



## Research note

## Evaluating state tourism websites using Search Engine Optimization tools

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## ABSTRACT

Applying Search Engine Optimization (SEO) tools such as TrafficEstimate and Twitter Search, Google Trends, Alexa, SimilarWeb, SEMRUSH, SEO Analyzer, and Moz-Open Site Explorer; this research comparatively evaluates tourism websites of the government of India and of five Indian states. The criteria for selecting state websites are the number of Foreign Tourists Arrival (FTA). Using each SEO tool, individual rank is given first and then the mode of ranks is taken to give the final ranking to six tourism websites. Though there is literature available on evaluating Indian government (central or state) run tourism websites, there is no research available on comparing and ranking state government tourism websites in the Indian context, using Search Engine Optimization tools presented in this research. The result shows that the government of India's website [www.tourism.gov.in](http://www.tourism.gov.in) ranks fourth. Tourism websites of three states i.e. Delhi, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu ranks first, second, and third respectively.

## 1. Introduction

In this internet age, when travel books are out of demand, websites and search engines are the sources of information. Accessing information about various destinations in the country plays a crucial role in foreign tourists' planning to visit particular countries. Though the internet has made all tour related information available on fingertips, it is necessary for governments to understand the level, nature, and volume of information needed by the tourists.

When it comes to collect information about a country and plan a remote trip, informative and attractive official and trusted websites become the game changer. Websites are the most powerful tool to attract tourists. Tourism is an important sector for the economy of nations. It contributes not only in generating employment but also in Gross Domestic Product of the nations. Tourism helps to build foreign exchange reserves and affects the balance of payments of a country (Çelik et al., 2013). Foreign Tourists Arrival growth is one of the factors to consider while checking attractiveness of the country. In addition to island nations, economies of which heavily depend on tourism, governments of most of the countries take tourism as a serious business. Governments take utmost care about their respective country image so that the national income from tourism keeps growing regularly.

Besides the presence of one of the seven wonders of the world and presence of world heritage sites in India, low cost of traveling, and successful campaigns such as *Incredible India*; there are other factors attracting foreign tourists arrival in India. These factors are union budget allocation to tourism sectors, medical tourism, and e-visa

facility. As mentioned on [www.indiabudget.gov.in](http://www.indiabudget.gov.in), in the union budget of 2018-19, it was mentioned that the government would make a framework to attract investments to promote tourism activities. In addition to investments, the government also proposed to focus on infrastructure, skill development, development of technology, and on marketing. The Government of India is also emphasizing on medical tourism. Bhaidkar and Goswami (2017) observed exponential growth in medical tourism in India in the last decade, largely due to the spread and growth of the internet. Authors list such factors affecting the popularity of Indian medical tourism abroad as lack of language barrier, privatization, availability of advanced healthcare facilities, globally qualified specialists, etc. The Government of India has simplified tourist visa process by launching e-Visa facility in 162 countries' international travelers. Tourists can upload documents on the website, pay visa fees, and can download and print e-visa received in their email.

Websites and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) play a vital role in promoting tourism at international level. Neither any of top five state tourism websites nor Government of India's ministry of tourism's website [tourism.gov.in](http://tourism.gov.in) appeared on Search Engine Result Page when the keywords "India tour" and "places to visit in India" were searched one by one on Google in October 2017. Several studies such as Salleh, Othman, and Sarmidi (2011); Bhattacharya (2011); Aggarwal, Guglani, and Goel (2008); Das, Sharma, Mohapatra, and Sarkar (2007); and Selvanathan, Viswanathan, Selvanathan, and Mangai (2009) have used and emphasized on an important criteria affecting tourism, i.e. Foreign Tourists Arrival (FTA). This paper compares tourism websites of the government of India and websites of top five states with high of FTA

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**Table 1**

Share of Top States/UTs of India in number of foreign tourist visits in 2015. Source: Adapted from *India Tourism Statistics at a Glance 2015*, Govt. of India, p. 15.

Rank	State/UT	Foreign Tourist Visits	
		Number	Share (%)
1	Tamil Nadu	4,684,707	20.1
2	Maharashtra	4,408,916	18.9
3	Uttar Pradesh	3,104,062	13.3
4	Delhi	2,379,169	10.2
5	West Bengal	1,489,500	6.4
	Total of Top 5 States	16,066,354	68.9
6	Rajasthan	1,475,311	6.3
7	Kerala	977,479	4.2
8	Bihar	923,737	4.0
9	Karnataka	636,502	2.7
10	Goa	541,480	2.3
	Total of Top 10 States	20,620,863	88.4
	Others	2,705,300	11.6
	Total	23,326,163	100.0

**Table 2**

Google Trends result using two keywords.

Keywords	Interest Over Time	Interest by region	Related Queries
Places to see in India	87	India-100 Sri Lanka-63 Nepal-52 United Arab Emirates-49 Oman-42	best places to see in India-100 places to see in south India-30
India tour	47	India-100 United States-5	tour of India-100 tour in India-80 India tour-75 tour to India-55 tour packages India-45

(Foreign Tourist Arrival) share in total FTAs of India, as shown in [Table 1](#). SEO (Search Engine Optimization) tools are used to make the comparison. As shown in [Table 1](#), Tamil Nadu state ranked number one in the share of foreign tourists visit with 20% of India's total foreign tourists. 68.9% country's foreign tourists visited five states i.e. Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, and West Bengal.

**2. Literature review**

There are certain researches done on evaluating tourism website (also known as Destination Marketing Organization website) developed and managed by central (federal) or state government departments directly or via outsourced mode. For example; [Ip, Law, and Lee \(2011\)](#) made a review of fourteen years' studies conducted between 1996 and 2009 and developed a framework to evaluate websites. This framework evaluates websites by phases, features, and effectiveness of tourism and hospitality websites. [Li and Wang \(2011\)](#) conducted a study to measure the effectiveness of the official websites of state tourism of the United States. [Law, Qi, and Buhalis \(2010\)](#) reviewed methodological approaches to evaluate tourism websites. Seventy-five articles about quality, evaluation, assessment, measurement of the website in the tourism industry were distributed by the industry sectors, regions, and instruments for evaluating websites. [Feng, Morrison, and Ismail \(2004\)](#) applied a modified balanced scorecard approach to compare similarities and differences among American and Chinese destination marketing organization websites. The selected organizations were the state tourism offices, convention and visitors bureaus, and provincial/city tourism administration offices. The evaluation parameters were website

**Table 3**  
Alexa Metrics of government-managed tourism websites.

State tourism Websites (in order of no. of FTAs)	Global Rank	Rank in India	Website visitors (India) %	Bounce Rate %	Daily Pageviews Per visitor	Daily time on Site (mm:ss)	Search Traffic %	Top Keywords	Total sites Linking In	Popular Subdomain	Gender, Edu., & Location
Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India-tourism.gov.in	1,68,547	11,065	82.9	55.40	2.30	02:43	61.70	ministry of tourism, India tourism, ministry of tourism,	557	tourism.gov.in	Male, School, work
Tamil Nadu-tamilnadutourism.org	3,31,661	23,741	93.9	40.40	3.60	03:01	66.30	Tamilnadu tourism minister of India	477	tamilnadutourism.org	Male, School, work
Maharashtra-maharashtratourism.gov.in	1,56,839	11,317	97.7	48.90	2.50	03:44	54.00	nadu, tamil nadu tourism	505	mtdcrrs	Male, School, home
Uttar Pradesh-uptourism.gov.in	3,27,065	21,907	95.9	64.10	2.00	02:41	48.80	Mumbai, mtdc, Maharashtra tourism, registration, Mumbai darshan	150	uptourism.gov.in	Male, School, work
Delhi-delhitourism.gov.in	1,56,363	10,467	86.8	53.90	3.00	03:00	67.90	Uttar Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh tourism, Lucknow, Agra city tour, up tourism	485	delhitourism.gov.in	Male, School, work
West Bengal- wbtourism.gov.in	7,68,477	1,30,745	98.9	47.60	1.90	01:41	64.30	Garden of five senses, Delhi, Delhi tourism, India gate, purana dila	151	wbtourism.gov.in	Male, School, work
								West Bengal tourism, west Bengal, Bengal tourism, Darjeeling, santiniketan tourist lodge			

**Table 4**  
Individual ranking of websites according to Alexa metrics factors.

Ranks	Global Rank	Rank in India	Website visitors (India) %	Bounce Rate %	Daily Pageviews Per visitor	Daily time on Site (m:ss)	Search Traffic %	Total sites Linking In
1	delhitourism	delhitourism	wbtourism	tamilnadutourism	tamilnadutourism	maharashtratourism	delhitourism	GOI, Dept. of Tourism
2	maharashtratourism	maharashtratourism	maharashtratourism	wbtourism	delhitourism	tamilnadutourism	tamilnadutourism	maharashtratourism
3	GOI, Dept. of Tourism	GOI, Dept. of Tourism	uptourism	maharashtratourism	maharashtratourism	delhitourism	wbtourism	delhitourism
4	uptourism	uptourism	tamilnadutourism	delhitourism	GOI, Dept. of Tourism	GOI, Dept. of Tourism	GOI, Dept. of Tourism	tamilnadutourism
5	tamilnadutourism	tamilnadutourism	delhitourism	GOI, Dept. of Tourism	uptourism	uptourism	maharashtratourism	wbtourism
6	wbtourism	wbtourism	GOI, Dept. of Tourism	uptourism	wbtourism	wbtourism	uptourism	Uptourism

marketing strategies, web page designs, marketing information, and technical qualities. [Doolin, Burgess, and Cooper \(2002\)](#) assessed the use of the World Wide Web for tourism marketing with a context of New Zealand's regional tourism organizations. [Novabos, Matias, and Mena \(2015\)](#) conducted a user-centered evaluation of Filipino provincial tourism websites and developed a tool called the User-Perceived Quality Scale as the standard tool for evaluating travel destination websites. [Ismailova and Inal \(2017\)](#) conducted a comparative study on government websites of Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and of Turkey to check website accessibility and quality with reference to search engines. The study used online automated tools. [Dwivedi, Yadav, and Venkatesh \(2011\)](#) conducted an interpretive study to determine the use of social media by national tourism organizations in 195 countries. The research focused on the extent of the use of social media by national tourism organizations, the social media platforms used by these organizations, and the social media platforms are used more frequently. It was concluded that when the search keywords such as “Official”, “Ministry”, “Tourism Department”, etc. were used; it was easier to identify the official website of national tourism organizations. When authors visited this website, from India; they did not find social media links or buttons on the homepage of such websites.

Other types of research done in ranking or evaluating government managed tourism websites are not specific to a country or region but are focused on a particular tool or tools such as search engine optimization. For example, [Lok Yeung and Lu \(2004\)](#) experienced the lack of existence of analytical studies on the functionality of websites. The authors proposed a two-dimensional framework to analyze websites and also to compare and improve the functionality of websites. [Pan, Xiang, Law, and Fesenmaier \(2011\)](#) constructed research about Search Engine Marketing (SEM) in tourism. The authors presented the model showing dynamics in SEM and discussed the implications of the model. The authors synthesized and critically reviewed research on search engine use by travelers and proposed a conceptual model depicted relationship among – 1) travel information search, 2) search engine, and 3) online tourism domain. The authors also proposed six essential principles for effective DMO (Destination Marketing Organization). [López, Altamirano, and Valarezo \(2016\)](#) termed *collaborative tourism communication 2.0* and evaluated it in the government tourism websites of twenty-two Latin American countries. Some SEO measurement used were bounce rate, Pageviews per visitor, and daily time on site. [de Carlos, Araújo, and Fraiz, \(2016\)](#) used SimilarWeb classification to analyze the importance of tourism intermediaries. [Thakur, Sangal, and Bindra \(2011\)](#) applied Search Engine Optimization parameters to a commercial website and measured the change in Alexa Traffic Rank.

There is not much written on evaluating central government or on the state government tourism websites in the Indian context. A small number of researches are available. For example, In the Indian context, [Chavali and Sahu \(2008\)](#) carried out an exploratory comparative study of websites of Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation, Kerala Tourism Development Corporation, and of Tamilnadu Tourism Development Corporation. [Ogra \(2014\)](#) analyzed a web content of Garhwali and Kumaoni tourism sector using tourism product analysis, internet delivery channels, user interfaces, institutional system, branding strategies, etc. Using the Information Processing Approach, and the Theory of Planned Behavior; [Padhi and Pati \(2017\)](#) extracted keywords on “Kerala Tourism” using Google Trends. [Panigrahi and Srivastava \(2015\)](#) explored the factors determining the quality of a travel website and the method for quality evaluation in the Indian context. Observing a gap in research on e-tourism initiatives of DMOs in India, [Satghare and Sawant \(2017\)](#) evaluated the destination websites of Indian states – Kerala, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat. Using certain criteria present in the previous literature, [Nejad and Subramoniam \(2015\)](#) evaluated Kerala tourism websites, ranked these websites on 1 to 10 and compared this ranking with the ranking given by other tools such as *Alexa*. [Prathapan, Sajin Sahadevan, and Zakkariya \(2018\)](#)

**Table 5**  
Modal ranks of the websites (Alexa metrics).

Websites	Global Rank	Rank in India	Website visitors (India) %	Bounce Rate %	Daily Pageviews Per visitor	Daily time on Site (mm:ss)	Search Traffic %	Total sites Linking In	Modal Rank
delhitourism	1	1	5	4	2	3	1	3	1
maharashtratourism	2	2	2	3	3	1	5	2	2
GOI, Dept. of Tourism	3	3	6	5	4	4	4	1	4
tamilnadutourism	5	5	4	1	1	2	2	4	5
uptourism	4	4	3	6	5	5	6	6	6
wbtourism	6	6	1	2	6	6	3	5	6

**Table 6**  
Traffic overview and referring site according to SimilarWeb.

State tourism Websites (in order of no. of FTAs)	Traffic Overview (Sept. 2017)			Top Referring Site
	Total visits ('000)	Traffic By country (%)	Traffic Source (%)	
Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India-tourism.gov.in	97.53	India-78.78 Afghanistan-2.92 U.S.-1.82 Philippines-1.49 U.K.-1.38	Direct-10.71 Referrals-7.73 Search-80.95 Social-0.52 Mail-0.10 Display-0.00	boi.gov.in
Tamil Nadu-tamilnadutourism.org	70.46	India-87.20 U.S.-2.70 Slovakia-1.79 U.A.E.-1.44 Malaysia-1.24	Direct-3.37 Referrals-6.27 Search-89.73 Social-0.07 Mail-0.57 Display-0.00	astromenda.com
Maharashtra-maharashtratourism.gov.in	121.71	India-88.94 Netherlands-2.93 U.K.-1.92 U.S.-1.61 Japan-1.39	Direct-17.69 Referrals-6.44 Search-73.74 Social-0.03 Mail-2.11 Display-0.00	steemit.com
Uttar Pradesh-uptourism.gov.in	64.11	India-95.24 U.S.-2.32 U.A.E.-0.62 Malaysia-0.47 Singapore-0.44	Direct-22.33 Referrals-13.25 Search-63.45 Social-0.98 Mail-0.00 Display-0.00	up-tourism.com
Delhi-delhitourism.gov.in	178.24	India-80.23 U.S.-4.07 U.K.-1.72 Australia-1.62 Canada-1.08	Direct-7.21 Referrals-6.28 Search-85.92 Social-0.49 Mail-0.00 Display-0.10	delhiportal.ongc.co.in
West Bengal-wbtourism.gov.in	Not Available	Not Available	Direct-10.09 Referrals-6.94 Search-82.96 Social-0.00 Mail-0.00 Display-0.00	Not Available

**Table 7**  
SEMRUSH domain overview.

State tourism Websites (in order of no. of FTAs)	Organic Search traffic ('000)	Paid Search traffic (%)	SEMrush Rank ('000)	Keywords ('000)	Traffic Cost ('000\$)	Backlinks ('000)
Ministry of Tourism, GOI- tourism.gov.in	27.6	0	5.9	7	21	12.9
Tamil Nadu-tamilnadutourism.org	28.9	0	5.7	2.3	7.6	10.4
Maharashtra-maharashtratourism.gov.in	61.3	0	3.3	4.4	10.4	9.3
Uttar Pradesh-uptourism.gov.in	9.5	0	12.4	2	4.2	752
Delhi- delhitourism.gov.in	100	0	2.3	10.6	33.1	5.8
West Bengal- wbtourism.gov.in	1.3	1.9	43	151	294	771

**Table 8**  
Page Level SEO using SEO Analyzer.

State tourism Websites (in order of no. of FTAs)	Page Level SEO
Ministry of Tourism, GOI-tourism.gov.in	Meta description missing
Tamil Nadu-tamilnadutourism.org	Meta description missing
Maharashtra-maharashtratourism.gov.in	Meta description missing
Uttar Pradesh-uptourism.gov.in	No error
Delhi- delhitourism.gov.in	Meta description missing
West Bengal- wbtourism.gov.in	No error

**Table 9**  
Domain authority and page authority.

State tourism Websites (in order of no. of FTAs)	Domain Authority	Page authority
Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India-tourism.gov.in	70/100	75/100
Tamil Nadu-tamilnadutourism.org	57/100	64/100
Maharashtra-maharashtratourism.gov.in	58/100	49/100
Uttar Pradesh-uptourism.gov.in	44/100	54/100
Delhi-delhitourism.gov.in	58/100	41/100
West Bengal-wbtourism.gov.in	41/100	34/100

compared Kerala government's tourism website with other competitive websites, using Alexa and SEMrush.

### 3. Research gap

Though there is a wide literature available on evaluating state tourism websites or on DMO of certain countries or regions, research is not done on evaluating central or state-managed tourism websites in India. Moreover, there is no research available on comparing and ranking state government tourism websites using Search Engine Optimization tools presented in this research.

### 4. Research method

Tourism websites of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (tourism.gov.in) and websites of five states of India were selected for comparative analysis. Location for all keywords search was India. These five states are those with the highest shares in the number of foreign tourist visits, as shown in Table 1. The data were collected in October 2017. Alexa data are available for the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Spain only. Because Delhi is the capital of India, has an international airport, gateway to the *Taj Mahal* (one of the wonders of the world), and is home to many world heritage sites; the searches are likely to prefer to visit Delhi tourism website instantly.

The following seven SEO tools were used to analyze selected six tourism websites: TrafficEstimate and Twitter Search, Google Trends, Alexa, SimilarWeb, SEMrush, SEO Analyzer, and Moz (Open Site Explorer). TrafficEstimate and Twitter Search help in understanding searchers' mind, which is a key to know and judge the keywords the searcher would prefer to use while searching for a product, service, or tourist destination. Google Trends proportionately shows the popularity of keywords in a particular location worldwide. The value ranges from

**Table 10**  
Rank Comparison using all metrics.

Websites	Alexa	SimilarWeb traffic	SEMRUSH org. traffic	SEMRUSH rank	SEMRUSH traffic cost	Moz Page Autho.	Moz domain Autho.	Final rank
Delhi tourism	1	1	1	1	5	2	5	1
Tamil Nadu tourism	5	4	3	3	2	3	2	3
Maharashtra tourism	2	2	2	2	3	2	4	2
UP tourism	6	5	5	5	1	4	3	5
West Bengal tourism	6	NA	6	6	6	5	6	6
GOI	4	3	4	4	4	1	1	4

0 to 100, where zero means in that location the keyword was less than 1% as popular as 100%. Related queries show those keyword(s), which users also search for when searching for given terms. There were two related queries for term 'places to see in India', and five for 'India tour'. Alexa SEO tools help to analyze websites on their ranking in the country and globally, visitor percentage, bounce rate, daily time spent on a website, top keywords etc. While analyzing the government of tourism department's website of central government and websites of five states, the consistency between global rank and national rank was observed for all six websites. SimilarWeb is used here to compare traffic Overview and top Referring Sites. The observations were noted while analyzing above six websites on SimilarWeb on a desktop website. Like Alexa, SEMrush also ranks websites. There are other comparable criteria such as Organic Search traffic, Paid Search traffic, Keywords, Traffic Cost, Backlinks, Branded Traffic, Non-branded Traffic, etc. [www.neilpatel.com](http://www.neilpatel.com) was utilized to conduct SEO analysis to help to analyze website grow traffic. Moz's Domain Authority is a search engine ranking score indicating how well a website ranks on Search Engine Result Pages (SERPs). Page Authority indicates the strength of individual pages. The highest possible score for each of this measure is 100.

Individual ranks to six websites are given based on seven SEO tools individually. Modal rank is given to each website based on how many times rank 1 has been repeated in all metrics for a particular website. For example, in Table 10 (second row), the website of Delhi tourism is four times ranked 1 thus rank 1 becomes modal rank for Delhi tourism website. Tamil Nadu tourism website is ranked 3 in final rank as it has rank 3 is the most repeated rank in that row. Similarly, for the remaining four websites, repeated ranks are calculated and final ranks are given as shown in the last column of Table 10.

### 5. Analysis and result

When the keyword phrase "India Tour" was searched on [www.trafficestimate.com](http://www.trafficestimate.com), none of the state tourism websites appeared on the top list. The popular websites on the list were – [www.indianholiday.com](http://www.indianholiday.com), [www.tourmyindia.com](http://www.tourmyindia.com), [www.mustseeindia.com](http://www.mustseeindia.com), [www.tourism-of-india.com](http://www.tourism-of-india.com), and [www.southerntravelsindia.com](http://www.southerntravelsindia.com). The same results appeared when the phrase was searched on Twitter.

Three analyses i.e. Interest Over Time, Interest by Region, and Related Queries were run on Google Trends (Table 2). When two keywords - 'places to see in India' and 'India tour' were compared with *worldwide* and *past 12 month* options on [trends.google.com](http://trends.google.com), Interest Over Time was found 87 and 47 for 'places to see in India' and for 'India tour' respectively. These data were collected between October 1 and 7, 2017. There were two related queries for term 'places to see in India' and five queries for 'India tour'.

Based on Alexa metrics (Table 3), individual rankings of six tourism websites were given as shown in Table 4. The consistency between global rank and national rank was observed for all six websites. As shown in the first row of Table 4, delhitourism.gov.in is the only website to top in three out of eight factors. In the bottom rank, wbtourism.gov.in repeats itself in four factors while uptourism.gov.in is repeated in three factors. If these websites are given ranks for eight criteria, their most frequently repeated ranks would look like as shown in Table 5.

Delhi tourism website had the highest traffic while UP tourism had the lowest according to SimilarWeb. Search as a traffic source is highest for Tamil Nadu tourism (89.73%). Except for search percentage, data for West Bengal tourism were not available. Next to India, the US has been the major source of traffic for all websites (Table 6).

SEMrush domain overview using Google India (desktop version) was fetched and the results were as in Table 7.

In organic search traffic, Delhi tourism tops the list with 100,000. All six websites had 0% paid search traffic, except West Bengal tourism website, which had 1.9% paid search traffic. Website of Delhi tourism ranks the highest. West Bengal tourism website had the highest number of keywords (151,000), the highest traffic cost (\$294,000) and the highest number of backlinks (771,000).

The Page level SEO analysis was run for the websites on [www.neilpatel.com](http://www.neilpatel.com) (Table 8). The tourism websites of UP and of West Bengal were error-free while other four websites had a missing Meta description.

As shown in Table 9, the government of India's tourism website scored the highest in both – domain authority and page authority according to Moz (Open Site Explorer).

As shown in Table 10, Website of Delhi tourism tops in this ranking, followed by state tourism website of Maharashtra. The rankings for all six websites are as shown below:

1. delhitourism.gov.in
2. maharashtratourism.gov.in
3. tamilnadutourism.org
4. tourism.gov.in (Govt. of India)
5. uptourism.gov.in
6. wbtourism.gov.in

## 6. Conclusion

For managing tourism websites, keywords in searchers' mind are important to understand. Government Tourism department's websites are informative but not as popular as privately run tourism websites such as [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com), etc. Search Engine Optimization tools offered by Alexa, SimilarWeb, SEMRUSH, and Moz help marketing managers to make tourism websites visible among the searchers. This research will be useful for website managers to understand what keywords foreign tourists use while searching destination information before visiting India. Moreover, the ranking method will act as a guideline for future research on ranking websites.

## Author contribution

The author applied Search Engine Optimization (SEO) tools such as TrafficEstimate and Twitter Search, Google Trends, Alexa, SimilarWeb, SEMRUSH, SEO Analyzer, and Moz-Open Site Explorer to comparatively evaluate tourism website of the government of India and of five Indian states. No prior research was found comparing and ranking tourism departments' websites of the government using SEO tools. Using each SEO tool, the author individually ranked the selected websites. The author has attempted to help tourism website managers to understand searchers' mind and make websites more attractive and informative.

## Declarations of interest

None.

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