Chapter V

5.1 Research process

Empirical research is a way of gaining knowledge by means of direct observation and conducting interviews and surveys. Research begins with a research question that needs to be addressed by following the well laid path of standard research procedures. The Research process begins with defining the problem, formulating the research aims and objectives, developing the research plan, collecting and analysing the data, presenting the findings and suggesting actions based on the findings and conclusions.

Chart No. 5.2 ResearchProcess.
5.2.1 Steps in the Research Process

Step I Analysing the problem and Formulating the research objectives –

The first step in a marketing research study is to analyse the problem and formulate the research objectives. For this, the purpose of the study, the available background information and the core competencies of the researcher are taken into consideration. The first step involved discussion with the decision makers, interviews with industry experts, analysis of secondary data, and qualitative research.

The Researcher’s working experience in Tourism Industry for more than 10 years indicated that

i. Tourism Industry is still largely an unorganized sector.

ii. There is a lack of professional approach in its various activities.

iii. There is a scope for developing marketing strategies for new tourism services and new market segments.

The Researcher discussed the potential reasons for the above problems with the research guide. A preliminary study was done by discussing the research area with the experts in the field of tourism. It indicated that a systematic study was essential to understand the Tourism sector and the marketing strategies that could be adopted to expand the Tourism Market in Pune.

This encompasses the study of

i. The impact of current advertising methods on Tourism Customers.

ii. The customer preferences for Conducted, Package and specially designed tours.

iii. The customer’s buying preferences and buying patterns.

iv. The marketing strategies at present and developing strategies for the future.
The researchers’ discussions with a number of Tourism experts from different core areas of expertise gave an insight into the customer expectations, the future travel destinations and the type of travel arrangements the customers would expect in the future. The Top executives of Tourism companies were consulted to know the tourism companies services offerings at present and what are the likely tourism services that would be required in future. The Tourism company top executives also provided information about the marketing strategies used at present and what likely new strategies will have to be used in future for the emerging customer base.

In consultation with the Guide the following objectives were then formulated -

**Objectives of the research:**

Objectives of the Research work are

1. To predict the demands for New Types of Tourism Service in Future.

2. To understand the channels through which Tourism Services will be purchased in future.

3. To assess Value Creation needed for competitive differentiation by developing a differentiated offering, delivery or image.

4. To identify Tourism Companies marketing position on key service components.

5. To help direct the marketing efforts of Tourism Companies to customer wants, needs and demands.
The Hypothesis are-

**Research Hypothesis:**

1. Customers prefer conducted tours to package tours.
2. Print media advertising is the most preferred advertising medium today.
3. Innovative marketing strategies would lead to expansion of existing market and discovery of new market segments.

### 5.2.2 Step 2 Developing the Research plan

A research plan is a framework or blueprint for conducting the marketing research project. It details the procedures necessary for obtaining the required information and its purpose is to design a study that will test the hypotheses. The Researcher also decides how and what data should be obtained from the respondents. A questionnaire and sampling plan is also designed. The following steps are involved in formulating a research plan.

- Secondary data analysis
- Questionnaire design
- Methods of collecting quantitative data (survey, observation,)
- Measurement and scaling procedures
- Sampling process and sample size
- Plan of data analysis

The present study is an empirical research. It is based on observations and surveys.

- As a data source, the available secondary data on the above subject was studied but the emphasis was on primary data.
- Multiple research approaches including observation, interviews and survey questionnaires were employed.
- A scientifically derived sampling plan was finalized.
5.2.4 Expert Group Research: An expert group of ten people were carefully selected based on their different core expertise areas in Tourism. The Researcher also discussed at length various issues related to tourism. The contribution of the expert group of multidisciplinary members was invaluable for this study.

5.2.5 Survey research:
Surveys are well suited to descriptive research. Questionnaires were used as research instruments for surveys. Surveys were undertaken to study customer preferences and to understand the tourism companies marketing strategies and service offerings. Observation method was used to study the selling skills of tourism companies counter staff.
This can be tabulated as follows –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tourism Company</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Direct contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tourism Company’s Top Executives</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Direct contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tourism Company Managers</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Direct contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tourism Experts</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Direct contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tourism Customers</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Direct contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tourism Company Staff</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Direct contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>On Tour Guide Observation</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Direct contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Case Study – Prasanna Holidays</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Direct Contact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.6 Observation Research – The observation method was used to observe the behavior of the counter staff with a checklist. This helped the researcher to gauge the selling skills of the staff. It gave the researcher an insight into the knowledge, soft skills and booking expertise of the counter staff.

5.2.7 Research Instruments:
The researcher has used two main research instruments in collecting primary data: questionnaires and observation methods.

A questionnaire consists of a set of questions presented to the respondents. Questionnaires were developed, tested, and debugged and were administered for all surveys. Customers and tourism company executives were requested to answer the questionnaire.

A majority of closed-ended questions with multiple choices were used in the Questionnaire. There were a few open-ended questions. Closed-end
questions specify all the possible answers and provide answers that are easier to interpret and tabulate. Open-ended questions allowed the respondents to answer freely in their own words and often revealed the innate desires of the customers. Care was taken to avoid bias and jargon, making questions simple with the usage of common words and close to the travel experience of customers and travel executives.

5.2.8 Sampling plan

**Sampling unit:** The sampling units were the individual tourism company and the tourism customer. A pilot survey of 100 customers of various demographics was conducted to understand the tourism scenario in Pune City. Minor changes were made in the questionnaire and it was finalised for the final survey.

**Sample size:** Large samples give more reliable results than small samples. Hence a suitable sample size was calculated using a sample size formula.

The customers sample size was determined scientifically by using the following formula:

\[
\text{n} = \frac{Nz^2(pq)}{Nt^2+z^2(pq)}
\]

\[\text{NZ}^2(pq)\]

\[\text{NT}^2+z^2 (pq)\]
n = \frac{NZ^2(pq)}{NT^2} + Z^2(pq)

Where  
\begin{align*}
  n & = \text{Adjusted sample size} \\
  Z & = \text{Level of confidence: @95\% } = 1.96 \\
  T & = \text{Allowable tolerance of variation } = 0.025 \\
  N & = \text{Population size} \\
  p & = \text{Probability of occurring the event } = 70\% \text{ or 0.70} \\
  q & = \text{Probability of non-occuring the event } = 30\% \text{ or 0.30} \\
\end{align*}

5.2.9 Pune District Urban Population 2011

The population within Pune Corporation limits as per the Pune 2011 Census was 31,15,431. The child population proportion was 11.63\%. The formula applied worked out as follows

\begin{align*}
\text{Population} & = 3115431. \\
\text{Less: Child Population} & = 3,62,325. \quad (11.63\%) \\
\text{Net Population (n)} & = 2753106
\end{align*}
5.2.10 Sample Size Calculation

So when we put the values in the equation we get,

\[
\frac{2753106 \times (1.96)^2 \times (0.30 \times 0.70)}{2753106 \times (0.025)^2 + (1.96)^2 \times (0.30 \times 0.70)}
\]

\[
= \frac{2753106 \times (3.8416) \times (0.21)}{2753106 \times 0.000625 + 0.8416 \times 0.21}
\]

\[
= \frac{2221030}{1721.498}
\]

\[
= 1290.173
\]

\[\approx 1300\]

The sample size arrived at is 1290.173. Actual size taken for Customer Survey was 1300.
5.2.11 Time Frame Research Activities

The Research was carried out in the following time frame:

Chart No.5.2.12: Activity Bar chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desk Research</th>
<th>August 2010 - February 2011</th>
<th>Literature Survey and Collection of Secondary Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Research</td>
<td>March 2011 - October 2011</td>
<td>Collection of Primary data – by surveys, interviews and observations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>November 2011 - June 2012</td>
<td>Data Entry in MS Excel, Data Cleaning, SPSS and Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions and Recommendations</td>
<td>July 2012 - February 2013</td>
<td>Data Interpretation, Compilations, Findings, development of marketing strategy, Conclusions and Recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Writing</td>
<td>February 2013 - March 2014</td>
<td>Completing all the Chapters, preparing synopsis, Validation, printing the copies and Submission to the University of Pune</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3 **Step III Data Collection**

Primary data was collected in the form of responses of the respondents to questions formulated in a structured way in the form of a questionnaire. This was done when the sample size was large as in the case of Tourism Companies and Tourism Customers of Pune City. The Interview method was used when there was a need of eliciting erudite information from the Top Brass and Experts in the Tourism Industry. Observation Method was used when the counter staff behavior for marketing tactics was studied. A detailed study of the marketing strategy was made to understand the marketing planning and execution of a leading company (Prasanna Holidays) with a view to strategize and suggest marketing strategies for the future.

The data collected was both Primary and Secondary –

**SECONDARY DATA**

**INTERNAL –**
1. Customer Database of Companies.
2. Sales Record of Destinations.
3. Customer Complaints Record.

**EXTERNAL –**
1. Trade Journals.
2. Trade Associations.
4. Internet Information.
5. Government Publications.
7. Tourism Books and Journals.
8. MTDC List of Authorised Agents.
9. Marahatta Chamber of Commerce.
PRIMARY DATA

Research Type – Descriptive and Diagnostic.
Scope – Pune City
Sample Unit – Travel and Tourism Companies in Pune
Sampling Method – For tourism Customers simple random sampling.
For tourism companies – census sampling of all members of Pune Tourism association (TAAP)
Data collection Tools
1. Surveys and Questionnaire Method –
   i. Customer Survey.
   ii. Company Top Executives Survey
   iii. Company Managers Survey
   iv. Tourism Company Survey
   v. Travel Industry Experts Survey
2. Observation –
   i. Counter staff customer interactions.
   ii. On Tour Observations.
3. Case Study
   i. A case study of the marketing strategy of an established Tourism Company.
Chart No 5.3.1 Summary of primary data collection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Research Approach</th>
<th>Research Instrument</th>
<th>Sampling Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Experts</td>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Non-probability, Judgment sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tourism Customers</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Simple random Sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Top Executives of Tourism Companies</td>
<td>Survey, Questionnaire</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-probability, Judgement Sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tourism Companies</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Census Sampling of Tourism Association Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tourism Companies managers</td>
<td>Survey, Questionnaire</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-probability, Judgment sampling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Step IV Analysing the Information

Analysis of the information in the form of the data collected is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of highlighting useful information making suggesting and arriving at conclusions.

- Data was carefully edited, coded, transcribed, and verified so that it could be properly analyzed during this phase of the research process.

- Verification ensured that the data from the original questionnaires was accurately transcribed, while data analysis gave meaning to the data that has been collected.

- Bias was avoided when interpreting data because only the results (not personal opinion) would be taken into account.
5.4.1 Data analysis

After the field survey was completed the collected data was summarised. The survey was uploaded on www.esurv.org. The findings of the surveys were diligently represented by tables. A number of tables for all the questions were prepared. Suitable graphs were used for representation. SPSS was used for statistical analysis and Chi square tests for Hypothesis testing.

The data was collected under 8 heads. They are –

1. Survey of Tourism Customers in Pune City.
2. Survey of Pune Tourism Companies
3. Survey of Top executives of Tourism Companies
4. Survey of Tourism Experts
5. Survey of Tourism Company Managers
6. Observation of Tourism Company Staff
7. On Tour Observations
8. Case Study of Prasanna Holidays
Table No5.4.2 Total Data Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Survey Of</th>
<th>Sampling unit</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tourism Customers</td>
<td>Individual Customer</td>
<td>1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tourism Companies</td>
<td>Tourism Company</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tourism Experts</td>
<td>Tourism Expert</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tourism Company Top executives</td>
<td>Top executive</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tourism Company Managers</td>
<td>Individual Manager</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Observation of Staff</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>On Tour Observation</td>
<td>Guide, Customer</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Case Study Prasanna Holidays</td>
<td>Managing Director, General Manager, Staff</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1467</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.5 Step V Presenting the Findings.

The Researcher’s objective was the study of customer buying patterns and market development of Tourism services with reference to Pune City. After developing the research plan, the data were collected, analysed and interpreted. The research was a part of the work for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy from the University of Pune. The website of the University of Pune was referred to for guidelines on how the findings were to be presented. University of Pune Circular No 142 dated 29th August, 2011 regarding Revised Rules for Ph.D. was used for presentation guidelines. The cumulative references were included at the end as per the APA Style.

5.6 Step VI Decision Making

It is sincerely hoped that the research findings will help the tourism companies in formulating appropriate marketing strategies for their target market to increase their market share.