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TOURISM MARKETING IN BANGLADESH

AN INTRODUCTION

Edited by
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Tourism Marketing in Bangladesh

Tourism is often a key driver of economic growth in many countries. The recent upward trends of tourism and hospitality education in higher academic institutions in Bangladesh suggests a growing tourism sector. Very little has been written on Bangladesh's tourism industry. This is the first edited volume published from an international publisher which looks at this industry and how it has developed and flourished. The book begins by looking at tourism policy planning and provides a comprehensive overview of topics from tourism products and services in Bangladesh to how they are being marketed. It also discusses how private and public tourism institutions can address future long-term trends.

This book will appeal to those interested to learn more about developing tourism industry in emerging economies and may provide invaluable lessons from Bangladesh's experience and success.

Dr Azizul Hassan is a member of the Tourism Consultants Network of the UK Tourism Society. Hassan's areas of research interest are technology-supported marketing for tourism and hospitality, immersive technology application in the tourism and hospitality industries, technology-influenced marketing suggestions for sustainable tourism and the hospitality industry in developing countries. Hassan has authored over 100 articles and book chapters in leading tourism outlets. He is also part of the editorial team of 15 book projects from Routledge, Springer, CAB International and Emerald Group Publishing Limited. Hassan is a regular reviewer of *Tourism Management*, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, *Tourism Analysis*, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *Journal of Ecotourism*, *Journal of Business Research*, *e-Review of Tourism Research (eRTR)*, *International Interdisciplinary Business-Economics Advancement Journal*, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, *Heliyon* and *Technology in Society*.

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Introduction

Azizul Hassan

Since the ancient time, marketing has been featuring as closely associated factors to achieve sales volumes. The appearance of marketing in research is the outcome of pressure infused from the economy, society, technological and business innovation of the generations. Still, the concept of marketing research cannot be granted as very old, rather it appeared in the theoretical research scene in the second half of the 20th century. The extension of marketing research towards the tourism and hospitality industry is the demand of the business and economic growth of the 20th century owing to improved living standards, population growth and the increase of unrestricted time and income. In the shortest time, the tourism and hospitality industry has turned into the leading and essential industry of the global economy. More interests in marketing research actually led to study relevant tourism and hospitality infrastructure construction, ancillary facilities development and creating many other recreational facilities. Over the years, tourism marketing has been staying as an important and conventional area of research for researchers. Tourism marketing research is the study of a coordinated and systematic execution of business policies by both public and private tourism organizations. These organizations generally remain functional at the national, regional and international levels for achieving the maximum possible satisfaction of the identifiable tourist groups' demands and for doing so for achieving proper return.

Interestingly, tourism and hospitality enterprises have recognized the importance of main economic factors as wants, needs and satisfaction to plan and design tourism products and services. Modern tourism and hospitality marketing research has progressed as a reaction of businesses to changes in the socio-economic environment where the most successful tourism bodies or enterprises have shown a keen sense to offer the right of organizational products and structures for the tourists. This is the reason for which a tourist tends to be considered as an exceptional client and any enterprise serving this tourist attitude normally becomes the concern for other competitors.

Tourism and hospitality enterprises of the present world are turning as larger, more automated and more sophisticated in their marketing operations while the tourists as customers also tend to become more experienced, trained, erudite and better quality packages and services demanding. In such instable tourism

and hospitality business environment, having adequate knowledge and skill in marketing acquainted through research become the essential elements than the knowledge and enthusiasm on products and services for longer-term growth and development. Tourism and hospitality marketing research thus turns as a recent phenomenon that has both conceptual and application values.

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia having a considerable population. In recent years, the country experienced a steady growth in its economy and socio-cultural developments. With a population of over 170 million the country possesses possibilities in tourism. With the stronghold of a social class having affordability to spend for tourism and leisure activities, the country already placed attention for the development of its tourism industry. The expansion of tourism and hospitality education in the higher academic institutions in Bangladesh is evidence. Arguably, the supportive roles of the government policy are favouring the development of tourism in Bangladesh. In principle, the importance of tourism is on a continuous rise in Bangladesh that in turn deserves attention from the researchers and the academia.

A good number of research studies are conducted outlining the contributions and importance of tourism including the Caribbean and many other developing countries. However, the tourism industry of Bangladesh so far has attracted very few researchers. Some contributions are made but not sufficiently. Considering the ongoing trend of tourism in Bangladesh very few research attempts have been made aiming towards exploring its diverse aspects of tourism. This book focuses on tourism marketing in Bangladesh that becomes one of the leading economic activities in many countries. Even uneven and improperly distributed, the contribution of tourism marketing in the economy of Bangladesh deserves significance in terms of earning opportunities and employment generation.

This book is a contribution towards the very limited knowledge of tourism marketing of Bangladesh. The book is designed to accommodate both conceptual and empirical research studies that link theory with practice. Existing policies, evidences and potential capitalization of tourism marketing are covered as well as some suggestions. The book carefully addresses and unifies the theme or framework of tourism marketing to integrate the theoretical explanations with practices. The book accommodates some critical and rich informative chapters.

In the first chapter, Nekmahmud, Farkas and Hassan argue that the success of tourism marketing is rather a subject to innovation acceptance. This theoretical chapter critically explains the relevant aspects of tourism marketing in Bangladesh, offers examples from existing literature (i.e. marketing mix and marketing strategy model) as a means to support arguments and relates them to the present tourism marketing context of the country. The chapter finds that even though tourism marketing is “interrelatedness”, Bangladesh still stays within the conventional side of marketing to completely embrace the latest innovations. This study suggests that marketing with value co-creation, experiences of tourism marketing, technology support, collaboration and alliance, visual media networking, niche marketing and online and social media marketing strategy “interrelatedly” can bring changes. The chapter on such understanding offers

some suggestions for managing future challenges and tourism marketing development in Bangladesh.

The second chapter of the book focuses on existing tourism products and services in Bangladesh. Suchana, Uchinlayen and Rahman have summarized some major tourism products and services literature studies with a focus on marketing. Findings of this research explore that Bangladesh possesses a diverse range of tourism products and resources that as tourism-ancillary products and services are expected to be well managed to satisfy tourists. Comprehensively, this chapter makes a positive contribution to tourism marketing research and explores the available tourism products and services in Bangladesh for both local and foreign tourists.

In the third chapter, Rahman, Rahman and Hassan argue that air transport is dominant in the tourism industry. This research explores the role of technology that support air transport and tourism industry in Bangladesh. The aims of this chapter are first, to discuss the importance of technology in the Bangladesh air transport industry; and second, to discuss how technology could improve tourism activity in Bangladesh. This abductive approach with content analysis-based research relies on secondary sources as well as desk research from the Internet. Results of the research present a framework and the implications of technology to air transport and tourism industry. The research proposes that a technology stalemate in air transport is pertinent for helping the sustainability of the air transport and tourism business. The frameworks that are developed in this research can be benefit the practitioners, policy makers and scholars to further develop the area and investigate key challenges. The research stresses on continued research and development of technology in air transport and tourism that is very much required for ensuring tourist safety.

The fourth chapter is contributed by Akhy and Roy. The authors of this chapter define accommodation as a place where tourists can find shelter and food offers in exchange of payment. The chapter believes that in a tourism resourceful country like Bangladesh, accommodation plays a crucial role. The chapter features that accommodation as a tourism product needs to highlight the key elements of any relevant business products. Because many changes have happened in tourist accommodation, this chapter thus focuses on the existing and future potentials of accommodation in Bangladesh. Limiting the research sites on major tourist destinations (i.e. Dhaka, Cox's Bazar, Rangamati, Chittagong city and Foy's Lake), the findings bring out the lack of research in this identified area that acts as a barrier for adequate information supply for the tourists. The chapter identifies the potentials of accommodation in the tourism industry of Bangladesh through SWOT analysis and presents remedial measures of relevant issues.

In the fifth chapter, Afrin and Hassan explain views on tourist transportation in Bangladesh. In the chapter, tourists' opinions stayed as the most important for better exploring the current situation and to discover operators' thoughts on the opportunities for better transit performance. The chapter, on the basis of understanding Bangladesh transport system, finds that the transit services are

not providing efficient services to the tourist. The chapter suggests to develop a number of areas as required for promoting tourism in Bangladesh.

Chapter six as contributed by Pramanik and Rakib discusses the competitiveness of tourism products and services of Bangladesh. This chapter makes some theoretical arguments. The chapter then analyses the competitiveness of the tourism industry of Bangladesh by taking two comprehensive models: the Travel Tourism Competitiveness Index and Porters' Five Forces Model. This study considers on the concept of competitiveness and destination competitiveness and other relevant facts and issues while developing and presenting the arguments.

In chapter seven, Rakib and Pramanik make the conceptual analysis of products and services in Bangladesh. This chapter accommodates the concept of promotion and tourism promotion, integrated marketing communication (IMC) for domestic tourists and IMC for foreign tourists with special focus to online and social media promotion. Also, the chapter focuses on the impending challenges to implement promotion tools in the tourism industry of Bangladesh. The authors suggest that tourism product and services marketers need to design effective marketing promotion strategies for stimulating the domestic and foreign tourists towards Bangladeshi destinations.

In chapter eight, Mia argues that even with the necessary government initiatives, the actual arrivals of foreign tourists and earnings are not at par, and rather it is decreasing over the years. Mia then evaluates the present tourism conditions and tourism policies in Bangladesh. This study observed that there is inadequate institutional capacity, coordination problems among various government agencies, lack of infrastructure and a not-so-friendly visa policy that deter the growth of the tourism industry in Bangladesh. Hence, well-planned and well-executed tourism policies will not only increase the international tourist arrivals but also contribute to the development of Bangladesh.

In chapter nine, Hassan and Ramos, on the basis of an innovative technology as augmented reality (AR), analyse conceptual marketing in the tourism industry of Bangladesh. This chapter shows that application of AR as an innovative technology is practically tourism business supportive. Hence, the useful attachment of tourists with this innovative technology can harness productivity and interaction as well as help improve inclusiveness, resource management and overall development. This application of AR as an innovative technology thus can be taken as benefit generating for the overall tourism industry of Bangladesh.

In chapter ten, Rana, Rahman, Islam and Hassan express thoughts in terms of the effects of globalization on tourism marketing in Bangladesh. This conceptual chapter sought for economic opportunities for Bangladesh through potential tourism marketing in the globalization process. Findings of this chapter suggested that the success of tourism marketing of Bangladesh depends on infrastructural development, digital and technological advancement, a traveller-friendly environment, convenient tourism regulations and so on. The chapter finally recommended policies to ensure the presence of Bangladesh in the global tourism market.

In chapter eleven, Akhter and Hassan determine tourists' perceived risks on Bangladesh. The research examines survey data of 320 tourist respondents (6.3% international and 93.7% domestic tourists) staying in Chattogram in Bangladesh. The research with the application of a series of statistical tool (i.e. exploratory factor analysis, principal component analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, binary logistic regression, one way analysis of variance [ANOVA] and ordinal logistic). Results of the research outline six dimensions of tourists' perceived risk on Bangladesh: Financial and Communication Risk, Political Instability and Natural Risk, Health and Time Risk, Physical Risk, Social Risk and Psychological Risk. Results also present that a good number of individual features (i.e. age, type of tourist, purpose of visit and budget of travel) affect perception of travel risk. The research also reports that tourists tend to follow both behavioural modification of consumption and information search as risk reduction strategies where the usage of these strategies relied on the various types of risk that tourists' perceived. Finally, the chapter concludes by stating that tourism planners are required to focus on risks that can cause stress among tourists followed by awareness creation as marketing strategies.

Khan, Mamun and Hassan in chapter twelve elaborately outlined the human resource management (HRM) practices in Bangladesh. By summarizing the findings of 37 research studies, this chapter contributed to the limited knowledge on HRM practices in Bangladesh and compensation and benefits practices, in particular. The authors identified and showed the research gaps and proposed a few areas of compensation and benefits systems in Bangladesh where future studies can be conducted.

In chapter thirteen, Roy, Yajing and Biswas outline the policies for tourism sector development in Bangladesh, the impact of capital investment and revenue on tourism and some implications for the development of the tourism industry. From the theoretical ground of using a vector autoregressive (VAR) model, the chapter also focuses on the total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP, capital investment on travel and tourism and international tourism receipts. Based on findings, this chapter suggests that tourism is a huge contributor to the national economy and without maintaining proper strategies, the tourism industry will not be able to contribute the national economy as expected.

In chapter fourteen, Adeneye, Chu and Hashim investigate the role of capital structure on firms' competitive strategies in Bangladesh. The study aims to test whether high leverage, external equity or retained earnings exert much competitive pressure on competitive strategies of firms in the tourism industry in Bangladesh. A longitudinal panel regression is used to sample all the listed firms in the tourism industry. Three models are analysed: baseline model (nexus between competitive strategy and firm performance), capital structure model (the interaction role of debt financing, equity financing and internal equity financing on the nexus between competitive strategy and firm performance) and robustness test (the use of firm value measured as Tobin's Q and a control of technology, corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability). This study offers a new model on sustaining competitive strategy through capital structure theoretically and for tourism policymakers.

In chapter fifteen, Khan, Islam and Hassan explain the revenue management techniques and practices in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh. This literature review-based chapter analyses the key concepts of hotel revenue management (RM), loyalty programmes in RM and its implementation and a case-based scenario assessed. The chapter also looks into the major areas of a hotel for maximizing the return on investment. After addressing the relevant theoretical aspects and limitations, the chapter brings the example of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. This chapter suggests to adopt modern technologies for the hoteliers to adapt and in order to gain strategic advantages over their competitors.

In chapter sixteen, Nekmahmud critically analyses the ground of green tourism product in Bangladesh, relates to tourists' purchasing behaviour response and determines the main factors of environmental marketing that are influential to the tourists' purchase intention of green products in Bangladesh. The chapter is conducted based on a mixture of primary and secondary data and proposes an approach to develop the conceptual framework of variables (e.g. green perceived quality, green perceived benefit, green purchase willingness, price consideration, environmental consciousness, safety and health concern, security, accessibility and purchase behaviour intention of green products). A brief summary of the main findings of the study are then presented by using with addressing managerial implications, challenges and suggestions for tourism products and services development in sustainable tourism market in Bangladesh.

The seventeenth chapter of the book is contributed by Hasnat and Steyn and overviews tourism advertising for transforming country image and empowering developing countries. The research considers Bangladesh and Nepal as cases. The chapter starts with an overview of the importance of tourism advertising for any country but specifically developing countries, and then primarily focuses on specific case studies (Bangladesh with its 'Beautiful Bangladesh' campaign and Nepal with its 'Visit Nepal Year 2020' campaign) to illustrate how these countries are implementing tourism marketing. The chapter at the later stage offers strategy recommendations for developing countries interested in tourism marketing.

In chapter eighteen, Hassan and Ramkissoon briefly analyse the potentials of tourism products and services marketing in Bangladesh. The aim of this chapter is to understand the potentials of tourism resources in Bangladesh. Findings of the chapter show that the potentials of tourism products and services in Bangladesh is subject to effective policy planning and implementation. Findings also show that Bangladesh will experience a sharp growth of domestic tourists mostly benefitted from the disposable income and the availability of leisure time. Thus, this research stresses that potentials as a theoretical term needs to be replaced with a more solid and effective set of policy implementations to cater the demands of tourists. Bangladesh as a tourist destination is suggested to redefine the potential of tourism products and services to a concrete base to enable to meet tourist demands.

This book is dominantly contributed by the middle- to early-age researchers either in the middle of their academic career or who recently completed or enrolled in their PhD. Thus, this book is rather an avenue for showcasing their expertise and capacities. Considering contents and scopes, this book is expected

to be a reading companion of tourism and hospitality researchers and can be a reference book for the tourism and hospitality students in higher academic institutions in Bangladesh. Apart from them, this book can also be a good knowledge source of the relevant policy planners and industry professionals having interests in tourism marketing in Bangladesh or similar countries. Above all, this book can be appreciated by expatriate and local Bangladeshi researchers who strive for a tourism marketing book on Bangladesh.

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