

EXPLORING TOURISTS' PERCEPTION: THE CASE OF BANGLADESH

Muhammad Sabbir Rahman
Multimedia University

The purpose of this research is to test the tourist's perception in the choice of selection a destination under the perspective of Bangladeshi tourism environment. The survey instrument was employed by using convenience sampling procedure on 250 tourists from significant tourist's destination places from Bangladesh. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) followed by Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to test the key influential attributes. Apart from that structural equation model was also used to test the hypothesis of this study. The result shows that most of the tourists perceived that selection of a destination highly depend on destination brand image, internet adoption followed by customer's satisfaction. This research will assist the operators of tourism industry in Bangladesh to understand the influential factors which are influencing tourist's perception to choose a destination that is unexplored previously by the past researchers.

Keywords: *Bangladesh, Destination Brand Image, Internet Adoption, Customer satisfaction*

JEL Classification: *L83, M1, O1*

INTRODUCTION

Kandampully (2000) define tourism as a unique product composite with tangible and intangible services by tourist's experience. In recent times tourism has considered a major component of the economic prosperity of almost all countries (Poon & Low, 2005). According to Balakrishnan (2009) travel and tourism is the second largest global industry with daily international revenues of approximately US\$2 billion, and investments of 12 percent of world GDP. That is why travel and tourism considered as one of the fastest growing industries (WTTC, 1995). In recent times tourism industry development is a high priority

© University of the Aegean. Print ISSN: 1790-8418, Online ISSN: 1792-6521



Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

agenda for most of the nations and communities everywhere in globe (Tabibi & Rohani, 2011).

That is why in terms of employment it ranks as the largest industry in the world (Mowlana & Smith, 1993). From the statistics it is been observed that in 2004, US, Spain, France, Italy, China, Australia earned US\$74.5 billion, US\$45.2 billion, US\$40.8 billion, US\$35.7 billion, US\$25.7 billion, and US\$13 billion from this industry (World Tourism Organization, 2005). For instance overseas visitors to the UK were 32.1 million in 2006, and spent approximately £15.4 billion (DCMS, 2006). This evidence reflected that large amount of revenues earned by this country because of the determination of the authorities to promote their country as friendly and welcoming places to visit (Uzama, 2008).

So far up to now there seems a significant research gap exist on Bangladeshi tourism market of discovering tourist's perception towards selection of a destination. Such studies of focusing on the Bangladeshi tourism industry were hardly ever reported in past academic research. In fact empirical research is hugely lacking contributing to the new knowledge in this area. The findings of this research would make a number of unique assistance to the tourism industry and the literature of the consumers' perception and hospitality research under the developing country's perspective.

The present study aims to gather primary data from the inbound and outbound tourists with multicultural, multi-religious group who are frequently visit various destination in Bangladesh. This paper presents a conceptual and exploratory analysis of the relevant variables that are influencing tourists' perception in choosing a particular destination in Bangladesh.

Tourism in Bangladesh

After the independence the government established the National Tourism Organisation (NTO) in the name of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) under Presidential Order No. 143. BPC began in January 1973 with limited assets. The corporation was entrusted with the dual responsibility consisted with developing tourism infrastructure and promoting Bangladesh as a tourist destination. Other responsibilities of the Corporation included with regulation and operation of tourism activities in Bangladesh (Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, 2004).

In recent times the government of Bangladesh realized the importance of tourism in its economic and social life. Therefore, the government decided to combine both the tourism department and the

private corporation into one organization for better coordination, promotion, development and marketing of tourism in Bangladesh (Hossain, 2006). Recently over 40 private tour operators have already been engaged in tourism marketing in Bangladesh. Some of them conduct only domestic (inbound) tours while others offer both domestic and outbound tours (Bangladesh Monitor, 2007). Apart from that thirty two private tour operators are members of an association named “Tours Operator Association of Bangladesh (TOAB)” to promote the country’s tourism business to attract inbound and outbound tourists (Siddiqi, 2006).

In 2005 Bangladesh recorded 207.662 inbound tourists. In terms of region the majority of the Bangladeshi tourists originated from South Asia (99.459), followed by Europe (48.961), East Asia and Pacific (35.976), US (18.673), Middle East (2.861) and Africa (1.730) (Source BPC). In terms of existing tourist products, both inbound and home market, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Chittagong and Khulna Division are the main tourist divisions (Primary source Lonely Planet, 2004; Banglapedia, 2006; Encyclopedia of the Nations ,2007; UNESCO 2008a-c). However, in recent times researchers reported that in country like Bangladesh tourist’s safety and security issues are significant for the travellers (Embassy Web-pages of America, Norway and Denmark has been consulted in February 2006).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chheang (2011) examines tourist perceptions and experiences and argues that tourist perception is positive and their experiences are beyond expectations based on cultural enrichment and local people friendliness plus local hospitality facilities. Holt (i.e., 2002: 80-82) referred that tourism being influenced by a “counter culture that opposes corporatism of all stripes”. According to Bowen (1998) consumers embrace tourism as an activity through which personal identity can be constructed autonomously and authentically. He also mentioned that travel and tourism industry has entered a postmodernist era. Because of that

Ezeuduji and Rid (2011) discover that to gain leadership in the tourism market few things need to be look after like value position, operational excellence and strong customer relations . On the other hand Henderson (2011) in his research on Philippine highlighted that improper arrangement of infrastructure of a country seems to perceive negatively by the international visitors to choose a destination. He also highlighted about other factors that almost influence on inbound and outbound tourist to travel like political instability, security and safety. Interestingly

Higginbotham (2011) employ basic social psychological concepts in the interrelated fields of recreation, leisure, and tourism. The result of his study reveals that although possessing an intrinsic motivation and an element of perceived freedom, travel for assisted-suicide is detached from the rewarding outcomes one normally receives from recreation, leisure, and tourism.

Destination Brand Image

A brand image is a mental representation that always evokes in the consumers mind. So brand image can be defined as “a unique set of associations within the minds of target customers which represent what the brand currently stands for and implies the current promise to customers” (All About Brands Index, 2005). Simeon (2006: 464) defines “a brand is a consistent group of characters, images, or emotions that consumers recall or experience when they think of a specific symbol, product, service, organization or location”. Branding must “attract and keep customers by promoting value, image, prestige, or lifestyle” (i.e., Rooney, 1995: 48). Brand must communicate information, minimize risk or increase trust, help to identify or recall, differentiate from competition and facilitate recommendations (Palumbo & Herbig, 2000; Knox, 2004). Hsieh and Kai Li (2008) argued that consumer’s perception of an organization’s brand is an antecedent of loyalty. In tourism brand images associated with unique history, heritage and culture of a particular destination (Hankinson, 2004).

Travel and tourism is the highly competitive industry, there is a paucity of academic research on destination branding (Balakrishnan, 2009). Foxall and Goldsmith (1994) indicate that branding and brand perceptions affect the consumer’s perceptions. Brand-management strategy as part of marketing strategy for a tourism industry (Pike, 2005). Because of that country like Britain also give importance to uplift its brand by launching a branding strategy (VisitBritain, 2006; Jowell, 2008). Since destination branding is complex and most of the literature is largely limited to the image and logo design (Blain et al., 2005). Researchers also believed that destination brands are similar to corporate brands, as they act as umbrella brands for a portfolio of leisure, investment and business tourism, and stakeholder and citizen welfare products (Trueman et al., 2004). A destination’s product and service portfolio must be integrated with existing assets (Hankinson, 2004). For example it require strategic location (Siddiqi, 1999); infrastructure (airlines, ports, roads, technology); natural resources and other economic policies (tax free, economic free

zones and credit facilities) (Balakrishnan, 2008). Destinations that diversify their portfolio can able to reduce their risk; increase their number of visitors and enhance loyalty (Rangan et al., 2006). Sometimes destinations are looking at combinations of business based or vacation based portfolios (Hankinson, 2005, 2004).

Internet Adoption

Nowadays internet is becoming a distribution channel for most of service oriented company that helps to accomplish the tasks of traditional intermediaries for the travel agents and tour operators. In fact these tourism organizations are being given new roles in the distribution channel and will remain secure if their offering capability could be strengthened by the presence of the internet, rather than if they functioned according to the more negative image of being simply a “booking agency” (Law et al., 2004; Nysveen & Leshagen, 2001; Law et al., 2004; Ozturan & Roney, 2004). During the last few years there has been an increased use of the internet by tourists, travel agencies all over the world. Moreover, travel agents in a country like Bangladesh must have positive attitudes towards internet applications and should believe that they can take advantage of the internet technology to retain and attracting current and future tourists (Maselli, 2002). Moreover tourist’s visit an agency’s site is for the information or content. The term “content” refers to the information features or services that are offered in the web site (Huizingh, 2000).

Service Quality

According to Leisen and Vance (2001) service quality helped to create the necessary competitive advantage by being an effective differentiating factor. Service quality is essential and important for a service provider company to ensure the quality service for establishing and maintaining loyal and profitable customer (Leisen & Vance, 2001). Johnson and Sirikit (2002) stated service delivery systems have the ability to allow managers of a company to identify the real customer’s feedback and satisfaction on their service. According to Wang and Lo (2002) marketing and economics quality often depended on the level of service attributes. Wal et al., (2002) argued that service quality reflects the extent to which a product or service meets or exceeds consumer’s expectations. By the way consumers prefer service quality when the price and other cost elements are held constant (Boyer & Hult, 2005). Customer

perceptions of the quality of a service are traditionally measured immediately after the person has consumed the service (Plamer & O'Neill 2003). Crosby et al., (2003) found that perceptions of quality are created and maintained in the minds of consumers.

Customers Satisfaction

According to Yi (1990) the satisfaction measurement focuses primarily on the disconfirmation model of expectations. He also claimed that the desires of the consumer, as the key determinants of satisfaction. This view was supported by Spreng et al., (1996) who believed that the extent to which a product or service fulfils a person's desires are significant in shaping the individual's feelings of satisfaction. Baker and Crompton (2000) also supported this view by indicating that factors such as desires, needs and disposition can influence the measurement of satisfaction. However "Attribute satisfaction" is the individual assessment of the degree to which a product's performance is perceived to have met or exceeded desires and expectations (Spreng et al., 1996). Bramwell (1998) suggested that the products of a destination should be designed to meet the demand of the targeted customers.

"Tourism satisfaction" refers to the emotional state of tourists after exposure to the opportunity or experience (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Jayawardena (2002) points out that the future of tourism markets is dependent on the ability of tourism countries to deliver "a high quality product that corresponds to the changing tastes, needs, wants and demands of the international traveler". The development of such marketing strategies requires tourism officials to measure the image customers have of the destination's tourism products and identify how satisfied they are with the delivery of these products (Jayawardena, 2002). Tribe and Snaith (1998) also measured tourists' satisfaction with their holiday experience and pointed out that the measurement of satisfaction provides some indication of the degree of customer loyalty. Kozak (2001) Gyte and Phelps (1989) found a relationship between overall satisfaction and intention to make a repeat visit.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Above all researchers in this research found that there is very limited literature focusing on tourist's perception in selection of destination. Based on the literature review; this study proposes a conceptual framework of studying dynamics of tourists perception towards selection

of a destination. This framework emphasizes on the following independent and mediating variables: destination brand image, internet adoption, satisfaction, service quality. The independent variables of this research are destination brand image and internet adoption which is related to the tourist's perception in selecting a destination where these relationships among them are mediated by service quality. On the other hand this research also proposes that there is direct link between satisfactions of the tourists towards their perception of selecting a destination. The schematic diagram is presented below:

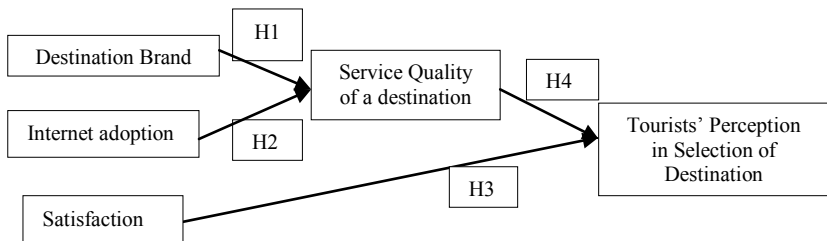


Figure 1 Theoretical framework of this study

To test our variables we construct the following hypothesis:

H1: Destination brand image plays a significant role on service quality of a destination.

H2: Internet adoption plays a significant role on service quality of a destination.

H3: Customers satisfaction and tourist's perception in selection of destination have significant relationship.

H4: Destination brand image and internet adoption plays a significant role on tourist's perception in selection of destination, when service quality plays a mediating role.

METHODOLOGY OF THIS RESEARCH

Since the major purpose of the study is to learn the tourist's perception in the choice of a destination. In order to guarantee the representativeness of the population, convenient sampling method were employed, according to the criteria of significant location in Bangladesh (like Dhaka, Rajshahai, Khulna and Chitagong). Place of survey were selected on the basis of some variables like (popularity, frequency of visiting by the tourists). The survey questionnaire consisted with five

distinct sections, each section contained relevant questions pertaining different parts of the study. Questionnaires were systematically distributed utilizing a convenient sampling method. The sampling frame for conducting the principal component analysis was comprised with 250 respondents. A 7-point rating scale were used ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ were used. Initially a total of 300 samples were distributed among the potential respondents for this study, of which 270 questionnaires were received. After having the screening process completed, only 250 responses were considered complete and valid for further data analysis. This represents a success rate of 87.50%, which was considered to be extremely good in view of time, cost, certainty and geographical constraints.

Data Analysis Procedure

The first stage of the data analysis conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to identify the factor structure for measuring the factor that affect on tourist’s perception in the choice of a destination. The second part of the data analysis was employed with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to confirm the factor structure at last structural equation models to test the hypothesis. According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988) stated measurement of a model can be tested on the complete data set using a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Test of SEM seems to be appropriate for the study because of the multiple dependence relationships in the hypothesized in the proposed models. In this research researchers used SEM (structural equation models) because of the multiple dependence relationships in the proposed hypothesized models (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1996). The application of SEM demonstrates advantages of “measurement and prediction” (i.e., Kelloway, 1998: 2) over standard multiple regression methods. To examine the general fit of the proposed model this study was based on maximum likelihood estimation approach (Fish, 2005). Fit indices included are the comparative fit index (CFI); the goodness-of-fit index (GFI); the normed fit index (NFI); Tucker Lewis Index (TLI); the root mean square error approximation (RMSEA) (Bentler & Bonett 1980; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1996; Tucker & Lewis, 1973; Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In order to measure the reliability for a set of two or more constructs this research used Cronbach alpha; values range between 0 and 1 with

higher values indicating higher reliability among the indicators (Hair et al., 1992). In accordance with the Cronbach alpha test, the total scale of reliability for this study varies from .783, indicating an overall higher reliability factors. From table 1 it is showed that the reliability of this study is substantial in every perspective.

Table 1 Reliability Analysis for all Variables

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No of Items
.792	.783	25

Factor analysis

The survey results obtained from 250 respondents have been explained in this section through the principal component analysis (PCA). It was carried out to explore the underlying factors associated with 20 items. The constructs validity was tested through Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and The Kaiser–Mayer–Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy. Result for the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and the KMO revealed from this study that both were highly significant. So this research concluded that this variable was suitable for the factor analysis (Table 2).

Table 2 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.793
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1465.826
	Df	168
	Sig.	.000

For this study, the general criteria were accepted items with loading of 0.60 or greater. The result showed in explained total variance explained by the two factors was 57.080%. The values of the following Table 3 indicated the affiliation of the items to a factor. The higher loading (factor) indicates the stronger affiliation of an item to a specific factor. The findings of this study indicate that each of the four dimensions (destination brand image, customer's satisfaction, internet adoption, and service quality) was homogeneously loaded to the different factors. On

the other hand the reliability coefficients for the four factors: destination brand image, customer’s satisfaction, internet adoption, and service quality were 0.79, 0.78, 0.83 and 0.86 respectively. As Table shows, all alpha coefficients for the data exceed the minimum standard for reliability of 0.70 recommended by Nunnally (1978). Thus, the results indicate that these multiple measures are highly reliable for measuring each construct.

Table 3 Reliability Analysis and Factor Loading

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Factor Loading
Destination Brand Name (Alpha = .79)			
(di) High degree history and heritage	4.65	1.369	.682
(di2) Feeling of ambience and experience	5.79	1.525	.713
(di3) International reputation	4.69	1.552	.651
(di4) Degree experience of exploration and natural wonders	4.58	1.669	.663
Internet adoption (Alpha = .78)			
(ia1) Standardize the sale processes and service delivery through internet	4.86	1.291	.641
(ia2) Standardize the travel products or services	3.65	1.385	.882
(ia3) Well established on line transaction	5.79	1.425	.763
(ia4) Offering multiple choices in travel services	5.58	1.456	.694
Customers Satisfaction (Alpha = .83)			
(cs1) Quality hotels and restaurants	4.58	1.636	.591
(cs2) Vacation met all expectations	6.54	1.587	.685
(cs3) Superior value for money	4.68	1.624	.769
(cs4) Fine local transportation system	4.75	1.268	.743
Service Quality (Alpha = .86)			
(Sq1) Provide services as it promise	4.38	1.536	.685
(Sq2) Perform services right at the first time	5.54	1.487	.621
(Sq3) Performance of stable service	4.28	1.324	.712
(Sq4) Service variety are very attractive	5.75	1.368	.628

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The second phase of data analysis consisted with confirmatory factor analysis. To this end the structural equation method (SEM) was applied, using maximum likelihood estimation method to test the hypothesis of the study (Bentler, 1995). Although this research has already employed EFA

for verifying grouping and loading pattern of measuring scale items, it has further attempted to screen EFA examination by conducting CFA among all the exogenous variables (destination brand image, internet adoption, and service quality and customers satisfaction) with measuring items retained by EFA.

Destination Brand Image

For destination brand, the modification indices for the covariance of measurement errors were: 11.844 between di2 (“Feeling of ambience and experience”) and di1 (“High degree history and heritage”) and 15.799 between di3 and di4 (“International reputation” and “Degree experience of exploration and natural wonders”). These two sets of measurement error are logically conceivable to be correlated (Figure2). Therefore these correlated relations were allowed in the model. Each pair was added to the measurement model one at a time. After adding these three parameters, testing of the revised measurement model showed: $\chi^2/d.f. = 1.366$ ($\chi^2=17.768$, d.f.=13); GFI= .982, AGFI=.972, CFI=.971, NFI=.962 and RMSEA= .040.

Internet Adoption

From our EFA (exploratory Factor Analysis) as shown in table 2, we have retained 4 measuring items for internet adoption. The default model fit indices of internet adoption were adequate. The measurement model fit indices of internet adoption showed an adequate fit: $\chi^2/d.f. = .079$ ($\chi^2=12.769$, d.f.=9); GFI= .972, AGFI=.947, CFI=.975, NFI= .953 and RMSEA= .047.

Customer’s Satisfaction and Service Quality

From EFA as shown in table 3, have retained 4 measuring items for customer’s satisfaction and service quality variable. This study have retained all these items after conducting CFA, as all those indicators were loaded with loading factor more than 0.70. The measurement model fit indices of customer’s satisfaction and service quality showed an adequate fit: $\chi^2/d.f. = 1.32$ ($\chi^2=15.852$, d.f.=12); GFI= .963, AGFI= .953, CFI= .969, NFI= .957, RMSEA= .050; $\chi^2/d.f. = 1.222$ ($\chi^2=13.452$, d.f.=11); GFI= .973, AGFI= .963, CFI= .969, NFI= .957 and RMSEA= .040.

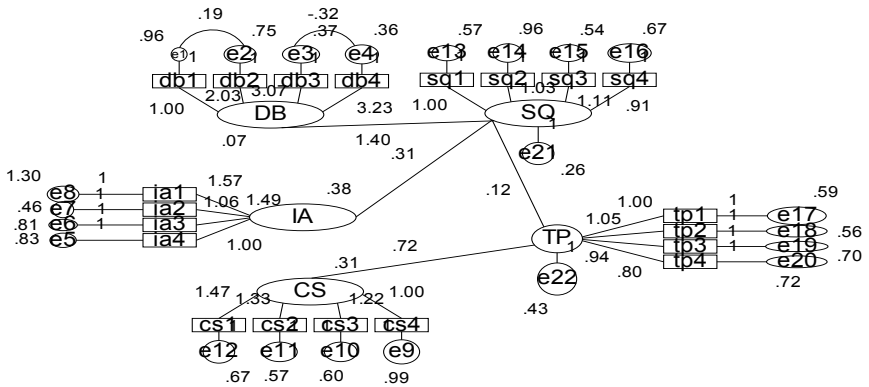


Figure 2: Factors Influencing Tourist’s Perception in Selection of Destination Model (For Total Sample): Default Model. (Destination Brand =DB, Internet Adoption=IA, Customer Satisfaction= CS; Service Quality = SQ, Tourist perception= TP)

Statistical Significance Of Parameter Estimates

In this stage data analysis this research utilized critical ratio (C.R) value, which represents the parameter of an estimate divided by its standard error. Based on a probability level 0.05 the test statistic needs to be $> \pm 1.96$ before the hypothesis (that estimates equals 0.0) can be rejected. On the other hand, it is also important to note that nonsignificant parameters can be indicative of a sample size that is too small (Byrne, 2001).

Table 3 Standard Estimation of the Main Model

	Standardized regression weight		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P value
H1	Service Quality (SQ)	← Destination Brand Image (DB)	1.403	.311	4.519	***
H2	Service Quality (SQ)	← Internet Adoption (IA)	.306	.068	4.475	***
H4	Tourist’s Perception (TP)	← Service Quality (SQ)	.115	.070	1.643	.100
H3	Tourist’s Perception (TP)	← Customers Satisfaction (CS)	.719	.117	6.155	***

Hypotheses Testing

The structural equation model was examined to test the relationship among the constructs. After adjustment of the model by observing the modification indices value goodness-of-fit indicates for this model were $\chi^2/df = (623.383 / 164) = 3.8011$, GFI = 0.92, AGFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.89, NFI = 0.85, RMSEA = 0.006. Figure 2 depicts the full model. After observing the statistical test it is been clear that all the paths are not significant at $p < 0.05$. (H1) Destination brand image plays a significant role on service quality of a destination. Therefore null hypotheses H1 is accepted at 0.5 level of significance $p > 0.000$. Regarding the H2: Internet adoption plays a significant role on service quality of a destination. Therefore, this null hypothesis is accepted at $p < 0.000$. H3: Customers satisfaction and tourist's perception in selection of destination have significant relationship. This null hypothesis is also accepted at $p < 0.000$. But H4: Destination brand image and internet adoption plays a significant role on tourist's perception in selection of destination, when service quality plays a mediating role. This null hypothesis is rejected at 0.5 level of significance $p > 0.000$. Among all the significant variables, destination brand image has the highest estimate (1.403) followed by customer's satisfaction (.719); internet adoption (.306). Overall destination brand image and internet adoption plays the most significant role on tourist's perception in selection of destination in Bangladesh.

CONCLUSION

The objective of the research is to figure out factors influencing tourist's perception in selection of destination Bangladesh as a tourist destination. This research also tries to identify the most significant attributes that satisfy tourist's needs in order to attract new visitors. The results of the structural equation modeling reflected that destination brand image, internet adoption and customers satisfaction played a significant role that are influencing tourist's perception in selection of a destination for travelling in Bangladesh. In response to the research objective relating to the tourists' needs and satisfaction, the findings showed that "Feeling of ambience and experience", "International reputation of the visiting place" "Standardize online services sales processes and service delivery through internet" "Well established on line transaction" and "Superior value for money" "Fine local transportation system" are the significant items influencing tourists' perception in selection of destination for travelling in Bangladesh.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study can provide marketing researchers and planners with some valuable view into the choice of appropriate markets based on the unique attributes of the destination, which can differentiate it in the tourists' minds and also meet the tourist's demand. It is recommended that managers of tourism business especially hotel and resort should ensure the provision of top quality service, restaurants with high standard security. Promotional activities through the internet and other electronic media including TV can be utilized to attract the new and existing tourists.

Bangladesh Government should be taken necessary measures to encourage the private sector to play positive role in the development and diversification of tourist facilities to promote domestic and international tourism in the country. From a managerial perspective, this research indicates the necessity for managers to understand what motivates tourists to visit Bangladesh. The research also highlighted the perception of tourists which can drive a manager to understand their behaviour.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER STUDIES

A number of limitations should be acknowledged here to inform future research. The survey was conducted only for two months, which permitted only winter tourists to be surveyed. Thus, most of the respondents were winter tourists not representative of year round tourism. Only few dimensions were analyzed in this study, so further research can be done by using factors such as socio cultural, outdoor activities, Income, cultural distance with larger sample size.

REFERENCES

- All about Brands Index. [Http://www.allaboutbranding.com/index.lasso](http://www.allaboutbranding.com/index.lasso). Accessed the 15 th of September 2005, at 12:35.
- American Embassy. [Http://www.infozee.com/usa/embassies/bangladesh.htm](http://www.infozee.com/usa/embassies/bangladesh.htm) – Dhaka, Bangladesh. Accessed the 30 th of December 2010, at 2:35.
- Anderson, J.C. & Gerbing, D.W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 103, pp.411-423.
- Baker, D. & Crompton, J. (2000). Quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 27, No.3, pp.785-804.

- Balakrishnan, M.S. (2009). Commentary strategic branding of destinations: a framework. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 43, No.5/6, pp.611-629.
- Banglapedia. (2006). National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh' CD edition. Asiatic society of Bangladesh.
- Bentler, P.M. & Bonett, D.G. (1980). Significance tests and goodness-of-fit in the analysis of covariance structures. *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 88, pp.588-606.
- Blain, C., Levy, S.E. & Ritchie, J.R.B. (2005). Destination branding: insights and practices from destination management organizations. *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 43, No.4, pp.328-338.
- Bowen, J.T. (1998). Market segmentation in hospitality research: no longer a sequential process. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 10, No.7, pp.289-96.
- Boyer, K.K. & Hult, G.T. (2005). Customer Behaviour in an Online Ordering Application: A Decision Scoring Model. *Decision Sciences*, Vol. 36, No.4, pp.569-598.
- Bramwell, B. (1998). User satisfaction and product development in urban tourism. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 19, No.1, pp.35-47.
- Chheang, V. (2011). Angkor Heritage Tourism And Tourist Perceptions. *Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism*, Vol. 6, No.2, pp.213-240.
- Crosby, L.B., DeVito, R. & Pearson, J.M. (2003). Manage Your Customers' Perception of Quality. *Review of Business*, Vol. 24, pp.18-38.
- DCMS (2006). A Stronger Voice for British Tourism, A New Marketing Force for England. [Http://www.culture.gov.uk/tourism/](http://www.culture.gov.uk/tourism/) Accessed the 22 nd of May 2007.
- Embassy of Denmark, Dhaka Bangladesh [Http://www.ambdhaka.um.dk/en](http://www.ambdhaka.um.dk/en)
- Embassy of Norway in Bangladesh [Http://www.norway.org.bd/info/embassy.htm](http://www.norway.org.bd/info/embassy.htm)
- Encyclopedia of the Nations (2007) 'Bangladesh – Overview of economy'
- Fish, A.J. (2005). Assisting cross-border manager adjustment: psycho-cultural and socio-cultural interventions. *Personnel Review*, Vol. 34, No.2, pp.225-245.
- Fornell, C. & Larcker, D.F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 18, pp.39-50.
- Foxall, G.R. & Goldsmith, R.E. (1994). Consumer psychology for marketing: Perceptual process, pp.49.
- Gyte, D. & Phelps, A. (1989). Patterns of destination repeat business: British tourists in Mallorca, Spain. *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 28, No.1, pp.24-8.
- Henderson, J.C. (2011). 1 Tourism Development And Politics In The Philippines. *Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal Of Tourism*, Vol. 6, No.2, pp.159-173
- Higginbotham, G. (2011). Assisted-Suicide Tourism: Is It Tourism? *Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal Of Tourism*, Vol. 6, No.2, pp. 177-185.

- Hankinson, G. (2004). The brand images of a tourism destination: a study of the saliency of organic images. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 13, No.1, pp.6-14.
- Hankinson, G. (2005). Destination brand image: a business tourism perspective. *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 19, No.1, pp.24-33.
- Holt, D.B. (2002). Why do brands cause trouble? A dialectical theory of consumer culture & branding. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 29, No.1, pp.70-90.
- Hossain, M.A. & Nazmin, S., (2006). Development of Tourism Industry in Bangladesh- an empirical study on its problems and prospects. Centre for Tourism and Hotel management Research, Ga-1, Rashedul Hasan Bhaban, University of Dhaka, and Dhaka
- Hsieh, A.D. & Tung, C.L.L. (2008). The moderating effect of brand image on public relations perception and customer loyalty. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol. 26, No.1, pp.26-42.
- Huizingh, E. (2000). The content and design of web sites: an empirical study. *Information and Management*, Vol. 37, No.3, pp.123-34.
- Ikechukwu O., Ezeudji, I.O. & Rid, W. (2011). Rural Tourism Offer And Local Community Participation In The Gambia. *Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal Of Tourism*, Vol. 6, No.2, pp.187-211.
- Jayawardena, C. (2002). Mastering Caribbean tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 14, No.2, pp.88-93.
- Johnson, W.C. & Sirikit, A. (2002). Service Quality in the Thai Telecommunication Industry: A Tool for Achieving a Sustainable Competitive Advantage. *Management Decision*, Vol. 40, No.7, pp.693-701.
- Joreskog, K.G. & Sorbom, D. (1996). LISREL 8: Users' Reference Guide, Scientific Software International, Chicago, IL.
- Jowell, T. (2008). Tomorrow's Tourism Today; Marketing Strategy, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. 08, London.
- Kandampully, J. (2000). The impact of demand fluctuation on the quality of service: a tourism industry example. *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 10, No.1, pp.10-18.
- Kelloway, E.K. (1998). Using LISREL for Structural Equation Modeling. A Researcher's Guide. London, Sage.
- Knox, S. (2004). Positioning and branding your organization. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 13, No.2, pp.105-15.
- Kozak, M. (2001). Repeaters' behavior at two distinct destinations. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 28, No.3, pp.784-807.
- Law, R., Leung, K.A. & Wong, J. (2004). The impact of the internet on travel agencies. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 16, No.2, pp.100-7.
- Leisen, B. & Vance. C. (2001). Cross-national Assessment of Service Quality in the Telecommunication Industry: Evidence from the USA and Germany. *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 11, No.5, pp.307-317.
- Lonely Planet (2004). 'Bangladesh' McAdam. M. Lonely Planet

- Maselli, J. (2002). E-ticketing threatens travel agents. *Information Week*, No.881, pp. 28-9.
- Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism. (2004). Travel and Tourism Yearly Report. Published by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Bangladesh.
- Mowlana, H. & Smith, G. (1993). Tourism in a global context: the case of frequent traveller programs. *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 33, No.3, pp.20-27.
- Nysveen, H. & Leshagen, M. (2001). Swedish and Norwegian tourism websites: the importance of reservation services and value-added services. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, Vol. 1, No.1, pp.38-44.
- Ozturan, M. & Roney, S. (2004). Internet use among travel agencies in Turkey: an exploratory study. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 25, No.2, pp.259-66.
- Palumbo, F. & Herbig, P. (2000). The multicultural context of brand loyalty. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 3, No.3, pp.116-24.
- Parjatan (The Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation) www.bangladeshtourism.gov.bd/
- Pike, S. (2005). Tourism destination branding complexity. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 14, No.4, pp.258-9.
- Plamer, A. & O'Neill, M. (2003). The effects of perceptual processes on the measurement of service quality. *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 17, No.3, pp.254-274.
- Poon, W. & Low, K. (2005). Are travellers satisfied with Malaysian hotels? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 17, No.3, pp. 217-227.
- Rangan, V.K., Elberse, A. & Bell, M. (2006). Marketing New York City. Harvard Business Case Studies, April 27, Harvard Business School of Publishing, Boston, MA.
- Rooney, J.A. (1995). Branding: a trend for today and tomorrow. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 4, No.4, pp.48-55.
- Siddiqi, R. (2006). Tourism in Bangladesh suffers: Policy makers lack understanding, government lacks strong intention. The Independent March 16th, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Siddiqi, S. (1999). Strategic geography and strategic corporate challenges: a regiocentric perspective to the Middle East. *Managerial Finance*, Vol. 25, No.2, pp.45-62.
- Simeon, R. (2006). A conceptual model linking brand building strategies and Japanese popular Culture. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol. 24, No.5, pp.463-476.
- Spreng, R., MacKenzie, S. & Olshavsky, R. (1996). Re-examination of the determinants of consumer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 60, No.3, pp.15-35.
- Tabibi, M. & Rohani, A (2011). Jet Ski Development Strategies: The Case of Caspian Sea'S South-West Beach. *Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism*, Vol. 6, No.2, pp.175-192.

- Tribe, J. & Snaith, T. (1998). From SERVQUAL to HOLSAT: holiday satisfaction in Varadero, Cuba. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 19, No.1, pp.25-34.
- Trueman, M., Klemm, M. & Giroud, A. (2004). Can a city communicate? Bradford as a corporate brand. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 9, No.4, pp.317-30.
- Tucker, L.R. & Lewis, C. (1973). The reliability coefficient for maximum likelihood factor analysis. *Psychometrika*, Vol. 38, pp.1-10.
- UNESCO Seal of Excellence (SEAL) programme
[Http://www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=483](http://www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=483) Accessed the 25 th of February 2008, at 11:35.
- Uzama, A. (2008). Marketing Japan's tourism to the world. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of British Association of Japanese studies in University of Manchester, Manchester 11-12 April.
- VisitBritain. (2006). Key Tourism Facts, www.visitbritain.com/corporate/facts/figures/index.aspx Accessed the 23 rd of May 2007, at 14:55.
- Wal, R.W.E., Van der Pampallis, A. & Bond, C. (2002). Service Quality in a Cellular Telecommunications Company: A South African Experience. *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 12, No.5, pp.323-335.
- World Tourism Organization. (2008). UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, UNWTO, Madrid, Vol. 6, No.1, pp.1-5.
- World Travel and Tourism Council. (1995). *Travel and Tourism: A New Economic Perspective*, Elsevier Science, and Oxford.
- Yi, Y. (1990). A critical review of consumer satisfaction. In V.A. Zeithaml (Eds.) *Review of Marketing* (pp.68-123), Chicago, IL: American Marketing Association.

SUBMITTED: MAR 2011

REVISION SUBMITTED: OCT 2011

ACCEPTED: DEC 2011

REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY

Muhammad Sabbir Rahman (sabbiruu@gmail.com) is a lecturer at the Multimedia University, Cyberjaya Campus (Malaysia), Jalan Multimedia, 63100 Cyberjaya, Selangor, Malaysia under Faculty of Management.