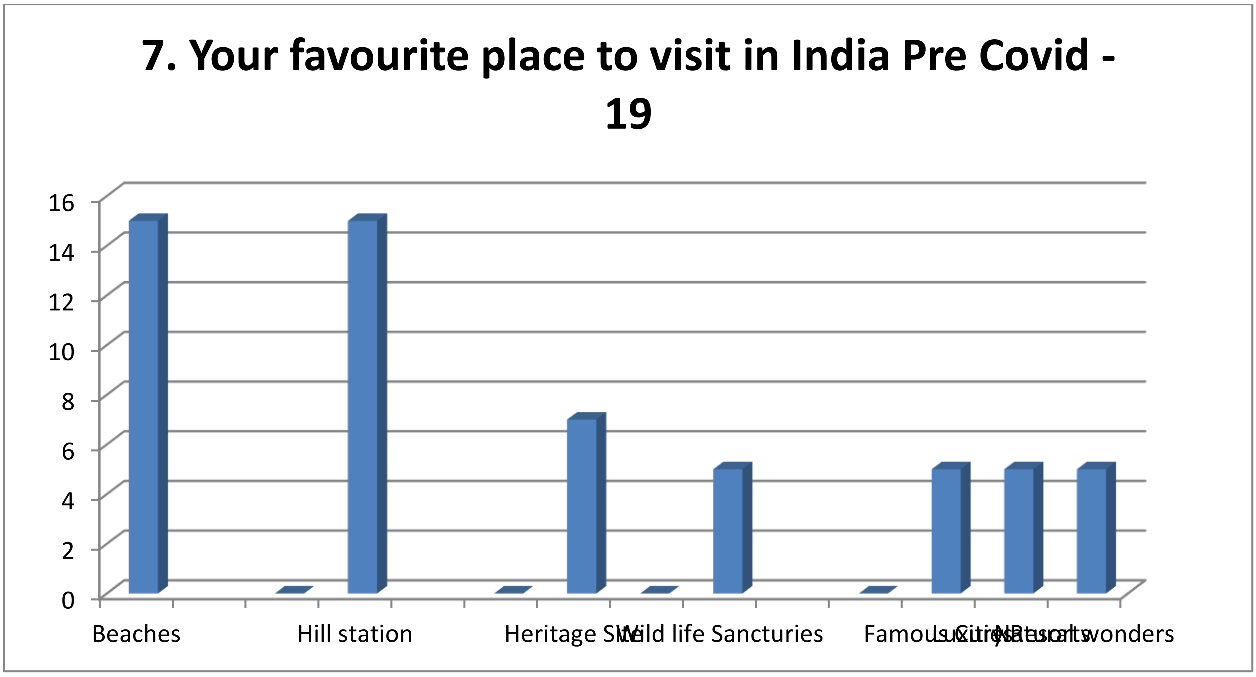
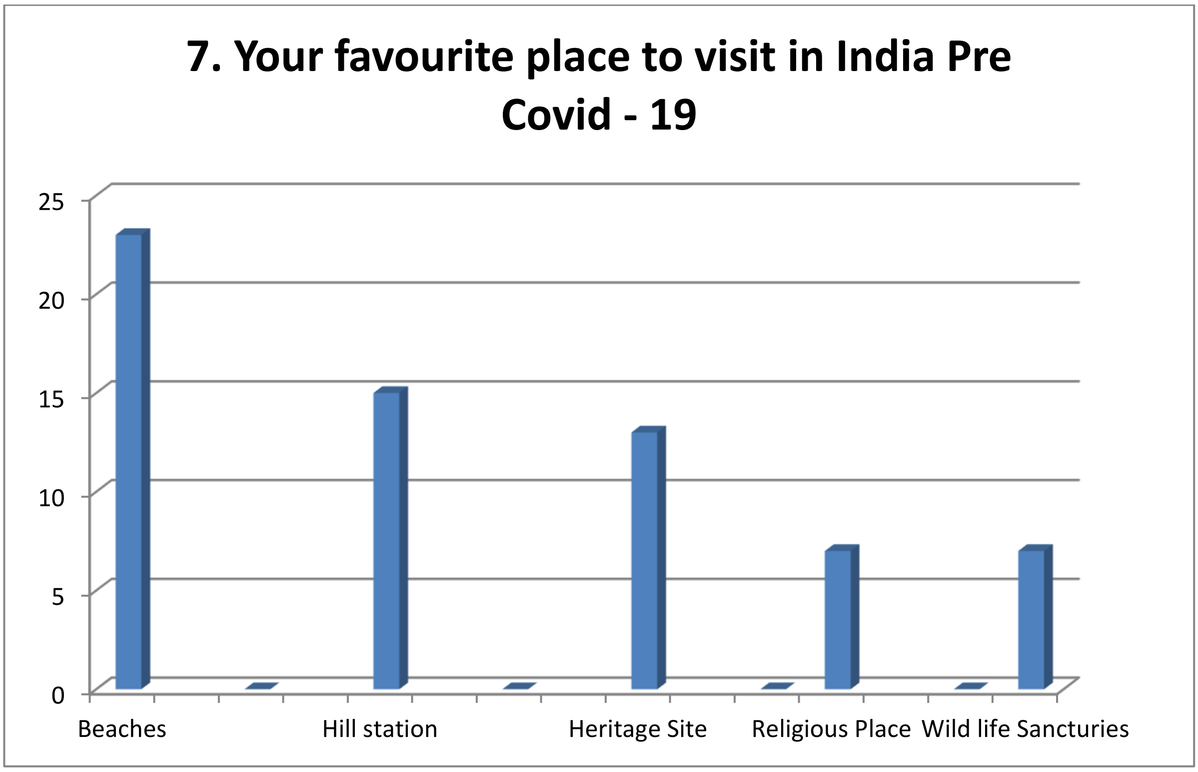


On asking about their favourite destinations to visit in India Beaches and hill stations came up on the top list followed by heritage sites, wildlife sanctuaries and in the last category was famous cities, luxury resorts and natural wonders for Gen X.

Gen Y:



Amongst the most favoured domestic tourism choices the top 5 which emerged for Gen Y are Beaches as the first preference followed by hill stations as the second option. Third option was heritage sites. Whereas religious places and wildlife were at fourth and fifth place respectively.

Gen Z:

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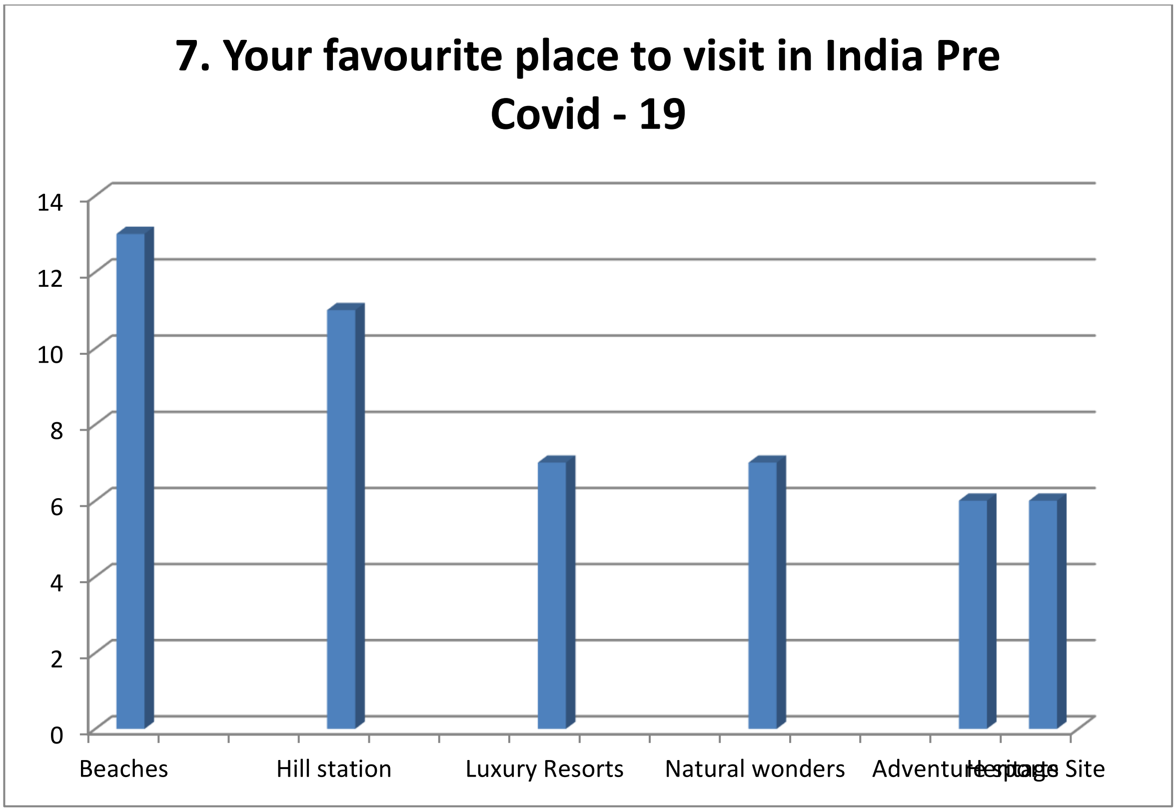
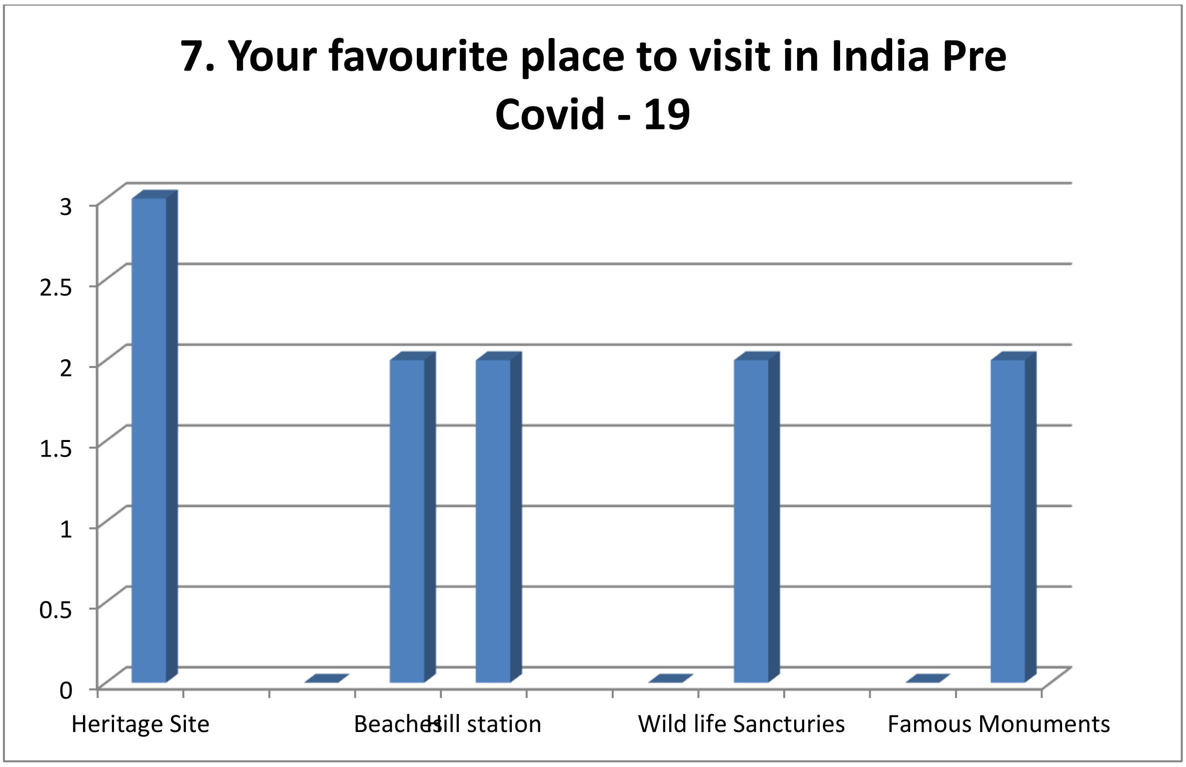


When asked about favourite domestic destinations pre COVID – 19 the choices emerged as beaches at top position, followed by hill stations, luxury resorts and natural wonders scored third position and adventure sports and heritage sites were at fourth position.

Senior Citizens:



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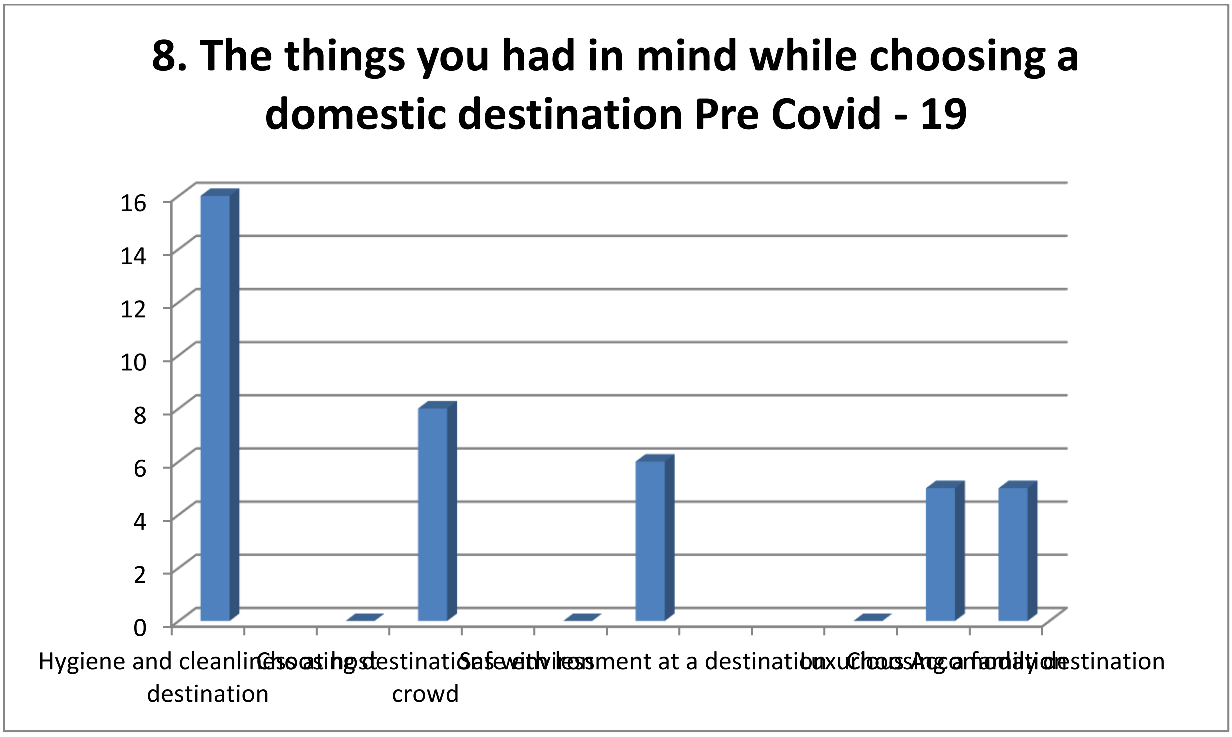
The favourite destinations in India for senior citizens were as follows,

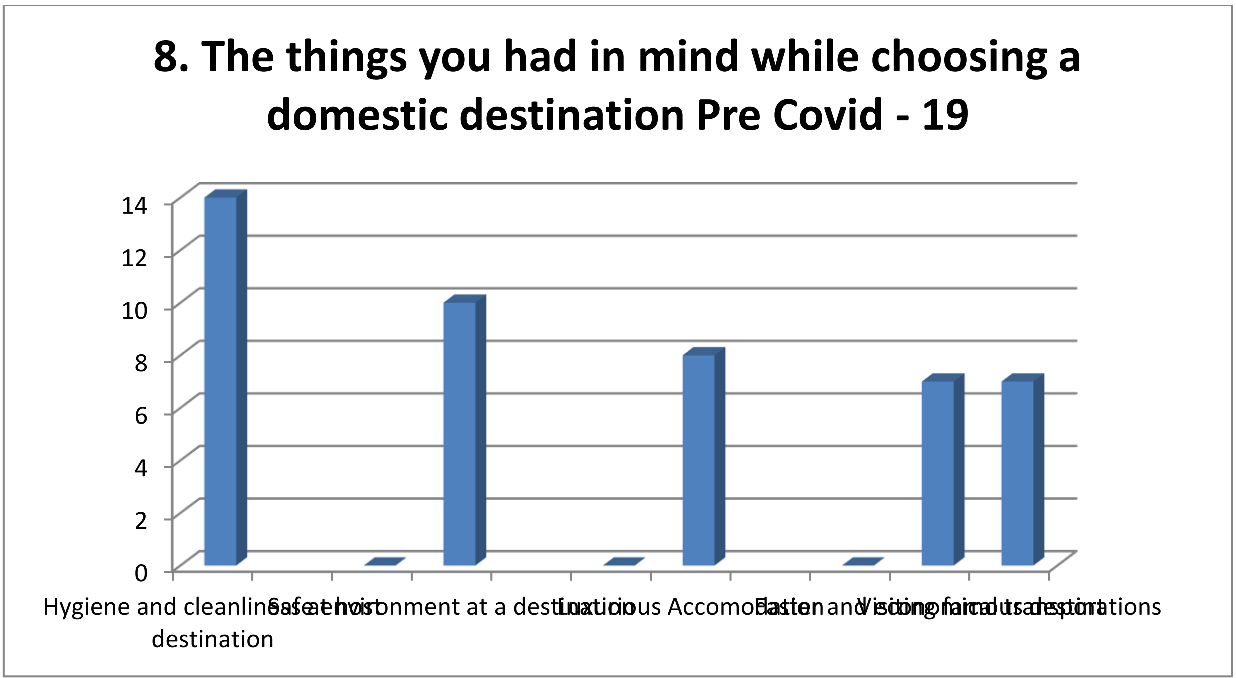
Heritage sites topped the list with beaches and hill stations scoring second place, wild life sanctuaries were at third place and famous monuments were at the fourth place.

Gen X:



When asked about top five concerns while choosing a domestic destination pre COVID -19 to Gen X, hygiene and sanitation at the host destination was on the top priority followed by less crowded destination at the second place, safety at the destination (safe environment) was the third concern whereas luxurious accommodation and family destination was simultaneously at fourth and fifth rank.

Gen Y:



Pre COVID – 19 what Gen Y was looking for at a domestic destination was as follows,

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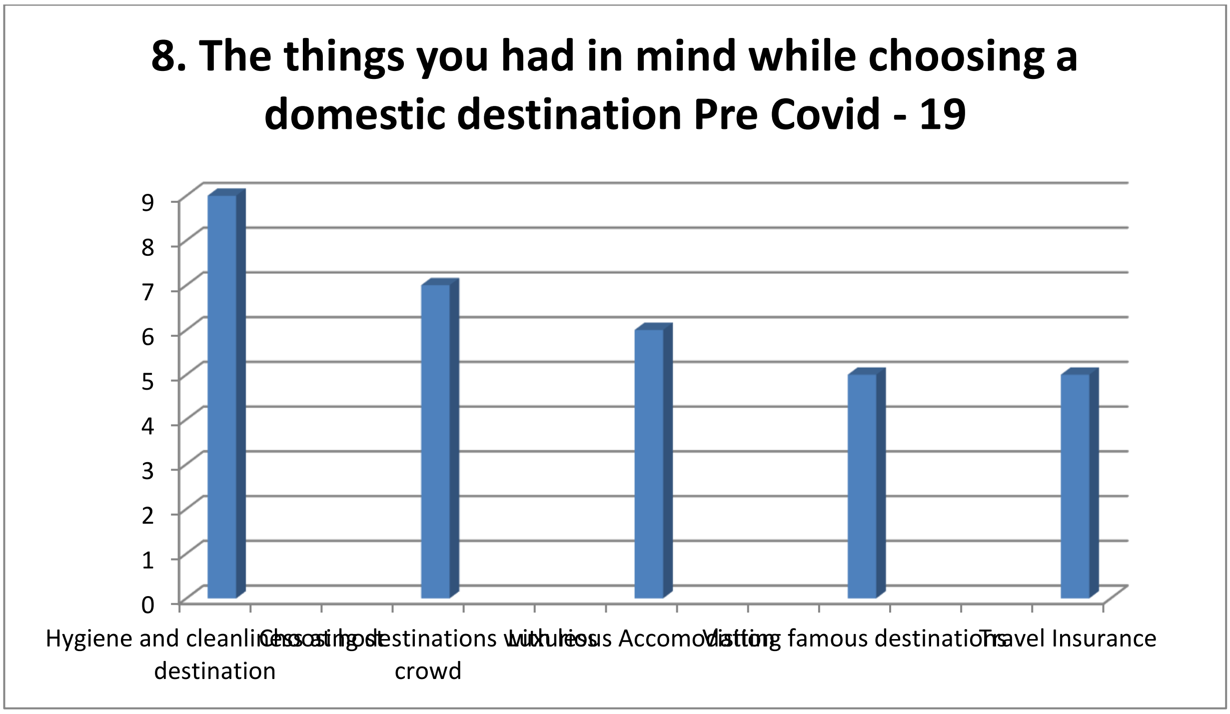
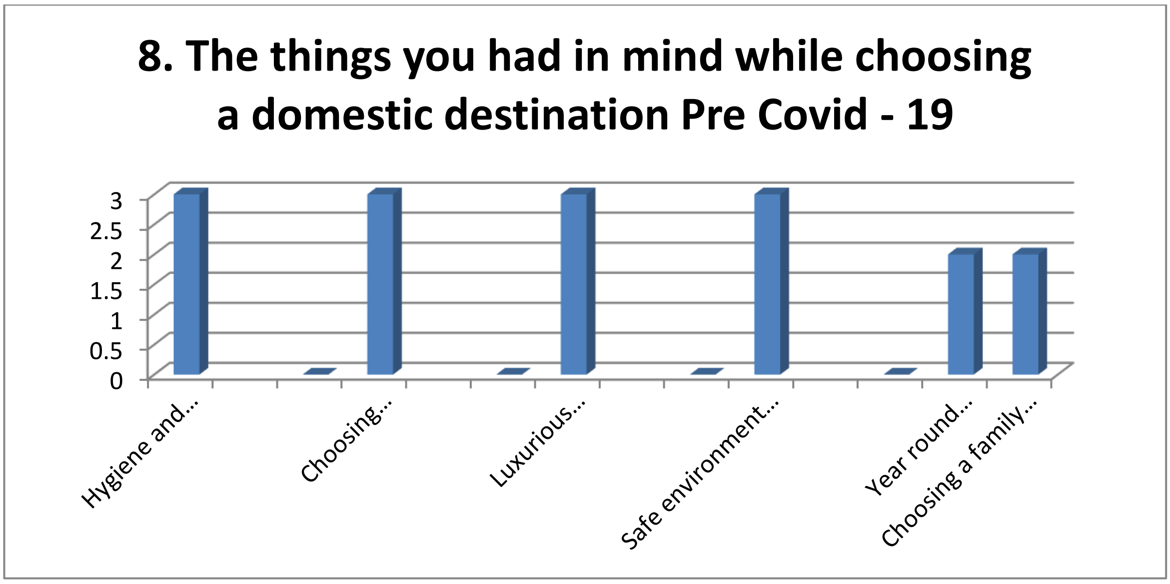
Hygiene and sanitation at host destination as a top priority followed by safe environment at the destination, luxurious accommodation scored the third position and faster and cheaper mode of transport with chance to visit famous tourist destination were equally placed at fourth place.

Gen Z:



Top five concerns for Gen Z, pre COVID – 19 domestic travels were hygiene and sanitation at a host destination as a top preference then less crowded destination at a second place, luxurious accommodation as a third priority, visiting famous destination at fourth place and travel insurance was the least concern at fifth place.

Senior Citizens:



Following are the top concerns for senior citizens while choosing a domestic destination pre COVID – 19,

Hygiene and cleanliness at host destination, choosing less crowded destination, luxurious accommodation and safe environment at the destination all were equally important.

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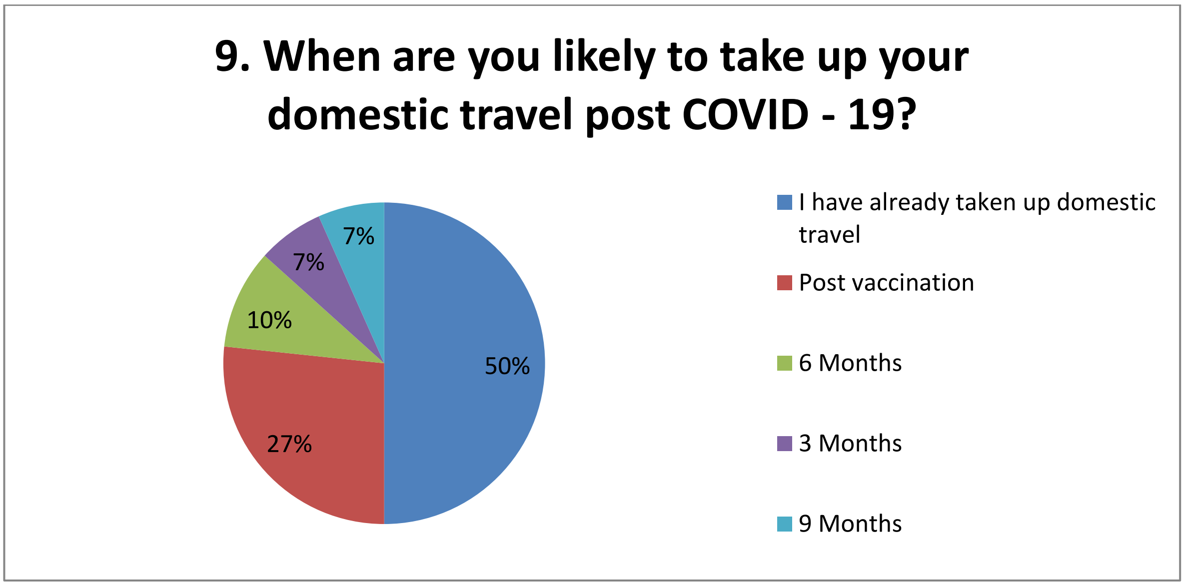
Year round availability of a destination and family destination were next in line.

Section II: Post COVID – 19 Tourism Scenarios

As the unlock phase gradually progress travel restrictions were relaxed and people were resuming their routine. We are now at a stage where travelling with precautionary measures is a new normal. The researchers intend to find out if the people are willing to take up domestic travel post COVID – 19. If yes, how do they intend to do it?

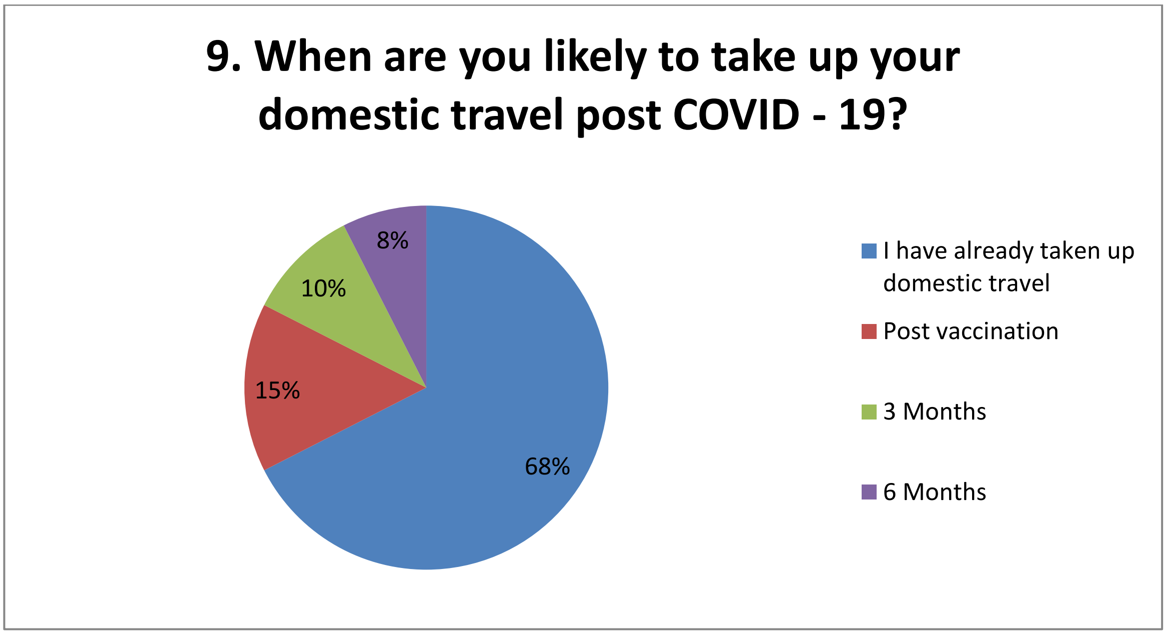
Gen X:



Upon asking if people are willing to take up a domestic travel, 50% of the Gen X said that they have already taken up a domestic travel though, 27% feel it only safe after the vaccination.

7% are ready to take up a domestic travel after 3 months, 10% to take up after 6 months and remaining 7% will take their domestic travel after 9 months.

Gen Y:



While trying to find out domestic tourism inclination post COVID – 19 with Gen Y 68% respondents said they had already taken up domestic travel. 15% said they would only think of domestic travel after

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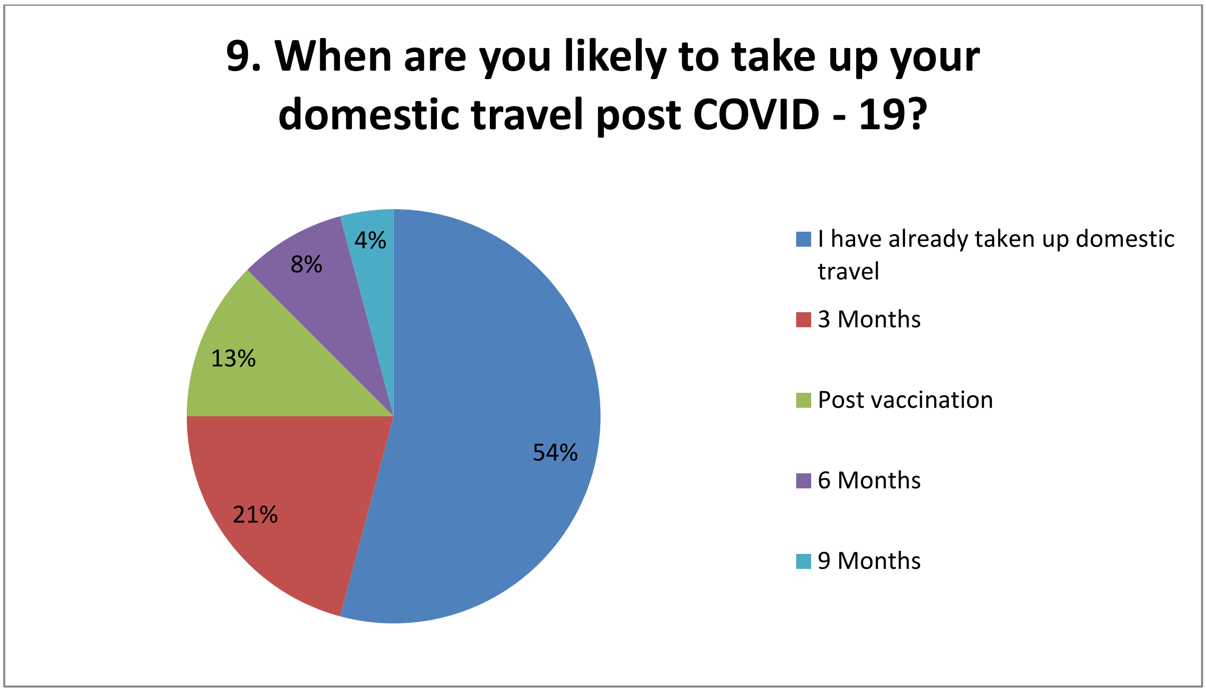
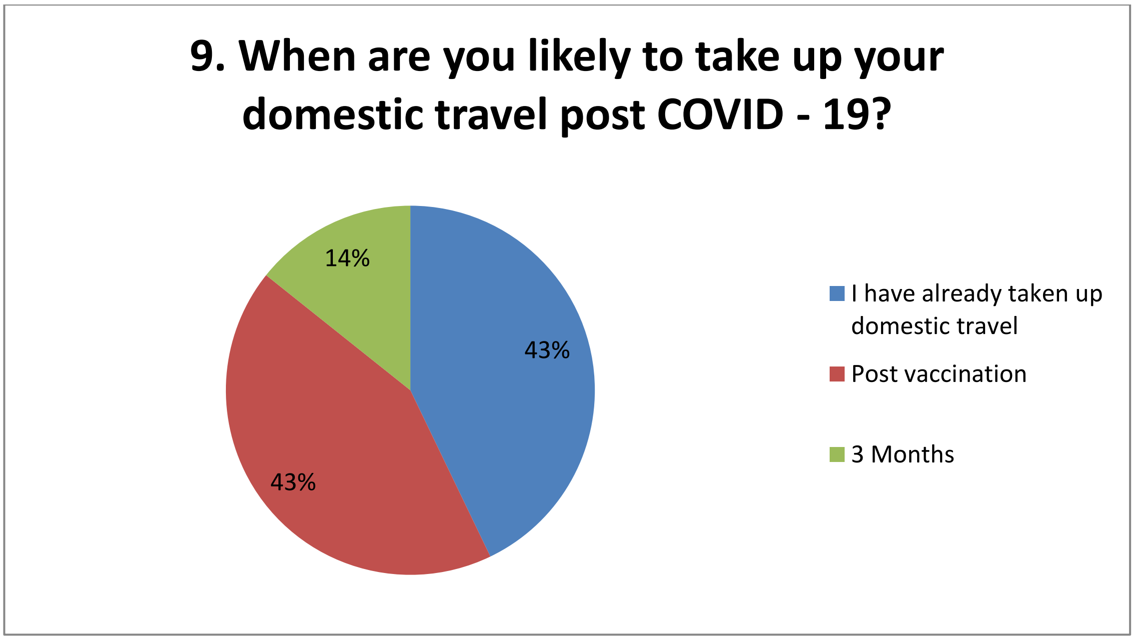
vaccination. 10% thought it's safe to take up a domestic trip in coming 3 months and 8% said they would think about travel in another 6 months.

Gen Z:



54% of Gen Z has already taken up domestic travel, 21% are planning to take up within 3 months from now, 8% are planning to take it within 6 months and 4% may take it 9 months from now. 13% feel it is safe to travel only after vaccination.

Senior Citizens:



43% of senior citizens have already taken up domestic travel and 43% of them will take post vaccination. Remaining 14% would like to travel after 3 months from now.

Gen X:

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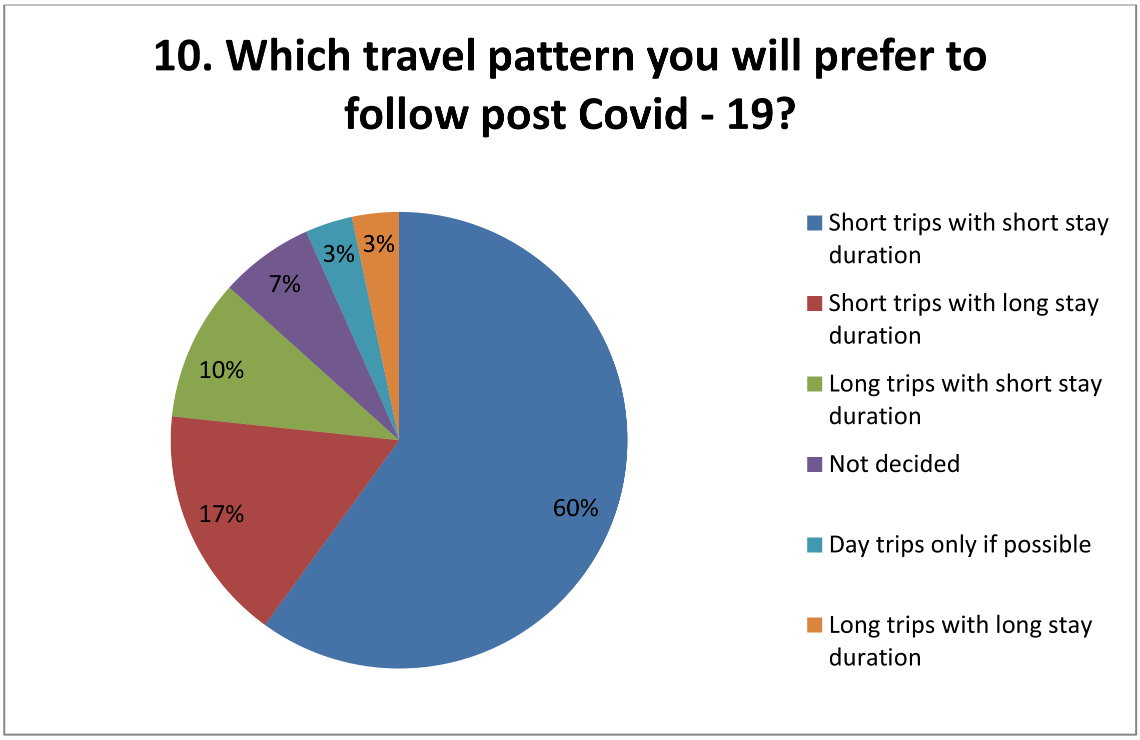
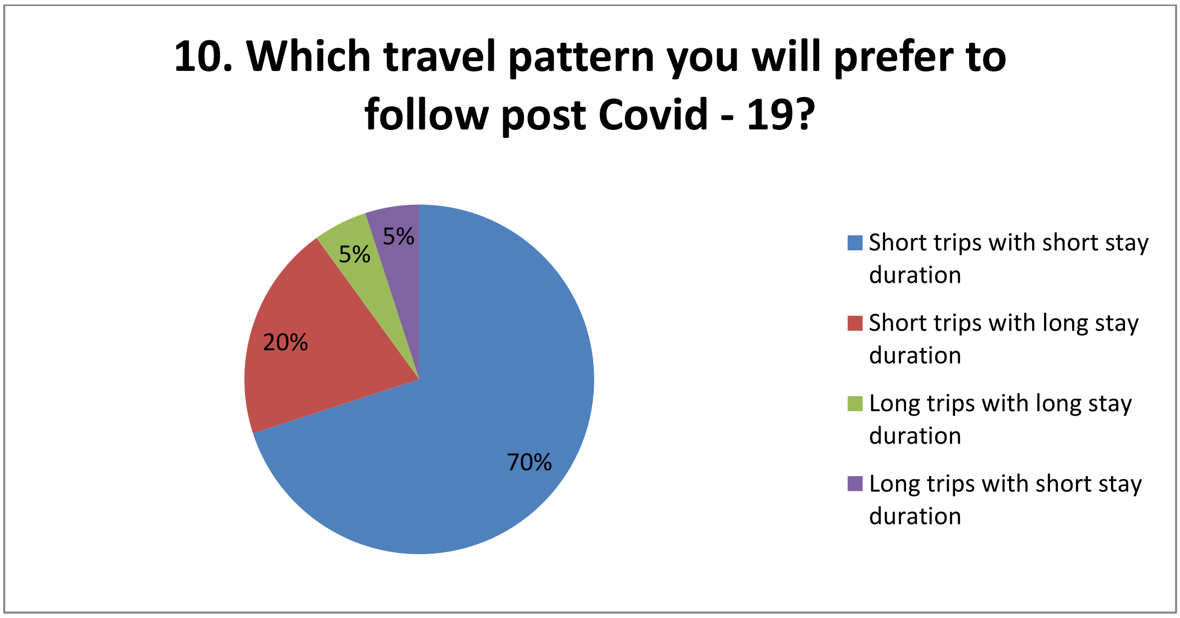


About 60% of Gen X prefers short trips with short duration of stay whereas 17% also prefer short trips with long stay duration.

10% prefer long trips with short stay and 3% will prefer long trips with long stay duration. 7% are indecisive about taking up a travel and 3% prefer only day trips and not overnight stay.

Gen Y:



Post COVID – 19 Gen Y preferred short trips with short stay as a top travelling pattern with 70%. Also 20% opted for short trips but long duration of stay. 5% each were for long trips and long stay and long trips with short stay.

Gen Z:

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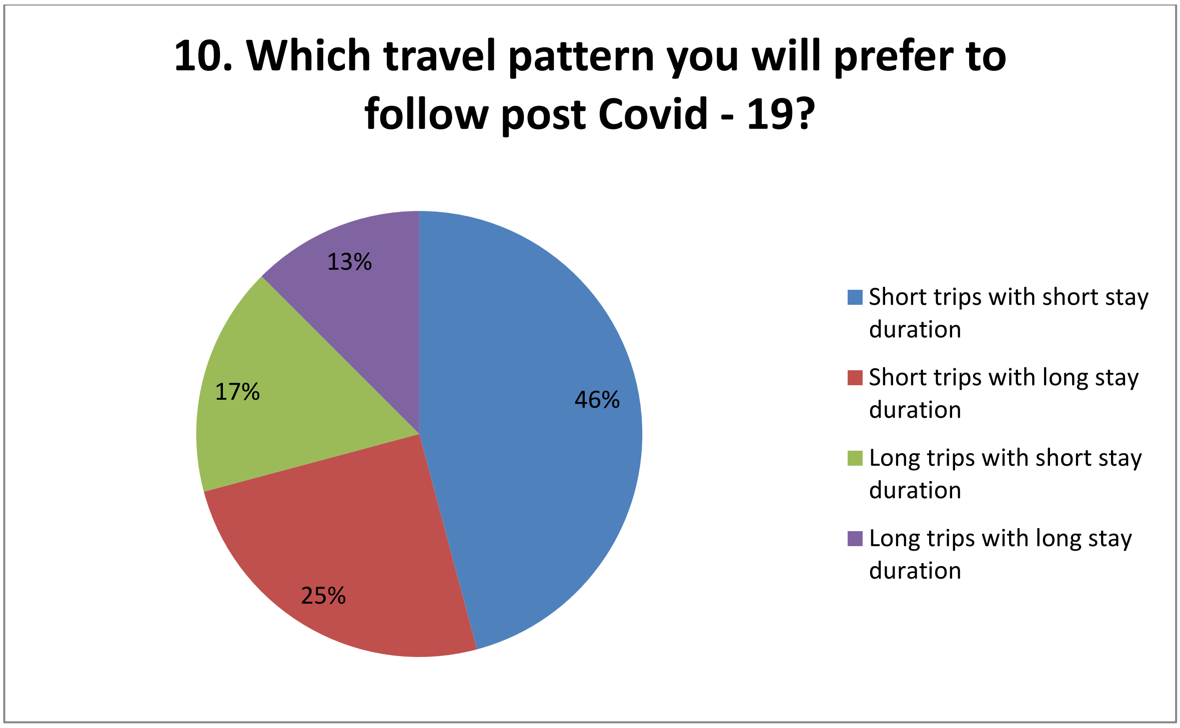
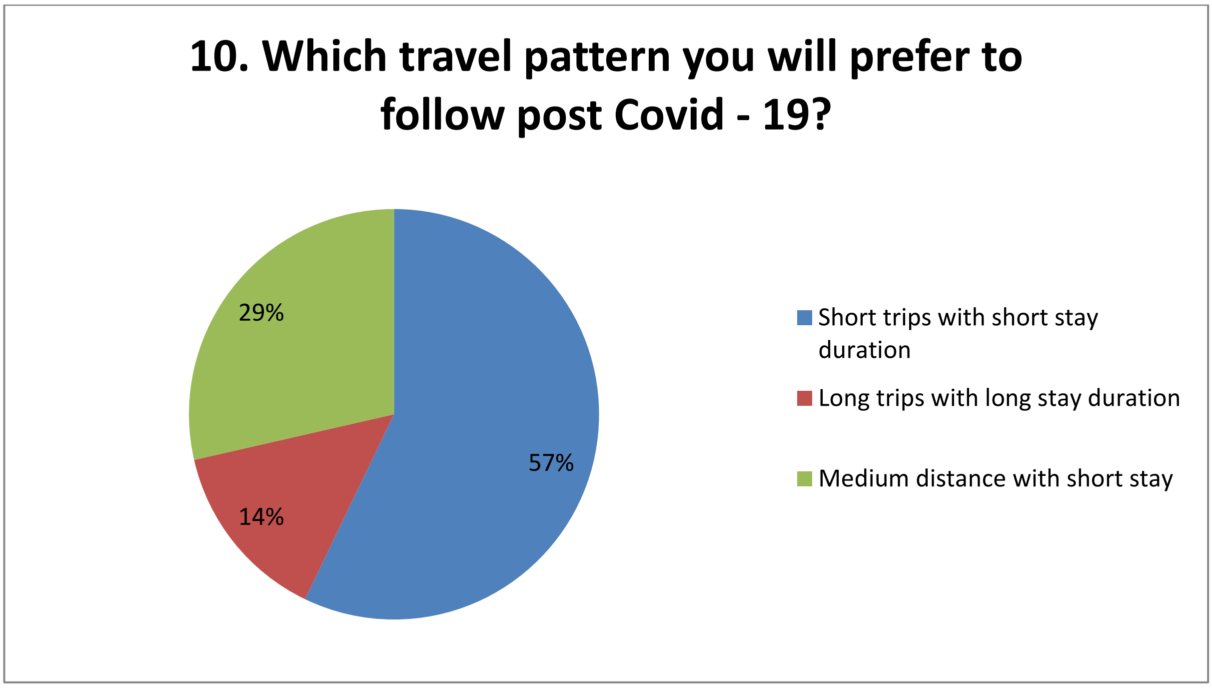


46% of Gen Z indicated that they would take up short trips with short duration and 25% would take up short trips with long duration post COVID – 19.

17% would take long trips with short duration and 13% would opt for long trips with long stay.

Senior Citizens:



57% of the senior citizens prefer short trips with short stay post COVID – 19.

29% said they would travel medium distance and prefer short stays whereas 14% would prefer long stays with long trips.

Gen X:

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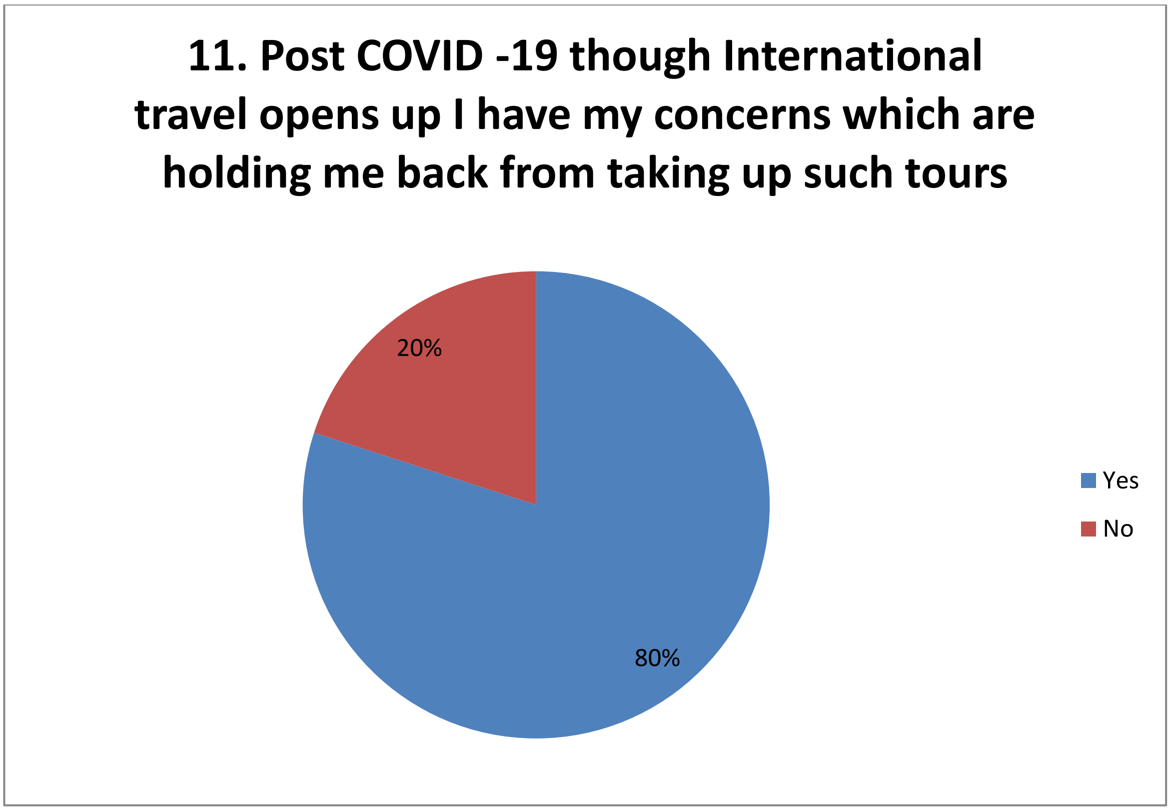
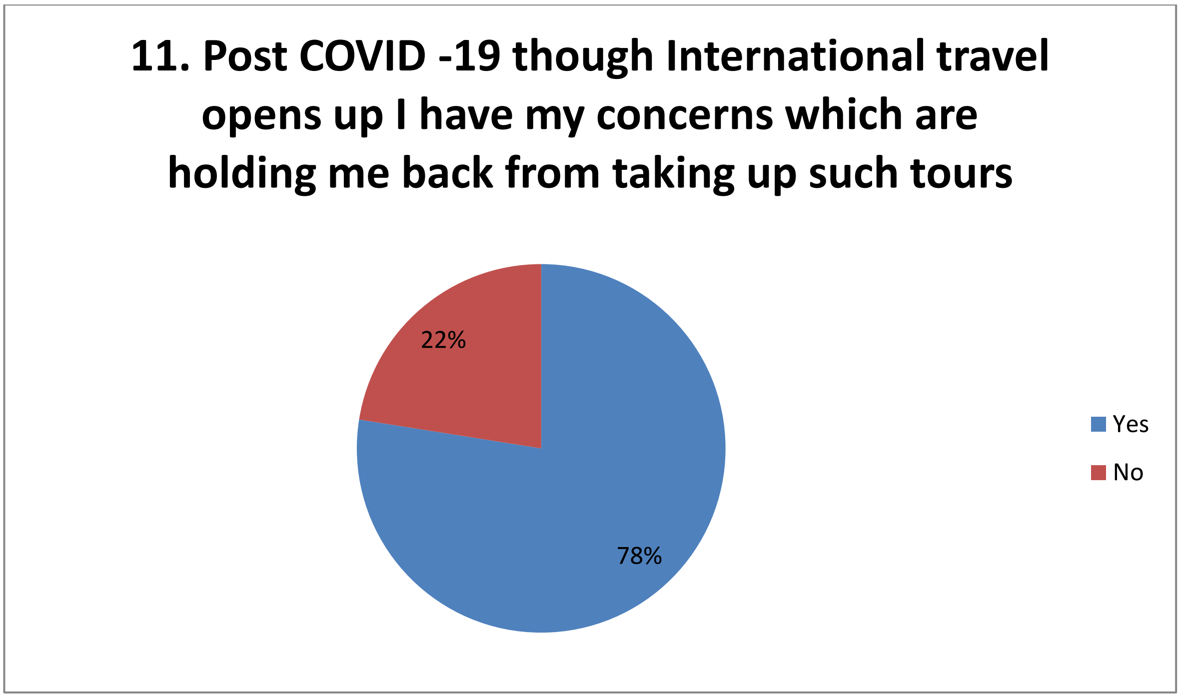


Gen X is not very keen on taking up an international holiday as 80% of the population is concerned about travel restrictions abroad which are holding them back from taking up international travel.

20% are not really concerned and pandemic is not holding them back in taking up international travel.

Gen Y:



For Gen Y international travel post COVID – 19 is still not a lucrative option as 78% have their concerns holding them back from taking up international travel. Only 22% were for taking up international travel post COVID – 19.

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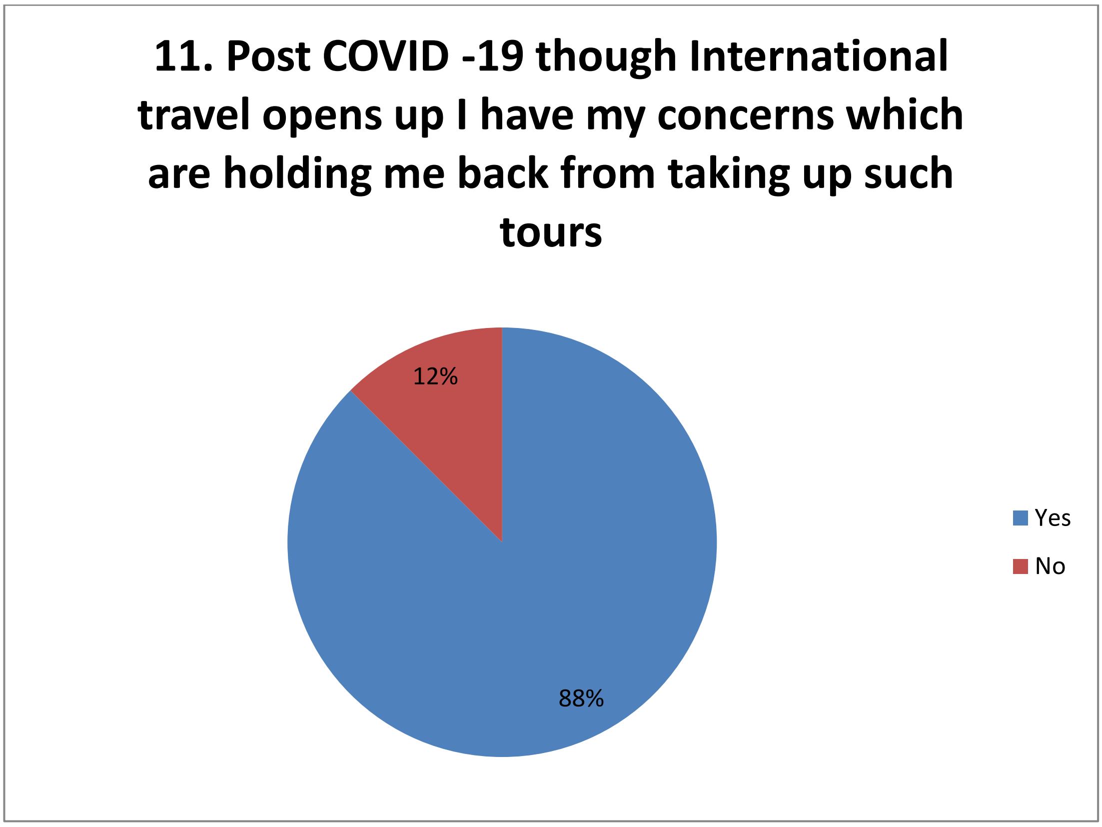
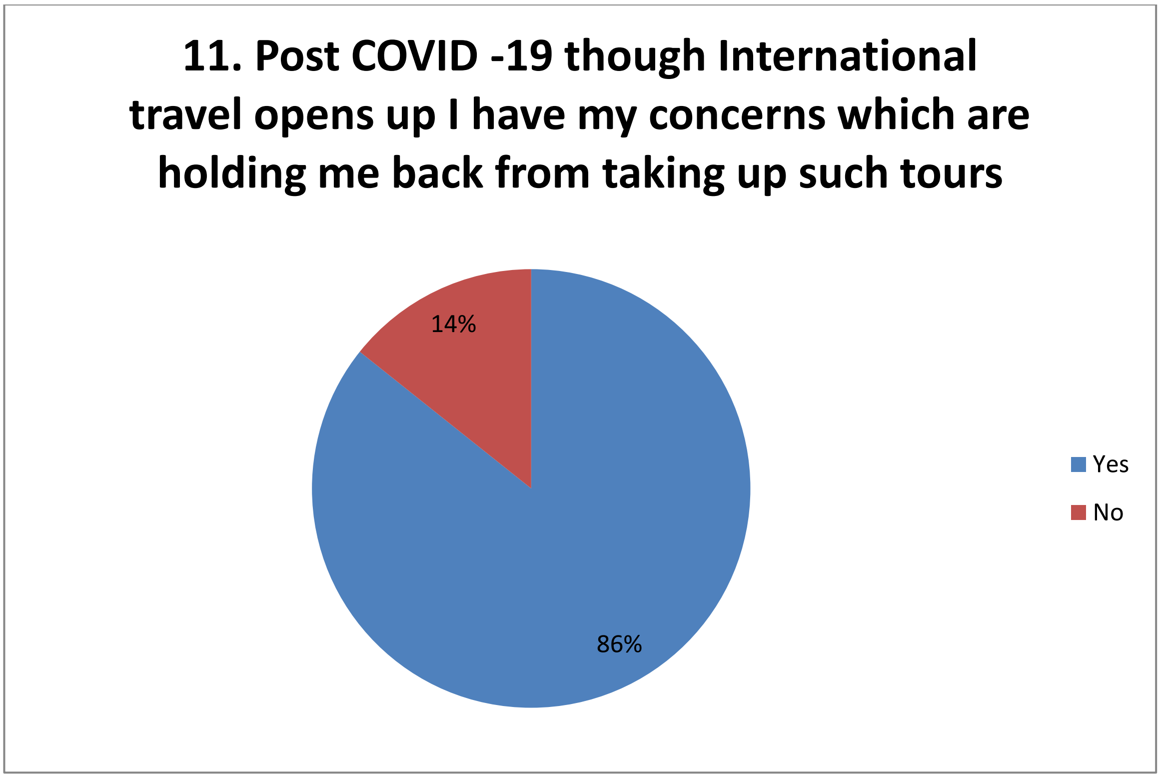
Gen Z:



88% Gen Z would have their concerns while taking up international travel post COVID – 19 which may hold them back. 12% were open to take up international travel post COVID – 19.

Senior Citizens:



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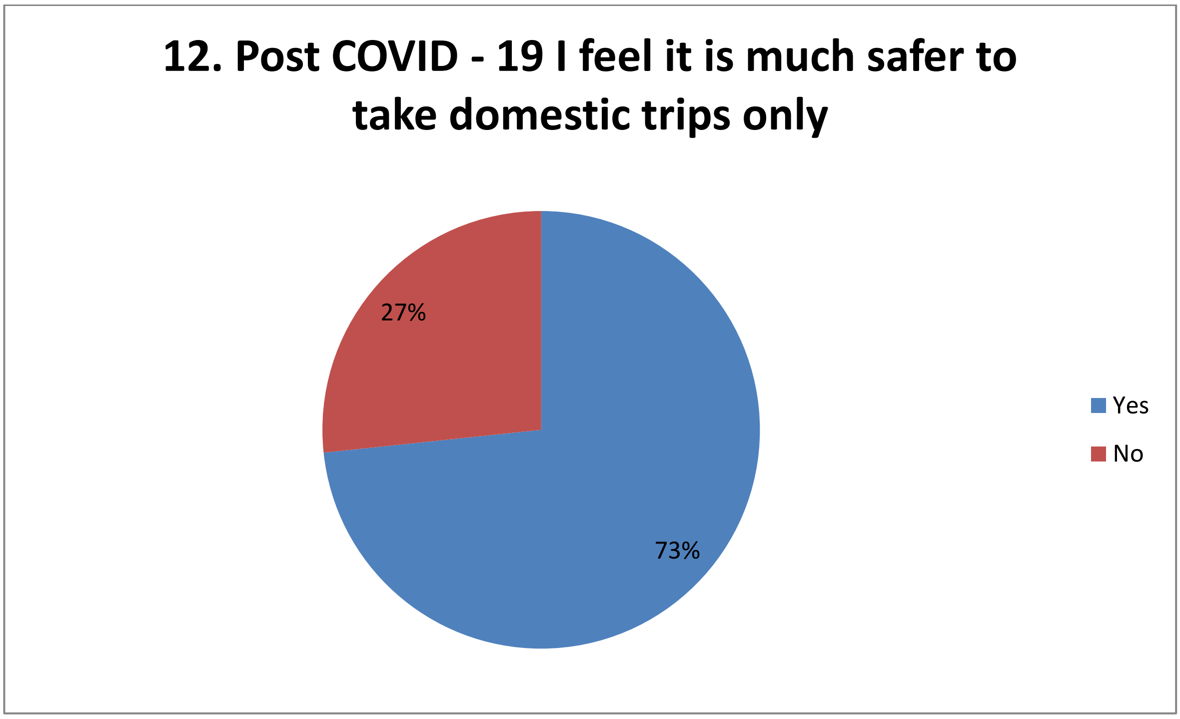
About international travel post COVID – 19 senior citizens are more conservative and 86% said that they would be concerned about taking up international travel. 14% showed positive mind set about taking up international travel post COVID – 19.

Gen X:



73% of Gen X feels that it is safer to go for domestic tourism only in pandemic situation. 27% feel it is not so and they are open for other holiday options as well.

Gen Y:

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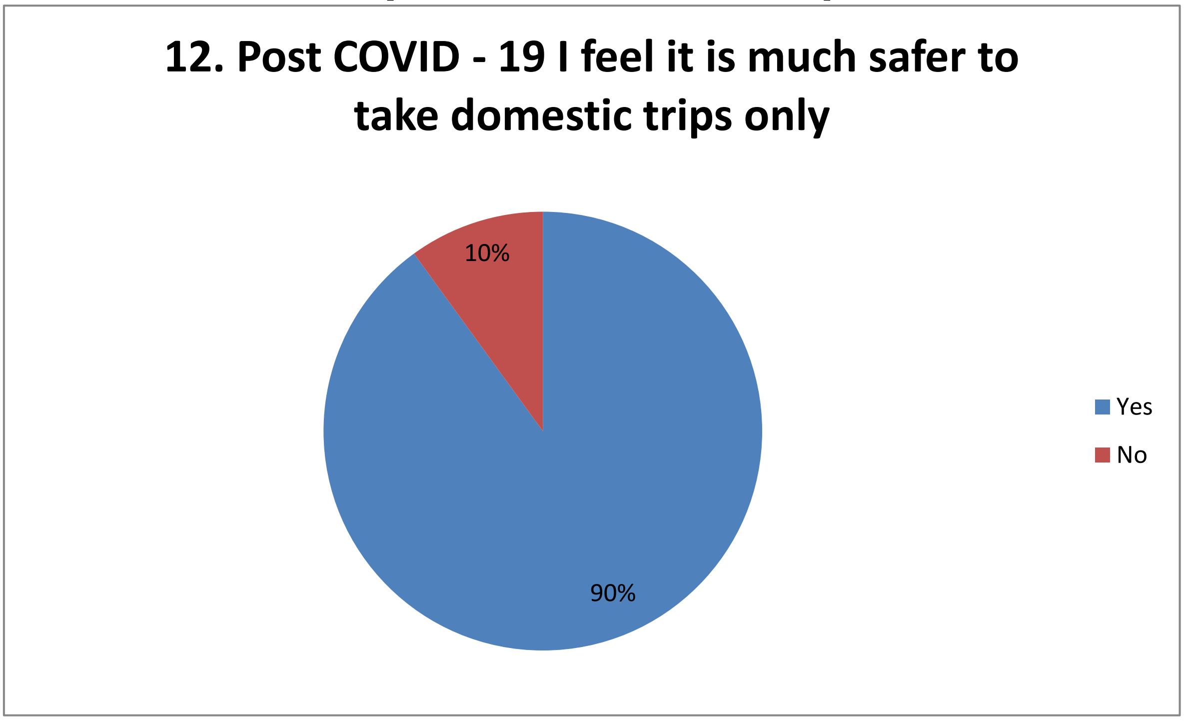
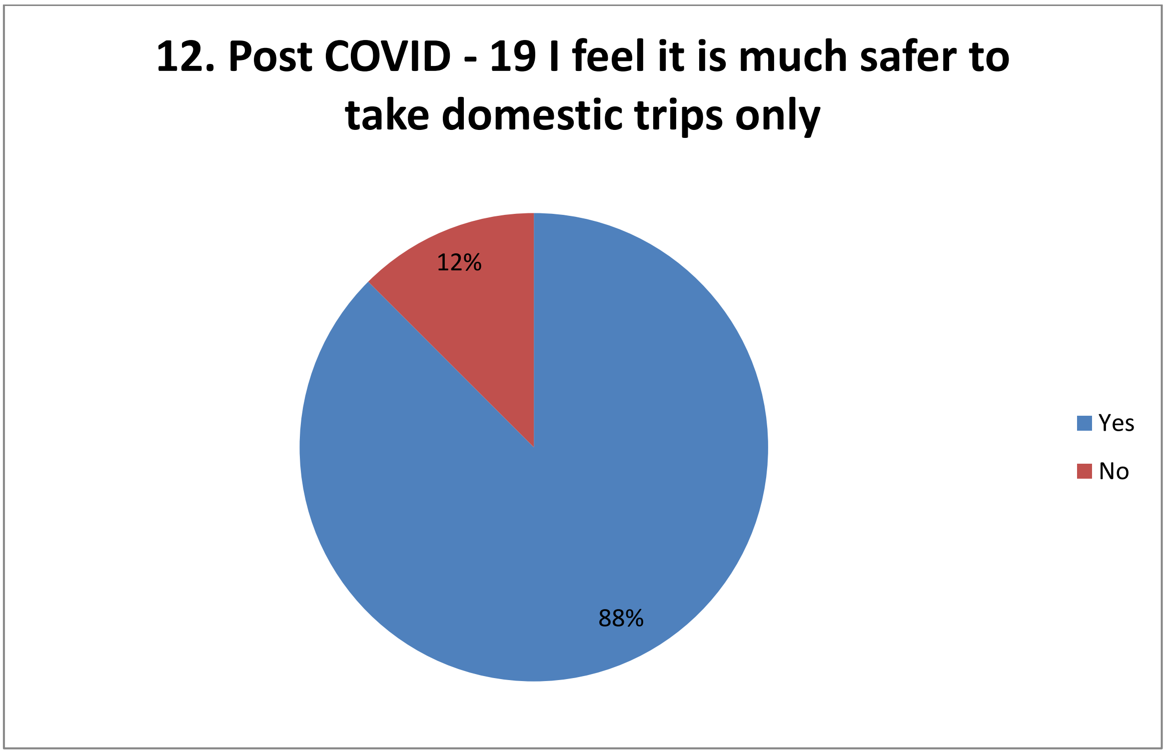
Gen Y is more open to take up domestic trips as 90% feel it is safer whereas only 10% feel it is not safe to take up domestic travel post COVID – 19.



Gen Z:



88% of Gen Z was for taking up domestic tourism post COVID – 19 as they feel it is much safer than international travel, 12% were for taking up international travel post COVID – 19.

Senior Citizens:

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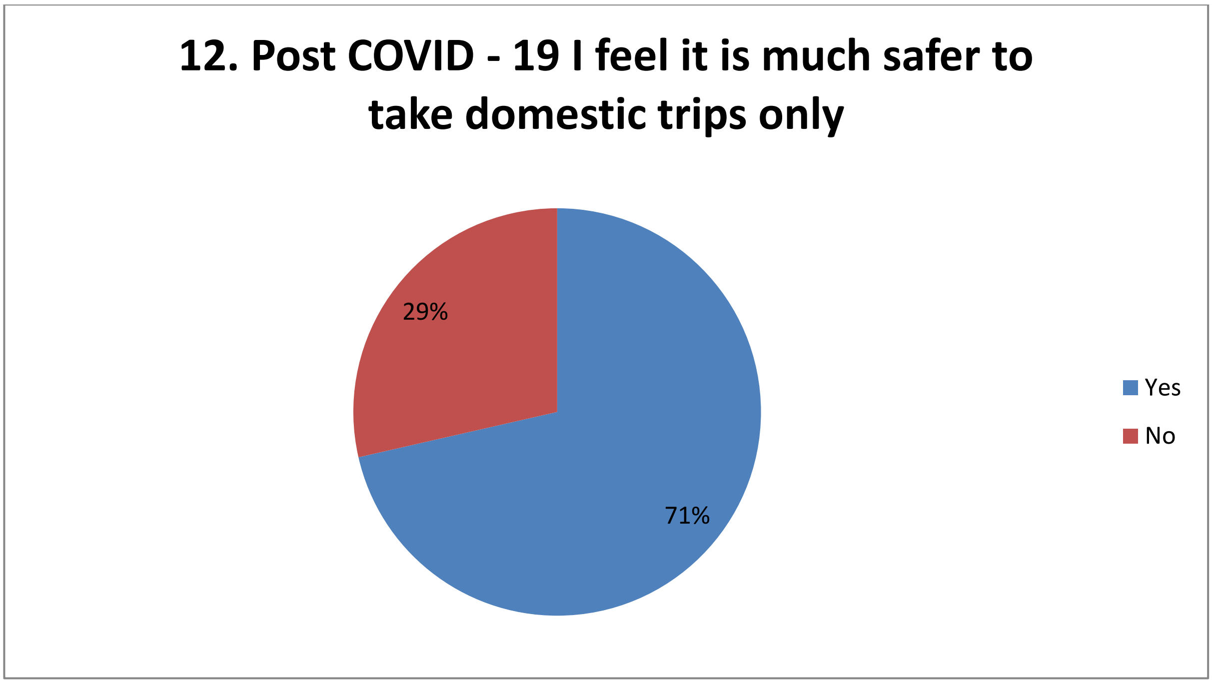
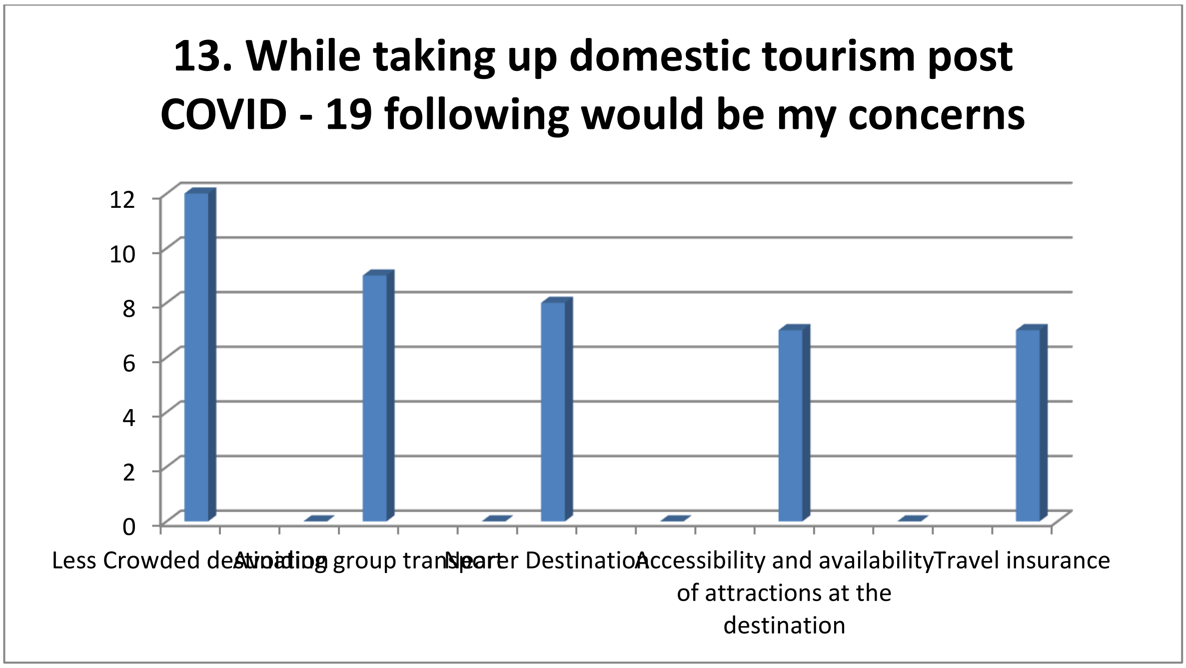


In contrast to international travel about 71% senior citizens were for taking up domestic trips post COVID – 19. Only 29% of the senior citizens were not sure about even taking up domestic trips post COVID – 19.

Gen X:



While taking up domestic travel the factor which mattered most post COVID – 19 for Gen X was less crowded destination followed by not taking up group transport. The proximity of a destination mattered at third place and accessibility and availability of attractions at destination along with travel insurance was on the fourth and fifth place simultaneously.

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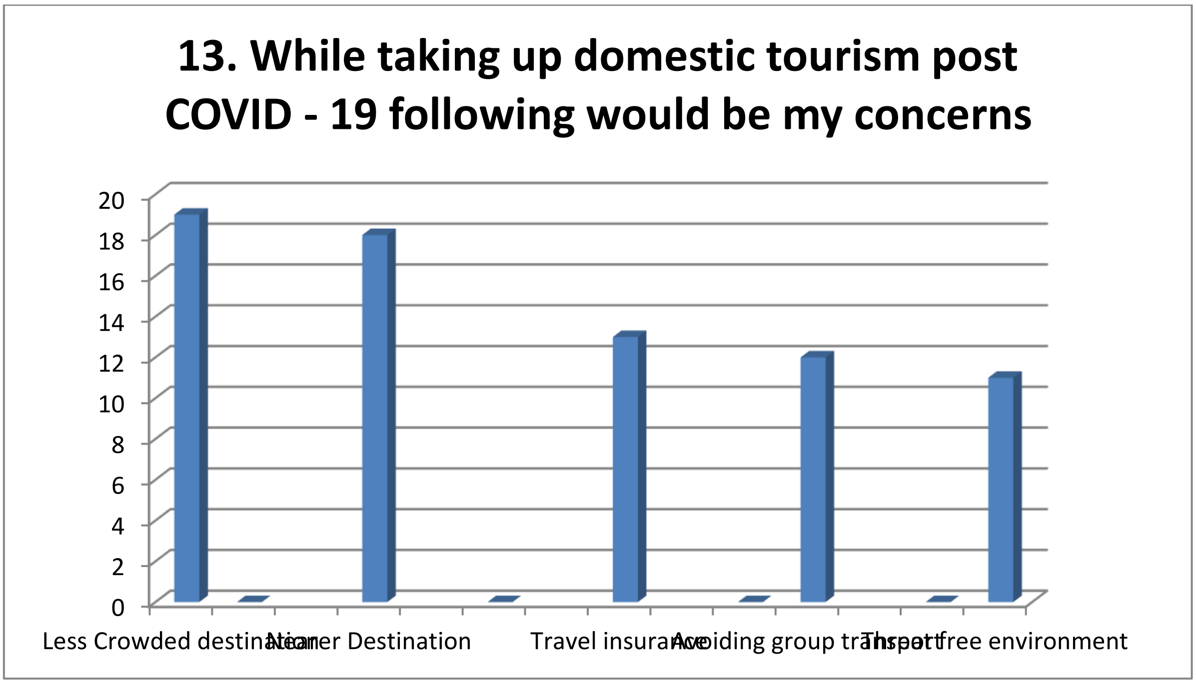
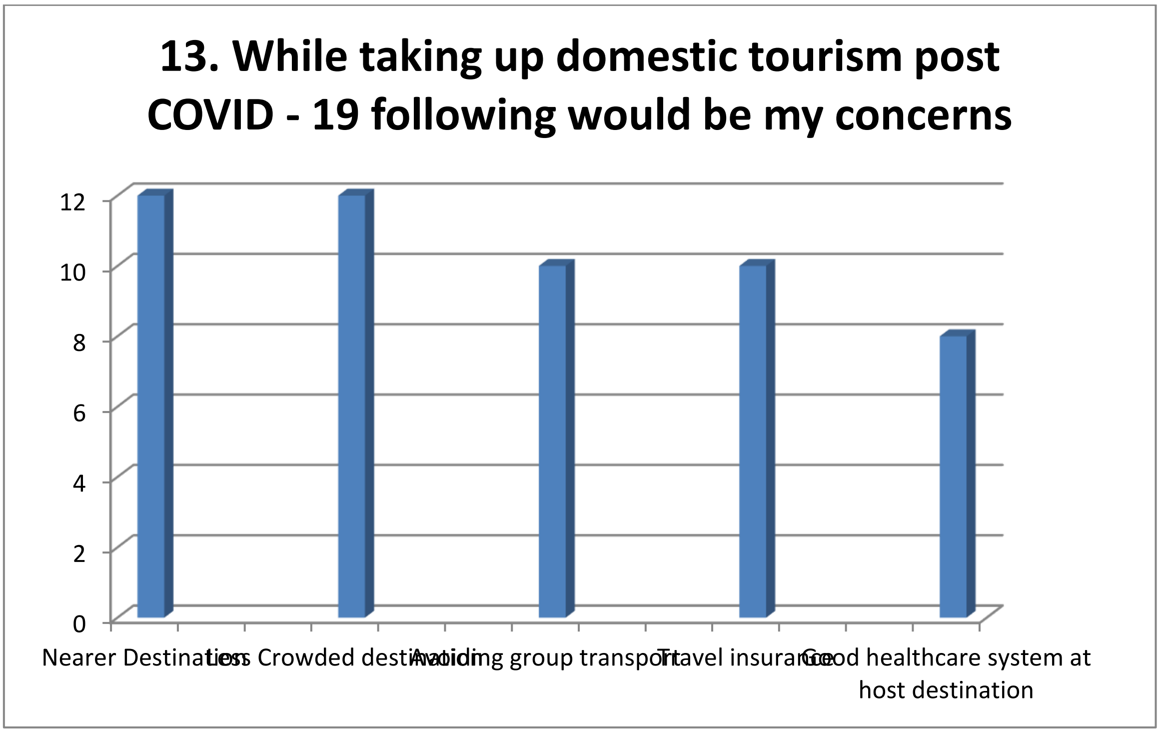
Gen Y:



Following were the top 5 concerns of Gen Y while taking up domestic tourism post COVID – 19. Destination with less tourists frequency at top followed by proximity of destination, travel insurance as the third priority whereas avoiding group transport and threat free environment at host destination were at fourth and fifth rank respectively.

Gen Z:



Upon asking top 5 concerns of Gen Z while taking up domestic tourism post COVID – 19 proximity of a destination was top listed followed by less crowded destination. Avoiding public transport was at the third place, travel insurance was the fourth concern followed by good health care system at the host destination at the fifth rank.

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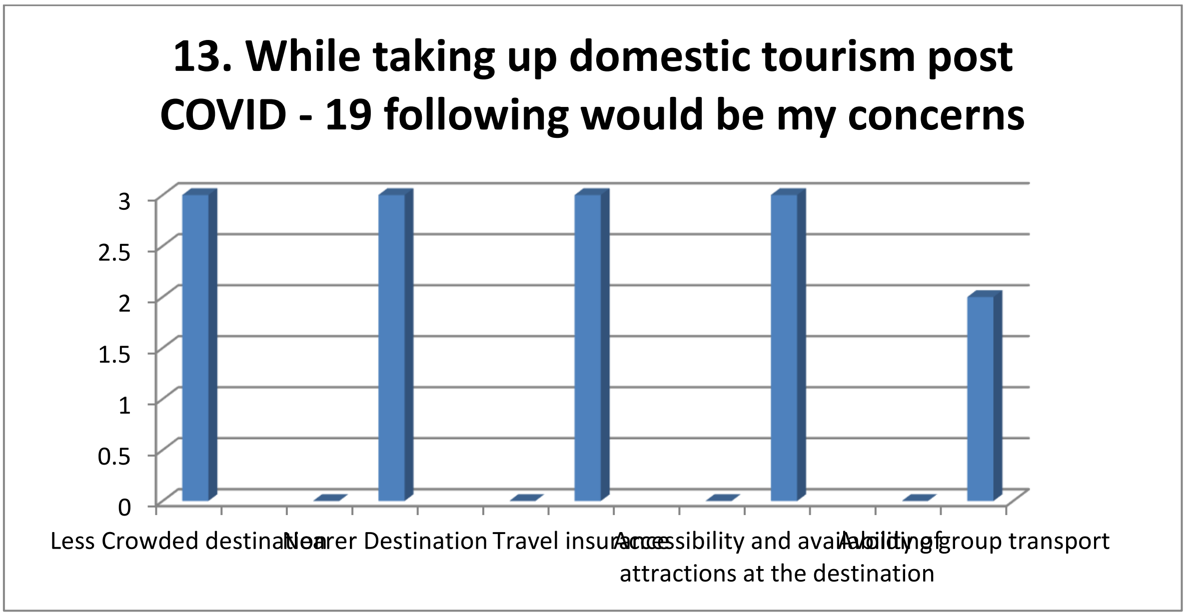
Senior Citizens:



For senior citizens following were concerns while taking up domestic tourism post COVID – 19,

Less crowded destination, proximity of a destination, taking up travel insurance and accessibility and availability of tourist attractions at a destination were in a top bracket. Whereas, avoiding group transport came next.

Observations:

The researchers have designed the questionnaire in 2 parts: the first part pertaining to tourism inclinations, preferences and pattern pre COVID-19 and the second part of the questionnaire depicts the trends, preferences and travel pattern post COVID-19. The researchers have tried to include Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z and senior citizens as a sample size so as to apply the research to universal population. Also equal representation is given to male and female population.

As pandemic was a totally unexpected and unforeseen phenomenon no individual or industry was prepared for it. Similarly any research pertaining to the topic covering any new dimension would surely add to the body of knowledge and would help the tourism players, marketers in understanding the current pattern the industry is heading to.

Pre COVID-19 Tourism Scenario:

Purpose of Travel

Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z would prefer recreation as the first purpose of travel in that Gen X topped with 70%, Gen Y and Gen Z 63%. Where as senior citizens were at 57% for recreation as a travel motive.

Gen X at 3% was the lowest to mix business and leisure, and senior citizens were at 29% missing business and recreation. Gen Y and Gen Z also accounted for merely 5% and 4% respectively for the same.

Gen Z preferred VFR at 21% as second top preferences. Gen X and Gen Y in that context were less inclined towards VFR at Gen Y giving it 3rd preference at 10% and Gen X at 10% ranking it third. Senior citizens also ranked VFR at third position at 14%.

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Gen X was at 18% giving second preference to business travel and Gen Z has no inclination towards business travel.

Gen X and Gen Z also showed a very small percentage of preference towards adventure tourism at 3% and 4% respectively.

International v/s Domestic Travel Trend amongst Various Age Groups

Gen X was equally interested in taking up domestic as well as outbound travel at 50% each.

Gen Z topped at 83% inclination for domestic tourism. Gen Y was at the second place preferring domestic tourism at 75%

Senior citizens were least inclined towards domestic tourism at 29%. This segment was topping outbound tourism at 71%

Travel Pattern (Long Haul/ Short Haul) followed by Different Age Groups

Gen X was showing more dedication to short haul travel at 50%. In those short trips with short duration topped at 43%. Long trips with long stays were t 10% and rest has individual travel patterns.

Gen Y at 66% was topping the short trips with short and long stays together. Long trips with long and short stay are 36% for this group. Gen Z preferred both long and short haul travel at 50% each.

Senior citizens were on top long haul travel at 57% and inclination for short haul was at 43%.

Preferred Transport for Domestic Tourism

Gen X and Gen Z preferred public transport at 63% each; Gen Y was on the second position at 57% along with senior citizens.

Senior citizens topped the list for using private transport for domestic tourism Gen Y was on the second position at 42%, Gen Z at third position in that regard and Gen X only 27% were the last. Interestingly Gen X was inclined to use flexible mode of transport as per the accessibility and convenience.

Travel Frequency of Short Trips

60% Gen Y was taking short trips twice a year, Gen X was at second position at 53% in the same context. Senior citizens secured third position at 29% and Gen Z at fourth position with 25%. Taking up domestic tourism twice a year is a more dominant pattern in all age groups.

Also Gen Z was travelling four times in a year for 33% topping all age groups. Followed by senior citizens at 29% and third position was for Gen X at 27%. Gen Y was least frequent in this category with 18%

Some Senior citizens were also taking up domestic tourism only once a year at 29%, second was Gen Z at 25% followed by Gen X at 13% and last in this regard was Gen Y at 10%

Gen Z topped the category of travelling every month at 17% followed by senior citizens at 14%, third position was for Gen Y at 13% and last on the list was Gen X at 7%.

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Frequency of Outbound Travel

Two age groups showed need based outbound traveling trend with senior citizens at 14% and Gen X at 7%.

Gen Y 70% of them said that they have never taken up a travel abroad. Followed by Gen Z at 58%, 29% of senior citizens have never taken up international travel at third place and Gen X only 23% have never travelled abroad

Gen Y and Gen Z were also taking up international travel 4 times per year at 2% and 13% respectively.

10% Gen X travelled twice a year and 4% Gen Z also opted to choose the same. Gen X also had another variation in frequency at 7% travelling once every two year and 3% travelling once every 3 years.

More frequent travelling pattern was once per year for international travel. Senior citizens were on top bracket with 57% at second place Gen X at 50%, followed by Gen Y at 28% at third rank and Gen Z at 25% were fourth.

Favourite Domestic Destination:

For Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z beaches and hill stations have emerged as top 2 favourite domestic destinations. For Gen X and Gen Y heritage sites were at third position and religious places and wild life sanctuaries were at fourth and fifth places respectively. For Gen X luxury resorts and natural wonders were also sharing fifth position with famous cities and wildlife sanctuaries. For Gen Z luxury resorts and natural wonders were at third position and adventure sports and heritage sites were at fourth place. For senior citizens heritage sites was top on the list with beaches and hill stations at second place, wild life sanctuaries at third place and famous monuments scoring fourth place.

Travel Concerns for Domestic Tourism:

For all the four age groups hygiene and sanitation at the host destination was the top concern. For Gen X, Gen Z and senior citizens less crowded destination was the second priority. Whereas, for Gen Y the second priority was safe environment at the destination. For Gen X Safety at the destination was the third priority whereas for rest three age groups luxurious accommodation was third priority. For Gen X luxurious accommodation was fourth priority, for Gen Y and Gen Z visiting famous destination was fourth priority, for senior citizens year-round availability came at fourth place along with family destination. For Gen X family destination was fifth priority and for Gen Z travel insurance was the last priority. No other age group mentioned the need of travel insurance.

Post COVID – 19 Tourism Scenarios:

Taking Up Domestic Travel Post COVID – 19:

All the age groups were asked about when are they likely to take up domestic travel at the earliest. Gen Y at 68% were at the top saying they have already taken up domestic holiday, Gen Z were at the second place with 54%, Gen X at third place with 50% and 43% of senior citizens have already taken up domestic holiday.

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Gen Z at 21% was in the first place to take up domestic travel within 3 months, senior citizens were at the second place with 14%, Gen Y with 10% were at third position and Gen X with 7% were last in the rank.

Also Gen X at 10% opting for domestic vacation after 6 months were on the first place followed by Gen Y and Gen Z at 8% each were second.

Taking a domestic trip after 9 months was option for Gen X at 7% and Gen Z at 4%.

Also, senior citizens as expected showed inclination at 43% to take up domestic tourism only after vaccination followed by Gen X at 27%, Gen Y 15% and Gen Z 13%.

Travel Pattern (Long Haul/ Short Haul) followed by Different Age Groups Post COVID – 19:

Researchers were interested to find out if the inclination of various age groups has changed post COVID – 19 about travelling pattern. It was found out as stated below,

90% of Gen Y preferred short haul travel with short or long stay followed by 86% senior citizens (also wanting to take medium distance short stay holiday) Gen X were at 77% for the same and Gen Z were last with 71%.

Long haul travel pattern showed the trends as follows,

Gen Z at 29% were the once opting for long trips with long and short stay followed by senior citizens at 14%, Gen X at 13% and Gen Y at 10%.

About 7% of Gen X was indecisive about the travel pattern and 3% were only interested in day trips.

International Travel Concerns:

When asked about would they be concerned while taking up outbound travel it was found out that unanimously all the age groups were holding back the outbound travel. Gen Z at 88% was most concerned followed by senior citizens at 86%, Gen X at 80% and Gen Y at 78%.

Post COVID – 19 Preferences to Domestic Trips Only:

It was found out that 90% of Gen Y preferring domestic trips followed by 88% Gen Z, 73% Gen X and 71% senior citizens.

Domestic Tourism Concerns Post COVID – 19:

For all the age groups except Gen Z the first concern while taking up domestic tourism is destination which is less frequented by people. For Gen Z the first concern is proximity of destination, less crowded destination was second for them. For Gen Y and senior citizens proximity of destination was second concern and for Gen X not taking up s group transport was important at second place, followed by proximity of destination at third place. Taking up a travel insurance was the third priority for Gen Y and senior citizens whereas avoiding group transport was the third priority for Gen Z and travel insurance came as a fourth concern for them.

For Gen X availability of attractions at a destination was fourth priority along with travel insurance simultaneously.

ISSN: 2233-7857 IJFGCN

For Gen Y avoiding group transport was fourth priority followed by threat free environment at host destination at fifth destination. For Gen Z the last concern was good healthcare system at the host destination.

For senior citizens accessibility and availability of tourist attraction came before the last concern of avoiding public transport.

Findings:

Pre COVID – 19 Tourism Scenario:

1. The most preferred purpose of travel across all age groups is recreation and the least preferred is adventure tourism and wild life tourism. There is also trend of mixing leisure and business amongst senior citizens. Visiting friends and relatives is also popular across all age groups.
2. The youngest age group Gen Z is the most inclined towards domestic tourism and senior citizens are least inclined towards domestic tourism pre COVID – 19. Gen Y and Gen X were also more inclined towards domestic tourism than international tourism pre COVID – 19.
3. Short haul travel was more popular across all age groups except senior citizens with more than 50% opting for short haul vacations. Senior citizens were more towards taking long haul vacations pre COVID – 19.
4. Most of the travelers preferred public transport (airways, railways, roadways) to reach a host destination. The age group which used the private transport the most for domestic tourism was senior citizen age group. Gen X was the most flexible group for using transportation as they were opened to any form of transport which would be convenient and more accessible to reach a destination.
5. About travelling frequency in domestic tourism the most frequent pattern emerged was taking up domestic trip twice a year. Younger population was found taking more domestic trips (four trips per year), which pattern is followed less by the other age groups. Across all the age groups taking up domestic trips every month is also a small percentage.
6. The percentage of population not taken up international travel is more of young population than the middle age and older population. Also middle age and senior citizens took international travel on need basis. Taking up international travel once a year is most common amongst all age groups, in that the youngest populations were the least number and the oldest populations were the highest number.
7. When asked about the favourite domestic destination middle age and younger populations were more frequenting beaches and hill stations. Followed by heritage sites and religious places. For middle age group population luxury resorts and natural wonders were also on the list. For senior citizens heritage sites were most preferred destination followed by beaches and hill stations. Very few across the whole population were inclined towards natural wonders, famous cities and wild life sanctuaries.
8. On asking about top concern in domestic tourism, all the population responded to hygiene and sanitation at the host destination to be the priority. Choosing a less crowded destination was second concern and safe environment at the destination was the next. Luxurious accommodation at the host destination and family destination were the other two concerns. Travel insurance was the last priority in the domestic tourism.

Post COVID – 19 Tourism Scenario:

1. As the travel restrictions were lifted while conducting the survey the respondents were asked about the likely time frame for taking up a domestic trip, across all the populations more than 50% have already taken up the domestic holiday. Also a considerable percentage is likely to take up a domestic trip within coming 3 months and 6 months. Senior citizens were more cautious and many responded that they would only take up domestic trip after the vaccination. Also a smaller number from other age groups in the population were of the same opinion.

ISSN: 2233-7857 IJFGCN

2. As compared to the pre COVID travel pattern post COVID – 19 travel patterns showed a remarkable shift to short haul travel across all age groups. There is a remarkable drop in taking up long haul travel post COVID – 19. Some were also interested only in taking day trips.
3. About taking up international travel post COVID – 19 most of the respondents were holding their plans back and they were concerned about taking up international travel in near future.
4. Preference to domestic tourism post COVID – 19 is seen on the rise and about 80% of the respondents preferring domestic tourism in current situation.
5. While taking up domestic tourism in current situation following concerns were observed, less crowded destination, avoiding group transport, proximity of a destination, taking up travel insurance (all age groups thought about it). For senior citizens accessibility and availability of tourist attraction was also a major concern.

Conclusions:

Researchers were able to cover the following dimensions of domestic tourism pre and post COVID – 19 from the research conducted namely - purpose of taking up a travel, preferred mode of travel, travelling frequency, favourite domestic places to visit, concerns while taking up domestic tourism, resuming domestic tourism post COVID – 19 and its concerns.

There were two assumptions of the research,

***H*$_1$: Pre-pandemic people used to prefer long distance and long haul travels.**

As per the research conducted, researchers can conclude that pre COVID – 19 all age groups mostly preferred the short haul trips with either short or long stay duration. So the hypothesis$_1$ is not valid and people did not prefer long distance and long haul travel pre COVID – 19.

***H*$_2$: Post pandemic the tourists prefer short trips at domestic tourist destinations.**

As per the research it is demonstrated that all age groups preferred short haul trips pre COVID -19, the same trend continued after COVID – 19 pandemic with increased inclination towards domestic tourism. International travel is now having many unsettled concerns. Hence hypothesis$_2$ is valid.

Due to COVID – 19 pandemic people are more concerned and will carefully plan their travel in future. Based on the research outcome, the most preferred option for domestic travel by any age group is recreation. In country like India, blessed with all types of tourists' attractions, the same can be achieved travelling at various domestic destinations. People are more positively looking forward towards domestic travel post COVID – 19 pandemic as they are feeling it is more secured and safe. Tourism marketers and suppliers can take the cognizance of the domestic tourism trends and preferences post COVID – 19 in order to boost the tourism sector.

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ISSN: 2233-7857 IJFGCN