

Gender Differences in Travel Planning Behaviour

A Qualitative Analysis

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Introduction

This project explores gender differences in travel planning behaviours among university students. The study uses qualitative coding methods (open, axial, and selective coding) to identify patterns in how male and female students plan their trips.

Literature Review

Previous research highlights key differences in travel decision-making between genders:

- **Women:** Prioritize safety, service quality, and structured travel (Ibănescu et al., 2018; Karatsoli & Nathanail, 2020).
- **Men:** Prefer autonomy, flexible itineraries, and spontaneous travel (Bocchi et al., 2023).
- **Both:** Use online reviews and social media as decision-making tools (Assaker, 2020).

However, limited studies focus specifically on university students, highlighting a research gap this study addresses.

Research Questions

1. How do male students plan their trips?
2. How do female students plan their trips?
3. What are the similarities?
4. What are the differences?

Method

- **Participants:** University students (18–25), tourism-related majors
- **Data Collection:** Online open-ended questionnaire
- **Analysis:** Open coding → Axial coding → Selective coding (Bryman & Bell, 2011)

Findings

1 Male Students

Theme

Example

Independence & Control "Booking a car in advance gave me freedom to travel at my own pace."

Budget-Conscious "Traveled on a budget under \$1000."

Theme	Example
Efficiency Focus	"Booked a car early to avoid delays."
Spontaneity	"Left food and transport plans flexible depending on the situation."

2 Female Students

Theme	Example
Safety & Health	"Researched scams and emergency services."
Service Quality	"Checked service promises vs. reviews."
Convenience & Accessibility	"Chose accommodation near attractions and planned for transport cards."

3 Similarities

Theme	Example
Use of Online Reviews	Both genders trusted high-rated online reviews.
Location Convenience	Both preferred accommodation close to attractions.

4 Differences

Category	Male Students	Female Students
Safety Focus	Not mentioned	Strong focus on health & safety
Spontaneity	Preferred	Avoided (preferred structured planning)

Conclusion

Male students emphasize autonomy, spontaneity, and budget management. Female students prioritize safety, service quality, and structured itineraries. Both groups rely heavily on online reviews and convenience factors.

Recommendations

- **For Tourism Providers:**
Develop gender-sensitive marketing strategies, promoting flexible packages for male students and safety-focused, structured options for female students.
- **For Future Research:**
Further investigate online decision-making behaviours among students to expand on current findings.

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