

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING TOURISTS DESTINATION: A STUDY ON FOREIGN TOURIST IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to identify the preference parameters for tourist destination. A structured survey has been conducted on 100 foreign tourists visiting Bangladesh to investigate factors influencing tourists to choose destination. The survey comprises of 10 selected issues of the tourism arrangements. Selected issues of destination consideration of the questionnaire have been selected in reference to different literature while conducting extensive literature review. The collected data are analyzed by statistical software using SPSS. The study focuses on the issues relevant to the selection of Bangladesh as a tourist destination country. It presents the findings of the study and throws light on the profile, preferences and perceptions regarding Bangladesh as a tourist destination country of the foreign tourist to come Bangladesh. A modest attempt in the study has been to delineate the analysis of Bangladesh tourism. Finally, the recommendations will guide in developing a tourism sector giving importance to form a strong and sustainable economy throughout Bangladesh.

Keyword: Tourist, Destination consideration.

1. Introduction

Tourism has become a very emerging and the fastest growing industry both in the global and rural economy, and particularly in the developing countries. Bangladesh is a country of Asian region holding high potentiality for tourism. From a developing country's perspective, tourism industry is important in Bangladesh because it is labor intensive, provides a wide range of different employment opportunities, contributes to a geographical spread of employment, employs more women and young people than most other industries and creates opportunities for many small and medium entrepreneurs. About more than one million people have already been employed directly and indirectly to tourism and tourism-related industries, and a huge number of people are waiting for employment. Tourism has both economic and social impacts. There is some private and public organizations i.e. Bangladesh Parjaton Corporation (BPC), which have been contributing to the socio-economic development of Bangladesh by tourism services. The analysis of foreign tourists' arrivals found that the arrivals of foreign tourists were 1, 13,242 in 1991 and 2,071,99 in 2001, and it went to 303000 in 2010 (*Source: Special Branch, Bangladesh Police, Statistical Report, Resource Center, BPC and Bangladesh Bank*). The annual foreign earnings were Million BDT. 331 in 1991, Million BDT 2653.8 in 2001 and it went to Million BDT. 7947 in 2010 (*Source: Special Branch, Bangladesh Police, Statistical Report, Resource Center, BPC and Bangladesh Bank*).

Bangladesh was an attractive destination to the tourists. However, at present, the position is not significant in terms of international tourism market. A number of

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significant factors affect the image of tourism in Bangladesh. Tourism industry of Bangladesh is suffering from numerous problems. Geographically, Bangladesh is far away from tourist generating countries of Europe and American. The legal formalities, especially visa and customs procedures take too much time and rigid formalities. As a result, the potential tourists of neighboring countries viz. India, Pakistan does not feel comfortable to visit the country. Hijacking, snatch, murder, etc. has become an ordinary event in our national life. The parks and the tourist spots are suffering from the lack of security and safety. Besides, political unrest and crisis have stood in the way of tourism industry. The potential tourists of foreign countries sometimes are scourged for lack of safety and security of their lives and wealth. Besides, communications and transportation of the hill tract areas are not smooth. All the 5-star, 3-star and 2-star hotels are located in Dhaka, Chittagong, Cox's bazar, Sylhet and Bogra. As a result, the foreign tourists do not want to visit other destinations. Political instability creates a negative image to the tourists. Private sector in the country is shy to invest in the tourism sector. The development factors of tourism are abundance in Bangladesh. Now in the country, the following special opportunities are available to develop tourism industry like lower cost of living, attractive tourist spot, transportation and communication, available sole foreign language newspapers, relaxation of government rules and regulation, high pressures of unemployment problem, privatization, etc. Bangladesh holds high tourism potentiality because of its numerous attractions for tourists. It has some advantages and disadvantages to the tourists on the arrivals. The country can earn a huge amount of foreign exchanges from this industry. Furthermore, it has not been possible to create the opportunities to highlight the image of Bangladesh thereby depriving the country of much-needed investment and capital for social and cultural purposes (UN, 2001).

1.1 Problem Definition

Tourism is now considered as a “sunshine” sector all over the world. It brings tremendous opportunities as the fastest-growing economic sector in terms of foreign earnings, creation of employment opportunities and rising purchasing power for the destination countries. It has created a multifaceted impact on people's pleasure, knowledge, overall standard of living, and culture of both the destination and tourist generating countries. Many of the destination countries have marched forward to reap the full potentials of this industry. Nevertheless, Bangladesh is lagging far behind in the growth and development of its tourism industry. Although the country has got many rare attractions substantially different from those of other destination countries, its tourism industry is yet at the primitive stage and has not taken the shape of an industry. The government of Bangladesh, though, has already taken some measures for the development of this industry. However, many of those are of very primary nature and have created a little impact on the growth and development of this industry. Therefore, it is necessary to uncover the reasons of the backwardness of this industry and by identifying the loopholes of the present policy measures and thus suggesting to formulate appropriate strategies and implementing of those strategies to create new opportunities, strengthening capacity building and minimizing the weakness of actions to be undertaken by the government and other concerned agencies.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The main thrust of this study has focused on the criteria relevant to the consideration for choosing Bangladesh as a tourist destination. However, the details of the objectives of this study are as under:

- to understand the pattern of tourist inflows to Bangladesh in terms of the demographic and economic profiles of the foreign tourist-population, their preference and also their destination choice consideration;
- to understand the satisfaction parameters of tourism industry in Bangladesh; and
- to prescribe necessary recommendations for reforms and improvements of the tourism industry in Bangladesh.

2. Literature Review

Most of the researchers in this area have concentrated on defining the role of appropriate and concerned organizations and destinations as well as its growth and their contributions to the economy, society, the environment, and over all the country. Nevertheless Azad and Chowdhury (1991) pointed out the development of tourism and economy, and its contribution to the economic development of a country like Bangladesh along with Hasan (1988), Haq (1991), Hasan (1992), Islam (1994), Patwari (1993), Amin and Salina (2001), Islam (2008), Quddus (1998), Hossain, Rahman & Khan (2005), Tuhin and Majumder (2010) have exposed the reviews, significance, prospects, opportunities, threats and facilities of tourism considering the problems facing by this country and recommended policies for taking corrective measures. Besides with the reviews others focused on sea tourism of Bangladesh (Alam, 2012), efficient utilization of strategic management of the tourism sector (Ali and Parvin, 2010), major reasons behind the foreign tourist arrivals in Bangladesh (Islam & Islam, 2004).

However, a few more researchers have studies in the field of tourism of Bangladesh showing foreign tourist attitudes (Hossain, 2002), an appraisal of foreign tourist's arrivals trend (Hasan and Neela, 2008) and the image of Bangladesh to foreign travelers and some essentials curative tricks (Chowdhury, 1999; Kalam, 2001), the role of different tourism firms (Hossain *et al.* 2003), development of travel agencies in the country (Bariqullah, 1983), suggestive strategies (marketing) for the national Tourism Authority providing marketing tools and policy implications (Hossain, 2002; Islam, 2004) strategic promotion approaches to developing tourism in Bangladesh focusing the role of the tour operator's performance (Hossain and Firozzaman, 2003).

In addition to Kamal and Chowdhury (1993), Islam (1998) and Abir & Nabi (2000) analyzed the significance of the transportation services airlines, in particular, and its marketing systems for the development of tourism and proposed a number of implications for taking remedial actions. Hoque & Istique (2000), and Ahsan (1997) have also studied about transportation sector, road way and railway, in particular, and have shown the tourists preferences and attitudes, and determinants for selecting the other modes of transportation for journey, which are very much relevant to the

development of tourism. In contrast, Chowdhury and Hasan (1995) have elucidated significance of hotel and restaurant services in the development process of the tourism sector in the country.

Moreover, other researchers have studied on particular issues like development of tourism at seashore and sea beach, *i.e.*, Potenga, Chittagong (Akteruzzaman and Ishtiaque, 2005) and Sylhet (Bhuiyan and Rahman, 2008), Jaflong, Sylhet (Hamid and Aktar, 2008) and Sunderbans (Tisdell, 1997) as eco-tourism, religions tourism viz. Hazrat ShahJal (RA) burial ground, Sylhet (Islam *et al.*, 2009) and so on showing the valuations, potentialities, opportunities and challenges besides the recreation, expectation and perception of the tourists in the development of a particular site as a part of the development of tourism industry in the country. These existing literatures on Bangladesh tourism are also with inadequate justification and skin-deep analysis. From this perspective, it can be concluded that contribution of this study can play a significant role to find out the criteria for choosing a tourist destination.

3. Methodology of the Study

The sources of data are both primary and secondary. It involves collection of data about the characteristics of the tourism industry in Bangladesh. Secondary information have been gathered from websites, newspapers, magazines, articles, journals of different organizations like Bangladesh Parjaton Corporation (BPC), Association of Travel Agents in Bangladesh (ATAB), Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Bangladesh Bank (BB), National Board of revenue (NBR) United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Primary data have been collected using a specially designed questionnaire.

3.1 Sample Design

The sample design consists the following

Defining the target population : The target populations are foreign tourists visiting Bangladesh considered the population for the tourist group.

Determinations of sample size : The foremost and important step of primary data collection are the selection of sample from which data to be collected. In an attempt to gauge the perceptions/attitudes of tourists, a total of 100 foreign tourists have been selected as the sample of this study. Necessary information have been collected from them to obtain feedback on 10 selected issues of the tourism arrangements in Bangladesh.

3.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire developed for the foreign tourists consists of 10 tourism-service related issues on which the respondent tourists were asked to document their response on different dimensions of Five-point rating scale. These objective questions attempted to collect objective data like the extent of foreign tourists' positive and negative attitudes on different tourism arrangements/services in Bangladesh. The questionnaire for the respondent tourists has been used in a five-

point Likert Scale ranging from 1 to 5 to obtain and rate their opinion on different tourism arrangements in Bangladesh. The main reason to use this Likert Scale is that it is relatively easier to understand. Parameters of the questionnaire have been selected in reference to different literatures while conducting extensive literature review.

4. Tourist's Profiles, Preferences and Destination Choice Consideration

4.1 Socio-demographic status and purpose of the visit of the respondents

Table 1: below shows the Socio-demographic status of respondents

Socio-demographic status	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age of the Respondent		
Below 25 Years	7	7
25-34 Years	24	24
35-44 Years	45	45
45-54 Years	19	19
55-64 Years	5	5
Total	20	100.0
Gender of the Respondent		
Male	75	75
Female	25	25
Total	100	100
Marital Status of the Respondent		
Married	81	81
Single	19	19
Total	100	100
Educational Qualification of the Respondent		
No Education	2	2
Secondary or upper Secondary	21	21
Higher Education	63	63
Technical Education	14	14
Total	100	100
Occupation of the Respondent		
Professional	15	15.0
Government service	20	20.0
Private Service	45	45.0
Student / Researcher	10	10.0
Social Worker	6	6.0
Agriculturist	4	4.0
Total	100	100.0

Respondent's travelling with		
Family	37	37
Friends	35	35
Colleagues	21	21
Alone	7	7
Total	100	100
Respondent's proposed length of stay in Bangladesh		
Less than 7 days	7	7.0
7 – 14 days	50	50.0
14 – 21 days	42	42.0
21 days and more	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field Survey

The following facts came out from the survey

Table 1 presents the age of the inbound sample tourists of different foreign countries to Bangladesh. In regard to the age of the sample tourists, it is observed that the inbound sample tourists from different countries in the age group of 25-34 years constitute 24 percent, followed by 45 percent of sample tourists in the age group of 35-44 years. However, it is also observed that the younger generation below 25 years constitutes 7 percent. The sample tourist in the age group of 55-64 years constitutes only 5 percent. In regard to the gender of the sample tourists, it is observed that out of 100 sample tourists, 75 percent are the male and 25 percent are female. In regard to the marital status of the sample tourists, it is observed that out of 100 respondents, 19 percent are the single and 81 percent are married couple. It is observed that in regard to educational qualification of the 100 sample tourists, 21 respondents or 21 percent are educated up to secondary or upper secondary level, followed by 63 respondents or 63 percent sample tourist possesses higher education. 14 sample tourist or 14 percent possesses technical education. And 2 sample tourists or 2 percent is no education. In regard to the occupation of the sample tourists, it is observed that professional constitutes 15 percent, 20 percent are engaged in government service, followed by 10 percent as students/ researchers and 45 percent of the respondents are engaged on private services, followed by 6 percent as social worker and 4 percent of the respondents are engaged on agriculturist. It is observed that out to total of 100 sample tourist 37 percent preferred to travel with their family, followed by 35 percent preferred to travel with their friends, 21 percent preferred to travel with colleagues and followed by 7 percent preferred to travel with alone. It is observed that a major portion of the sample tourists of different countries, i.e. 50 percent tourist stay in Bangladesh was 7-14 days (i.e. one to two weeks). It is also observed that 42 percent tourist stay in Bangladesh was 14-21 days; 7 percent tourist stay in Bangladesh was fewer than 7 days. However, very small portion of sample tourist stays in Bangladesh for more than three weeks and above.

Purpose of the visit of the respondents

Table 2: Prime Attractions in Bangladesh by Tourist

Prime Attractions	Frequency	Percent
Historical/ Cultural	11	11
Spiritual	7	7
Social Tour	10	10
Business related/ Official	36	36
Nature	13	13
Adventure/ Sports	3	3
Conference/ Seminar related	11	11
Educational Tours/ Excursions	9	9
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey

Table 2 presents the purpose of the visit of the sample tourists from Different countries to Bangladesh. It is observed that a major portion of the purpose of the sample tourists visiting Bangladesh are for Business related/ official out of a total 100 sample tourist 36 percent tourist visited for the business / official purpose. Out of a total of 100 sample tourist, it is observed that 11.0 percent showed their interest in Historical cultural tourism in Bangladesh. 7 percent tourist interest in Spiritual. Out of 100 tourists, 10 percent interest in Social tour. Purpose of visiting Bangladesh for natural splendor also constitutes 13 percent of the sample tourists. Adventure tourism/ sports meet 3 percent; conference/ seminar related 11 percent, educational tours/ Excursions 9 percent.

4.2 Tourists rating of the different criteria of their experience in the destination

In order to assess the different dimensions of the visitors' travel-experience in Bangladesh, ten tentatively- selected destination –related dimension were placed before the visitors with a request to rate their experience against each of the dimensions. The dimensions were:

- ✓ Tourist attraction
- ✓ Status of connectivity with tourists' home country and air tariff
- ✓ Visa and Immigration Formalities
- ✓ Accommodation quality
- ✓ Accommodation Tariff
- ✓ Availability of medicinal and health care facilities
- ✓ Safety measures by local administration
- ✓ Food prices
- ✓ Public transport facilities
- ✓ Availability of Tour Operators and Local Travel agents

A structured schedule with a five-point rating scale was used for the purpose where the rating could vary from 'Excellent or Very Good' (carrying a score of +2)

‘Very Poor’ (carrying a score of -2). The outcomes of the entire exercise are shown in Table 3 to Table 12 below:

Table 3 below shows the ratings of the destination dimension parameter by “Tourist Attraction” by the sample respondents

Table 3: Tourist rating of the parameter “Tourist Attraction”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent of all respondents	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2	0	0	0
Need Improvement	-1	0	0	0
OK	0	10	10	0
Good	1	65	65	65
Excellent	2	25	25	50
Total		100	100	115
Mean Score		1.15		

Source: Field Survey

Table 3 presents the rating of “Tourist attraction” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourist of foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It is observed from the above table that 65 percent of the sample tourists rated the tourist attractions of Bangladesh as “Good,” followed by 25 percent of the sample tourist who rated the tourist attraction in Bangladesh as “Excellent.” 10 percent of the sample tourists rated tourist attractions as “Ok.” The means score of respondent's rating of ‘tourist attraction’ is 1.15, which reflects that ratings of the respondents are in the range of “Good” to “Excellent.”

Table 4 below shows the ratings of the destination dimension parameter “Status of air connectivity with tourists’ home country and the air tariff” by the sample respondents.

Table 4: Tourist rating of the parameter “Status of air connectivity with tourists’ home country and the air tariff”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2	0	0	0
Need Improvement	-1	1	1	-1
OK	0	28	28	0
Good	1	66	66	66
Excellent	2	5	5	10
Total		100	100	75
Mean Score		.75		

Source: Field Survey

Table 4 presents the rating of “Status of air connectivity with tourists’ home country and the air tariff” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourists of different foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It is observed from the above table that 66 percent of the sample tourists are of the opinion that the Status of air connectivity with tourists’ home country and the air tariff “Good” and followed by 28 percent of the sample tourist rated the Status of air connectivity with tourists’ home country and the air tariff as ”Ok.” However, it is also observed that 5 percent of the sample tourist rated status of air connectivity with tourists’ home country and the air tariff in Bangladesh as “Excellent.” 1 percent of the sample tourists are of the opinion that the Status of air connectivity with tourists’ home country and the air tariff as “Need Improvement.” The mean score of the respondent's rating of Status of air connectivity with tourists’ home country and the air tariff is .75, which reflects that ratings of the respondents are in the range of “Ok” to “Good.”

Table 5 below shows the rating of the destination dimension parameter “Visa and immigration formalities” by the sample respondents.

Table 5: Tourist rating of the parameter “Visa and immigration formalities”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2			0
Need Improvement	-1	3	3	-3
OK	0	44	44	0
Good	1	50	50	50
Excellent	2	3	3	6
Total		100	100	53
Mean Score				.53

Source: Field Survey

Table 5 presents the ratings of “Visa and immigration formalities” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourist of different foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It is observed from the above table that 50 percent of the sample tourists are of the opinion that the Visa and immigration formalities “good” and followed by 44 percent of the sample tourist rated the Visa and immigration formalities in Bangladesh “Ok.” However, it is observed that 3 percent of the sample tourists are of the opinion that the Visa and immigration formalities in Bangladesh as “Excellent,” and followed by 3 percent of the sample tourist rated the Visa and immigration formalities in Bangladesh “need improvement.” The mean score of the respondent's rating of ‘Visa and immigration formalities are .53, which reflects that ratings of the respondents are in the range of “Ok” to “Good.”

Table 6 below shows the ratings of the destination dimension parameter “Quality of accommodation” by the sample respondents

Table 6: Tourist rating of the parameter “Quality of accommodation”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2			0
Need Improvement	-1	4	4	-4
OK	0	40	40	0
Good	1	55	55	55
Excellent	2	1	1	2
Total		100	100	53
Mean Score		.53		

Source: Field Survey

Table 6 presents the ratings of “Quality of accommodation” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourists of different foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It is observed from the above table that 55 percent of the sample tourist rated the Quality of accommodation in Bangladesh as “Good,” followed by 40 percent of the sample tourist who rated the Quality of accommodation in Bangladesh as “Ok.” 1 percent of the sample tourist rated the Quality of accommodation in Bangladesh as “Excellent,” followed by 4 percent of the sample tourist who rated the Quality of accommodation in Bangladesh as “need Improvement.” The mean score of the respondents' rating of ‘Quality of accommodation’ is .53, which reflects that ratings of the respondents are in the range of “Ok” to “Good.”

Table 7: Tourist rating of the parameter “Accommodation tariff”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2			0
Need Improvement	-1	4	4	-4
OK	0	57	57	0
Good	1	37	37	37
Excellent	2	2	2	4
Total		100	100	37
Mean Score		.37		

Source: Field Survey

Table 7 presents the rating of “Accommodation Tariff” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourists of different foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It is observed from the above table that 57 percent of the sample tourist rated the Accommodation Tariff in Bangladesh as “Ok,” followed by 37 percent of the sample tourist rated the Accommodation Tariff in Bangladesh as “Good,” 2 percent of the sample tourist rated the Accommodation Tariff in Bangladesh as “Excellent,” however, it is observed that 4 percent of the sample tourist rated the

Accommodation Tariff as “Need Improvement.” The mean score of the respondents' rating of ‘Accommodation Tariff’ is .37, which reflects that ratings of the respondents are in the range of “Ok” to “Good.”

Table 8 below shows the ratings of the destination dimension parameter “Availability of medical & Health care facilities” by the sample respondents.

Table 8: Tourist rating of the parameter “Availability of medicinal and health care facilities”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2	1	1	-2
Need Improvement	-1	6	6	-6
OK	0	47	47	0
Good	1	45	45	45
Excellent	2	1	1	2
Total		100	100	39
Mean Score				.39

Source: Field Survey

Table 8 presents the rating of “Availability of medical & Health care facilities” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourists of different foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It is observed from the above table that 47 percent of the sample tourist rated the Availability of medical & Health care facilities in Bangladesh as “Ok,” followed by 45 percent of the sample tourist rated the Availability of medical & Health care facilities in Bangladesh as “Good,” 1 percent of the sample tourist rated the Availability of medical & Health care facilities in Bangladesh as “Excellent,” however, it is observed that 6 percent of the sample tourist rated the Availability of medical & Health care facilities as “Need Improvement.” Followed by 1 percent of the sample tourist rated the Availability of medical & Health care facilities in Bangladesh as “Poor.” The mean score of the respondents' rating of ‘Availability of medical & Health care facilities’ is .39, which reflects that ratings of the respondents are in the range of “Ok” to “Good.”

Table 9: Tourist rating of the parameter “Security measures by local administration”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2			0
Need Improvement	-1	9	9	-9
OK	0	57	57	0
Good	1	34	34	34
Excellent	2			0
Total		100	100	25
Mean Score				.25

Source: Field Survey

Table 9 below shows the ratings of the destination dimension parameter “Security measures by local administration” by the sample respondents.

Table 9 presents the rating of “Security measures by local administration” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourists of different foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It is observed from the above table that 57 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Security measures by local administration” in Bangladesh as “Ok,” followed by 34 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Security measures by local administration” in Bangladesh as “Good,” however, it is observed that 9 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Security measures by local administration” as “Need Improvement.” The mean score of the respondents' rating of ‘Security measures by local administration’ is .25, which reflects that ratings of the respondents are in the range of “Ok” to “Good.”

Table 10 below shows the ratings of the destination dimension parameter “Food prices” by the sample respondents.

Table 10: Tourist rating of the parameter “Food prices”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2			0
Need Improvement	-1	10	10	-10
OK	0	61	61	0
Good	1	23	23	23
Excellent	2	6	6	12
Total		100	100	25
Mean Score		.25		

Source: Field Survey

Table 10 presents the rating of “Food prices” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourists of different foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It

Table 11: Tourist rating of the parameter “Public transport facilities”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2			0
Need Improvement	-1	24	24	-24
OK	0	57	57	0
Good	1	19	19	19
Excellent	2			0
Total		100	100	-5
Mean Score		-.05		

Source: Field Survey

is observed from the above table that 61 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Food prices” in Bangladesh as “Ok,” followed by 23 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Food prices” in Bangladesh as “Good,” however, it is observed that 6 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Food prices” as “Excellent.” 10 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Food prices” in Bangladesh as “Need Improvement.” The mean score of the respondents' rating of ‘Food price is .25, which reflects that ratings of the respondents are in the range of “Ok” to “Good.”

Table 11 below shows the ratings of the destination dimension parameter “Public Transport facilities” by the sample respondents.

Table 11 presents the rating of “Public Transport facilities” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourists of different foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It is observed from the above table that 57 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Public Transport facilities” in Bangladesh as “Ok,” followed by 19 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Public Transport facilities” in Bangladesh as “Good,” however, it is observed that 24 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Public Transport facilities” as “Need Improvement.” The mean score of the respondents' rating of ‘Public Transport facility is -.05, which reflects that the overall ratings of the respondents are negative and there is a need to improve the dimension.

Table 12 below shows the rating of the destination dimension parameter “Availability of Travel Agents & Local Tour Operators” by the sample respondents.

Table 12: Tourist rating of the parameter “Availability of travel agents and local tour operators”

Rating	Rating Score (assigned)	Frequency	Percent	Total Score (Col.2*Col3)
Poor	-2			0
Need Improvement	-1	14	14	-14
OK	0	59	59	0
Good	1	27	27	27
Excellent	2			0
Total		100	100	13
Mean Score		.13		

Source: Field Survey

Table 12 presents the rating of “Availability of Travel Agents & Local Tour Operators” as a destination dimension parameter by the sample tourists of different foreign countries visiting Bangladesh. It is observed from the above table that 59 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Availability of Travel Agents & Local Tour Operators” in Bangladesh as “Ok,” followed by 27 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Availability of Travel Agents & Local Tour Operators” in Bangladesh as “Good,” however, it is observed that 14 percent of the sample tourist rated the “Availability of Travel Agents & Local Tour Operators” as “Need Improvement.” The mean score of the respondents' rating of ‘Availability of Travel Agents & Local

Tour Operators is .13, which reflects that ratings of the respondents are in the range of “Ok” to “Good.”

4.3 Destination Dimensions Considered Important by Tourist

Keeping the twenty selected destination's dimensions used for rating of foreign tourist Travel Experience, the sample tourists were asked which of these dimensions they, in fact, specially considered while making their choice of a destination country. The responses were to be calculated against twenty dimensions in a mean score format through Likert rating scale.

Table 13: Mean Score on Tourism Parameters

Serial No	Tourism Parameters	N	Mean
I	Tourist attraction	100	1.15
II	Status of air connectivity with tourists' home country and the air tariff	100	.75
III	Visa and immigration formalities	100	.53
IV	Quality of accommodation	100	.53
V	Accommodation tariff	100	.37
VI	Availability of medicinal and health care facilities	100	.39
VII	Security measures by local administration	100	.25
VIII	Food prices	100	.25
IX	Public transport facilities	100	-.05
X	Availability of travel agents and local tour operators	100	.13

Table 13 presents the summary of tourist rating of the destination dimension parameters. It is observed from the above table that out of 10 destination dimension parameters, the visitors were found satisfied at varying degrees on the following 9 dimensions of their travel experience:

- I. Tourist attraction
- II. Status of air connectivity with tourists' home country and the air tariff
- III. Visa and immigration formalities
- IV. Quality of accommodation
- V. Accommodation tariff
- VI. Availability of medicinal and health care facilities
- VII. Security measures by local administration
- VIII. Food prices
- IX. Availability of travel agents and local tour operators

The rating of the tourists' in the above mentioned destination dimension parameters are in the range of "Ok" to "Good". However, it is also observed that in one destination dimension parameters where tourists rated their experience as 'Less than satisfactory'. This dimension is:

- i. Public transport facilities

5. Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 Recommendations

Tourism is a very excellent source of foreign exchange and employment. Bangladesh is a country of vast population. Unemployment problem is high ranked problem here. Tourism development could open a new era for solving unemployment problem and could generate income. In this section, some specific recommendations are listed below.

- i. It has been 42 years since since Bangladesh liberation, yet yet there is no comprehensive tourism policy. So, Government should form a comprehensive and long-term national tourism policy in the context of a global phenomenon.
- ii. Well infrastructure and transportation are the prerequisites for tourism development. So, the government should take necessary steps to develop highways, railways, and airways to connect key tourist attractions as well as public transport facilities should be generated.
- iii. Positive image of our tourism industry must be expressed by our diplomats, ambassadors, consular representing Bangladesh in different countries of the world. Bangladeshi representatives abroad can act as overseas offices for the wholesale tour operators who conduct inbound tours.
- iv. It is necessary as early as possible to diversify the hotel products and other tourism products tailored to specific target groups and to improve the recreational and active holiday facilities to be attractive all-year-round that are able to attract local and foreign tourists through development and maintenance of products.
- v. Very few among natural and cultural heritage, cultural and traditional events and festivals are today known to foreign guests, even to local and regional visitors. The establishment, promotion and marketing of tourist attractions will ensure the necessary preconditions for attaining the objectives of Bangladesh becoming an all-year-round destination.

5.2 Conclusion

Tourism sector emerges as an important driver of economic growth of nations playing a significant role by way of creation of employment opportunities, earning foreign exchange and contributing to growth of the GDP and the poverty alleviation. The growing importance of this sector within the framework of the country's development found formal recognition when the campaign, an attempt by the

Government of Bangladesh was launched as a part of publicity & marketing activities. Two video films named 'Visit Bangladesh' and 'Discover Bangladesh' have been produced, and some concerned authorities have been established. Colorful brochures and folders have been printed describing the tourism products/ places of attractions in Bangladesh. A large number of Social, cultural, natural, religious and historical elements could forward tourism industry in Bangladesh. A great natural element, Cox's Bazar, the longest sea beach in the world, is in the possession of Bangladesh. Definitely, this natural asset as well as Kuakata, Sundarban and other key spots in Bangladesh are not absolutely used by the country for the development of the tourism sector. Major developments have been taking place alongside the global tourism scenario. These changes are forced by a number of inter-related phenomena, which included the advances in the field of transportation and communication, urbanization, the emergence of industrialization in the world and the information revolution. The combined effect of the aforesaid phenomena translated itself into a spectacular rise of tourism industry.

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