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Tourism Marketing Dimension on Bangladesh **Perspective**

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ABSTRACT: Basically this paper focuses on the tourism perspective surroundings and tourism marketing dimension of Bangladesh. The expansion of the tourism industry all over the world has enlarged drastically in the twenty first century. Many countries are trying to attract their tourists by using lucrative as well as effective marketing strategies. Here trying to explore the actual scenario of the tourism industry through using the secondary data sources. The main objective of the study is to explore the tourism marketing trends in Bangladesh and identify the drawbacks of the tourism marketing activities. The analysis and findings of this study would be the logical steps to expand the tourism industry in Bangladesh. As a result a large number of national and foreign tourists can be attracted to the tourism destinations along with the tourism industry may gear up their foreign earnings.

Keywords: Bangladesh, Destination, Foreign earnings, Perspective, Tourism Marketing.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries all over the world. It is an emerging sector to our county economy and it could be the crucial part of the 4th industrial revolution along with the sustainable development of our economy. According to The World Travel and Tourism Council, the direct and indirect contribution of tourism industry to the world economy is US\$ 8.9 trillion. In the year of 2020, the contribution of tourism industry to the global economy was US\$ 2.9 trillion that was 10.4 percent of the total global GDP. The World Tourism Organization forecasted that in the year of 2020, the total world tourist arrivals will be 1561.1 million and it will increase to 4500.0 million in 2050.In perspective of Bangladesh the contribution of tourism industry is 4.4 percent to the gross domestic product but the global contribution is 10.4 percent. The contribution of our county's travel and tourism sector is as compared as low benchmark with the global range to the gross domestic product because of the poor infrastructure, lack of effective plan and strategies , high cost of doing business, political instability, insecurity , lack of promotion, marketing and branding. Although tourism is a rising industry in Bangladesh which may create more job opportunities to people and raise the contribution to the country economy. So, an integrated promotion and marketing communication, proper tourism planning and development is required to meet the tourists' demand and sustainable development of the tourism industry.

2. Literature review

According to Carlo Maria Grassi "Tourism marketing is the business discipline of attracting visitors to a specific location - hotels , cities, states, consumer attractions, convention and other sites and locations

associated with consumer and business travel all apply basic marketing strategies to specific techniques designed to increase visitors".

Shaft (1985) proposed that the marketing and promotion efforts of official tourist organization will have two major objectives: (a) it will seek to create knowledge about a country in particular markets and persuade visitors to visit that country; (b) it will seek to create a distinctive image of its country's tourist attractions into coherent single image.

Hasan (1992) observed that a large number of tourist facilities are available in Bangladesh but in some cases proper information of these are not enough to serve. Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) should change its marketing strategy by considering the tourists' demand and attitude.

Paynter (1993) defined the tourism marketing as a systematic process consisting of marketing objective, strategies, schedules, marketing media focused on the specific market segment and based on a substantial return on investment.

Witt and Mouthino (1994) mentioned that tourism marketing is the systematic process through which tourism organizations select their target audience and communicate with them to find out and influence their needs, desires and motivations, at a local, regional and international level, with the aim of formulating and adapt their tourist products. In this way, tourist satisfaction and organizational goals are achieved simultaneously.

Hossain and Nazmin (2005) suggested that tourism services are quite complex and heterogeneous in nature and the marketing of these services is challenging and difficult. Moreover, heterogeneous business groups supply a variety of services to the tourist people whereas a large scale of integrated efforts and co-ordination among the different service firms is required.

HossainAfjal (2005) showed that tourism marketing constraints affect the foreign tourists' attitude like service product arrangement, channel of distribution, price of tourism product and services and promotional arrangement. He also recommended that Bangladesh tourism industry should develop its marketing mix elements in a way that achieve positive attitude of the foreign tourists and ensure economic growth of the country.

Thepphawan, Tachumpa and Vichitr (2007) observed for Thailand, the strategic marketing to attract the tourists to the Intra-City tourism route may apply the tourism marketing mix strategy as follow (a) Product: In case of product design differentiation strategy is the key to success of Intra-City tourism. The three tourism sites should be set up museums to show their history and background of their beings. Here, try to create their own image of distinct characteristics of their human resources, their hospitality and communicative language ability of their target tourists' nationalities such as English, German etc. Moreover, emphasizing on safety measures of the tourists in health, lives and belongings. Regarding public transportation in the Intra-City tourism route, the government tourism agency and public transportation both physically connect these three tourism sites together and easily access to the sites. (b) Price: The package price service should be considered as the special packages to the customers. Reducing the price discrimination to provide total service of the Intra-City tourism route- travelling, accommodation and excursion are included in the package. Privilege price strategy should be used to attract the regular customers and to give more promotion on VIP membership. (c) Place: To participate with the road show of Tourism Authority of Thailand. Intra-City tourism route is being made as the plan and put into the map and projects of Tourism Authority of Thailand. (d) Promotion: Tourism Authority of Thailand promotes this route through the travel agencies around the world by using website via the internet and creating media group to put in the road show.

In the literature review, it has been claimed by different authors that effective tourism marketing trend is essential for economic development as well as for further progress of a country.

3. Objectives of the study

The comprehensive objective of the study is to measure the potentiality of the tourism marketing to enrich the tourism industry of Bangladesh. The core objectives of the study are:

- (a) To identify the tourism marketing development trends in Bangladesh.
- (b) To find out the drawbacks of tourism marketing activities.
- (c) To suggest some recommendations for further development of the tourism marketing in Bangladesh.

4. Methodology

Necessary data and information are collected from the secondary sources. While in this study different tourism related journals, newspapers, newsletters, books, magazines, annual report of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Bangladesh Tourism Board, foreign and local research works have been reviewed. Moreover, a lot of tourism based websites has been reviewed for current and updated information.

5. Analysis of tourism marketing trends in Bangladesh

During the period of Pakistan, there was a separate tourism department in West Pakistan. This department was nominated to look after the promotion, development and regulation of the tourism industry in Pakistan. At the end of 1970, a private corporation came into operating the tourism sector. After the Liberation war, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation was formed to develop the tourism sector of Bangladesh in 1972 and started it activities in 1973. Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism was a ministry under the central government before independence. Several issues related to communication and tourism was entrusted with the ministry of commerce. In the year of 1972, Civil Aviation Division was brought under the ministry of Shipping, Inland Water Transport and Civil Aviation. However, an independent Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism was established in 1975. Tourists' views and opinions about a country frequently are based on what the tourists have heard or read about the country more specifically country's attracting and appealing factors to travel that country (Kale and Weir, 1986). Government affiliated in the tourism sector is addressed through BPC (Hossain, 2006), which is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism. Therefore, the government decided to reconstruct the tourism sector (Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, 2004) under the government responsibility for better coordination, promotion, development , planning and marketing (Hossain, 2006). Marketing planning and development in the tourism industry is a very common trend all over the world. Tourism marketers always try to cope with the changing environment and make sure that they would like to contribute this sector largely but the task of marketing planning and implementation is not only the challenging one but also difficult to perform in nature. Tourism marketing efforts begin with a plan and it also has a road map to attract national and international tourists toward a specific tourism destination. It has a wide range and mass coverage from a small place of lodging or tourist attraction to the positioning of a country as a tourism destination.

The starting point in the development of tourism marketing is to have a concept of the value offering which clearly depends on the target to which the product is directed. Tourism marketing is responsible for discovering what tourist want, developing the right services for them, providing information about the existing service package and offer as well as giving instructions on how they can purchase the service (Diaz Martin, 2006). World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defined "Tourism marketing as a management philosophy which, in the light of tourist demand, makes it possible through research, forecasting and selection of tourism products/services from suppliers, on the line with organization's purpose and tourist satisfaction".

Nouri, B. A. and Soltani, M., (2015) conducted a questionnaire survey on buying holiday home and then provided a conceptual framework for tourism marketing mix to understand the consumers while products and services aimed to meet the needs. The blueprint of the tourism marketing mix:

18

Table 1. Tourism marketing mix based on the study's questionnaire on buying holiday home

Variable	Dimensions	Facilitation	
	Product	Amenities in holiday home, recreational and welfare centers,	
		tourism cultural features and healthcare centers	
	Price	The price level of holiday home, Stable and controlled price	
		and flexible monetary policies	
	Promotion	The availability of tourism information, tourism information	
		presented by the media and attractive advertising methods	
Tourism marketing mix	Place	Destinations being located in the tourist areas, the dispersion	
		of tourism attractions, the security of tourism areas, easy	
		access to tourism areas and beautiful beaches	
	Physical	Urban beautification, building beautification and	
	environment	destination's decoration	
	Process	Government policies in the field of tourism, programs that	
		are well-matched with needs of tourist and easy process of	
		buying services	
	People	The attitude of popular culture towards this industry,	
		relevant information provided by dealers	

Source: International Journal of Business Administration, Vol. 6 No. 5; 2015

Tourism marketing is different from others because the tourist purchases a bundle of services. While marketing a tourism product or service, the marketing people depend on the positive facets of the following components:

- **5.1 Tourism product:** Tourism product is a combined set of physical resources, services and activities. The tourism being a service or activity sold to the tourism customers; here tourist experience is the key product, which is intangible and non-storable in nature. As a product the quality of the tourist experience is fully proportional to the quality of the service a tourism destination provides. So, the tourism product must be designed to address the tourists' needs, wants, demand, brand preference. These are:
 - Tourism oriented products: accommodations, transportation, tour operators, travel agents, restaurants, souvenirs outlets, parks, museums, temples, gardens, cinema theatres, shopping centers, tourism information centers etc.
 - Residents oriented products: hospitals, banks and ATMs, postal service, petrol pumps, security service etc.
 - Intangible products of tourism: bookings, tourists' experience, tourists' memory.
 - Tour operator's products and services: hotel, motel, reservation service, chain services, self-catering, guest houses, camping sites, tour guidance etc.

The components of tourist products come in various forms (Koutoulas, (2001:394):

- Integral products that can be sold independently on the market such as hotel, accommodation, air transport, admission to visitor attractions etc.
- "Free" or "Public" goods, such as the climate and the scenery from the environment that can be consumed by tourists free of charge (Scheuch, 1982: 87; Leiper, 1990:147).
- Complementary products that can be sold independently on the market such as services rendered by a tourist information office.
- **5.2 Price:** Setting a price for tourism products is a very sensitive job and a strong mix of marketing strategy and financial analysis. In case of determining the price of tourism products, marketers must need to be considered some key factors such as seasonality, competitors' price, capacity, operating costs, profit

margins, commissions of intermediaries, distribution costs, promotional costs etc. Although several tour operators group developed their tourism business plan by determining the cost to travel in Bangladesh. Sebastiaan (2020): A detailed budget guide for backpacking in Bangladesh. This guide gives us a perceived knowledge of how much it costs to travel in Bangladesh, with tips on accommodation, food and drinks, transportation and other things to do in Bangladesh. Budget guide for Bangladesh is given below:

- Currency exchange rate (March 2020): US\$1= Tk84.
- Travel around Bangladesh (one person for single day): US\$15-20=Tk1260-1680.
- Cost of accommodation in Bangladesh: (a) Budget hotels in cities: US\$4.50-9= Tk400-700 (b) Mid-range hotels: US\$1236=Tk1000-3000 (c) Luxury hotels (4stars): US\$75+=Tk6500.
- Cost of food and drinks in Bangladesh :(a) Cheap lunch or dinner:US\$1.75-3.50=Tk150-300 (b) Sit down lunch or dinner at a clean place:US\$2.30-6=Tk200-500 (c) Tea and snacks on the street:US\$0.05-0.10=Tk5-10.
- Cost of getting around in Bangladesh: (a) Shared rickshaw in a city:US\$0.05-0.10=Tk5-10 (b) Bus between cities:US\$2.30-5.20=Tk200-500 (c) Six hour ferry ride:US\$2.30-4.60=Tk200-400 (d) Over night train in lower class:US\$4.50-9=Tk400-700.
- Cost of sightseeing in Bangladesh :(a) Entrance to most Islamic sites: Free (b) Entrance to most Hindu temples: Free (c) Ticket fee for ticketed sights: US\$1.20-2.40=Tk100-200.
- Cost of getting connected in Bangladesh: connectivity in Bangladesh is spotty if someone wants to stay connected would have to get a SIM card and enough data.
- 5.3 Place: It is known that the task of place or distribution is to connect the tourism products or services producers and tourism products or services consumers as a range of distribution channel. Kotler states that they are: travel agents, wholesalers, specialists, hotel representatives, national, federal and local travel agencies, consortia and reservation systems, internet, receptionists (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2010). Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh (TOAB) was established to develop and nourish tourism in Bangladesh and to promote tourism products of Bangladesh in the international arena. This organization maintains a good relationship with Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Bangladesh Tourism Board, Bangladesh Hotel Owner Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh, PATA Bangladesh Chapter and other trade bodies by the consent of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh (ATAB) and Bangladesh Inbound Tour Operators Association are also contributed to develop and flourish our tourism industry.
- 5.4 Promotion: Tourism promotion as a marketing mix element is intended to inform the customers about the products or services create a brand image about the destination and make position in the competitive market. Tourism marketing companies or tourism business attract their audience and make their promotion ideas through the contextual advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity, showing online banners, starting a blog or posting articles, social media marketing, newsletters, using tourist promo videos etc. Promotional tools used in tourism industry of Bangladesh (Source: Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation):
 - Video films: An invitation to Bangladesh.
 - Publication: On tourist handbook.
 - Publication: On picture postcards.
 - Bangladesh tourist map.
 - Posters: On tourist attractions in Bangladesh.

Tourism industry of a destination country expands its efforts to expose some factors such as forms of promotion at a large number of people in different countries of heterogeneous socio-economic and cultural background, versatile needs and expectations, consumption patterns and separate leisure-spending behaviors (Hossain, 1999), accordingly based on these factors county should take necessary promotional strategies to draw attention and make interest among the actual and potential tourists. While designing promotional strategies and plan, the industry needs to take decision about which promotional tools, techniques, media,

channels, images and formats to use. Basically, National Tourism Organization or the official tourist organization of each country performs the responsibility of promoting the country as a tourism destination. Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation is the national tourism organization in Bangladesh. It is vested with the promotion as well as the development of the country's tourism but it uses some traditional marketing and promotion techniques to perform the responsibility for stimulating the tourism demand. These mainly included printed information materials and literatures, brochures, booklets, guides, posters, souvenirs, leaflets etc for distributing among the local tourists, foreign tourists and domestic resident foreigners. The price list of the BPC's promotional materials and publications are given below in table:

Table 2. Prices of the BPC's Promotional Materials and Publications

Promotional Materials and Publications	Price in Tk
1.Video Films:	200.00
Visit Bangladesh (30 min): An Invitation to Bangladesh	
2. Publications:	50.00
Bangladesh tourist handbook, 10 picture postcards, Bangladesh tourist map,	30.00
Dhaka tourist map	20.00
	10.00
3. Posters:	
Six types of posters	15.00
(On tourist attractions in Bangladesh)	

Source: Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation

The BPC distributes these printed materials to different foreign travel agencies and tour operators, Biman's overseas offices, Bangladesh mission offices for the dissemination of the information about our country tourism. These offices convey those materials among the potential tourists by free of costs.

Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) determines its promotion budget on what it can afford. It now allocates and spends approximately one core taka every year for its marketing and promotion activities. This amount is not sufficient to promote the tourism industry of our country in front of the overseas people because the amount allocated each year is mainly for producing and distributing sales literatures and publishing advertisements in local newspapers and magazines. The following table presents the marketing promotion budgets and actual promotion expenditures of the BPC:

Table 3.Marketing Promotion Budgets and Actual Promotion Expenditures of the BPC

Year	Marketing Promotion Budgets	Actual Promotion Expenditures
	(Tk. In Lac)	(Tk. In Lac)
2007-	350.00	50.00
2008- 09	300.00	299.50
2009-	833.00	833.00
2010- 11	2300.00	Continuing

Source: Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation

On the other hand, Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB) is responsible for promoting tourism and providing necessary training to the tourism people as the National tourism organization. Since its inauguration in 2010, it has been faithfully promoting a positive image of Bangladesh to the world. A few evidences of its marketing and promotion are given below:

Table 4.Marketing and Promotion activities by the Bangladesh Tourism Board

Marketing and	Coverage arenas	Year
Promotion Events		
School of Life	During the anguing commons of the ICC Chiefest	2011
School of Life	During the opening ceremony of the ICC Cricket	2011
	World Cup 2011 a television commercial titled	
	'Beautiful Bangladesh (School of Life)'was	
	produced to attract tourists into Bangladesh.	
ICC Cricket World	It was jointly hosted by India, Sri Lanka and	2011
Cup 2011	Bangladesh. BTB was the local partner in	
	Bangladesh and also worked for marketing the	
	tourism aspects of Bangladesh to the foreigners.	
E-Marketing	BTB had opened its own website	2011
campaign	www.tourismboard.gov.bd for digital marketing	
	campaign.	
Bangladesh Folk	In order to promote the famous and enriched folk	2011
Festival 2011	history of Bangladesh to the foreign media	
	journalists covering the ICC Cricket World Cup	
	2011.	
Participation in	In order to raise the attractiveness of tourism in	2011-12
Foreign Tourism	Bangladesh and to promote the country, the	
22	Asian Januaral of Casial Calanas and Managama	

Exhibitions	Bangladesh Tourism Board launched "Visit Bangladesh Campaign" and participated in International Tourism Exhibition.	
Bangladesh Premier League 2011	Bangladesh Tourism Board worked as the co- sponsor and collaborator of that event and helped to create awareness, shaped a better image and developed tourism potential for Bangladesh.	2011
Asian Tourism Fair 2011	A three day regional tourism fair was held on Dhaka city from September 29 th till 1 st October with a view to shaping common tourism-promotion strategies for the Asian countries with the support of the Ministry of Civil aviation and Tourism and Bangladesh Parjatan corporation (BPC).	2011
11 th SAARC Trade Fair and Tourism Mart 2012	This event helped to highlight the positive image of Bangladesh.	2012

Source: Bangladesh Tourism Board

6. Drawbacks of Tourism Marketing in Bangladesh

Although Bangladesh has a great potential aspect to develop a much enriched tourism destination, but there are so many crucial problems for the development and implementation of tourism marketing in Bangladesh:

- Insufficient promotional fund and integrated support from the tourism stakeholders and concerned authority of our country.
- Lack of efficient infrastructural facilities.
- Negative impact of security and country's image to domestic and foreign tourists.
- Ineffective and traditional marketing strategies, tourism plan and policy.
- Poor and obsolete promotional tools and techniques.
- Lack of Patronization for tourism media partners.
- Unavailability of updated information and market research on tourism.
- Absence of training institute related to tourism industry.

7. Findings of the Study

In the earlier of the emerging Bangladesh, there were no specialized and assigned organizations for developing integrated tourism marketing and promotion mix. But nowadays, the Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, the Bangladesh Tourism Board and the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism are trying to flourish the tourism industry and attract the tourists by addressing some key marketing and promotional efforts. They have also categorized the tourism products, determined the price of tourism products, set the tourism channel of distribution and worked for promotion by video films, publications on tourist handbook, postcards, posters, Bangladesh tourist map etc. In the year of 2007-08, the BPC set the marketing promotion budget Tk35 million and the actual promotional expenditure was Tk5 million. In the next year, it was Tk30 million for marketing promotion budget and actual expenditure was Tk29.95 million. It increased to Tk83.3 million in 2009-10 and Tk230 million in 2010-11. Although, the country is unable to take marketing and promotional efforts and ensure the required infrastructural facilities such as accommodation, transportation, power supply, safety and security etc for the potential tourists like any other country. On the other hand, Bangladesh has some crucial challenges and impediments to reach the golden age of tourism industry development.

8. Recommendation

Development and expansion of tourism marketing and promotion in Bangladesh is not only the task of government but also the task of combined efforts from all the stakeholders and concerned authorities. Our country couldn't attract the foreign tourists with a massive range of expectation, although the Government has taken many steps to develop the tourism industry. The effective and efficient implementation of all the following steps will help the country tourism to reach the pinnacle of the industry:

- Ensuring the proper allotment of marketing and promotion funds and to create supportive environment for adapting the new trends of tourism.
- Making the positive image of the country on the national and international level of tourism.
- Developing the infrastructural facilities and diversified products e.g. hotel, motel, restaurant, cafes, camping, vehicles, retail network, internet coverage, information etc up to the mark level.
- Ensuring the safety and security of the tourists because of their high priority on it to select a foreign country as a tourist destination.
- Modernizing the tourism marketing strategies to address the new dimensions of market segmentation, targeting, positioning and branding.
- Incorporating the updated promotional tools and techniques with the existing one.
- Using of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in promotional activities to disseminate the positive information about our country in domestically as well as internationally.
- Making collaboration and liaison with foreign tour operators to promote Bangladesh by the supervision of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation and private tour operators of Bangladesh.
- Encouraging more private sectors to invest for sustainable infrastructure facilities and promotional measures.

9. Conclusion

Tourism is one of the emerging and multi-dimensional industries all over the world. All the countries across the world are trying to attract their tourist by lucrative marketing strategies and concurrent promotional tools. Bangladesh has a plenty of potentials to attract the foreign tourists as well as boost up the domestic tourists through adapting the dynamic marketing mix and promotion techniques e.g. video marketing, storytelling, mobile marketing, satellite media, country road map via internet, social media marketing, website content making, blog hosting etc. So, it is essential for the success of Bangladesh tourism to know that what the new trends and dimensions of tourism marketing are?

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