

## **Destination Competitiveness: Attributes Affecting Tourist Decisions- A Case Study on Cox's Bazar**

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**Abstract:** *Cox's Bazar known as the longest sea beach in the world which unbroken sandy beach. Study has been carried on Cox' bazar so that a positive brand image can be created in front of tourists all over the world. The process of earning reputation for a place through its original resources and opportunities to motivate the outer world is known as destination marketing. The study has been conducted by primary resources as well as secondary data; used 100 questionnaires and method is qualitative. From the study we came to know that there is positive relationship between image attribute and overall image of Cox's Bazar. The outcome of this study will be helpful for concerned authorities, planners, and marketers to ensure enough components to build a strong brand image of Cox's Bazar as a destination for tourist.*

**Keywords:** *Destination marketing, Longest sea beach, Earning sources, Economic effect.*

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Date of Submission: 19-09-2017

Date of acceptance: 06-10-2017

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### **I. Introduction:**

To make the whole world a small village and changing the world economy, there is a big impact tourism industry. Tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries. World Travel & Tourism Council has published it's latest annual research, shows that world GDP grew for sixth consecutive year in 2015, rising to a total of 9.8% of world GDP US \$7.2 Trillion. All over the world now days this sector helps over 284 million people to earn their livelihood. That's mean among every 11 person 1 on the planet.

Brand image can vary time to time and tourists to tourists. To make destination marketing need to be very carefully because it's sensitive and difficult which can effect on the image of that destination. If the tourists find any gap between image and the reality it creates negative response. It needs to create in a way that motivates every person all over the world. Tourists try to go a place where he can feel the beauty and utilize his vacation with beloved persons.

Cox's Bazar, name of the world's largest (120 km) sea beach of soft silvery sand. It is endowed with potential for industry of tourism. Tourists can feel the beauty with low hills and sea the Bay of Bengal. Cox's Bazar is as romantic as its name. "Panowa" is another name of cox's bazar and its literal translation is "yellow flower". It has population of 51,918. Cox's Bazar is connected both by air and road with Dhaka and Chittagong. The major income of this area's people is tourism industry. A number of people are involved in fishing and sea product for their livelihood.

Tourism in Bangladesh is managed by Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism (MCAT). At the seasonal (November to March) time more than 2 million people visit Cox's Bazar for their vacation. The main places are Labonee beach, kolatoli, Himchori, Innani are particularly visited by people. From Labonee beach to Kolatoli Beach there are many hotels, motels, cottage, rest house and guest house to stay. The area of cox's bazar is changing for the tourism industry.

### **II. Literature Review**

Tourism destination is composed of the fusion of tourism products offering an integrated experience to customers (Buhalis, 2000). It is being expressed as destination attributes and the combination of the multidimensional attributes of one destination can create the overall attractiveness of that destination. Not all attributes could be important or determinant for tourists (Crouch, 2011) which is a deciding factor for tourists to choose their and compare options. The most comprehensive framework was developed by Crouch and Ritchie (1999, 2003). It is known as the Calgary Model. The base of this model is on elaboration of various macro and micro economic factors. While the discussions of competitiveness in the general literature are useful in highlighting the various determinants of 'firm' or 'national' competitiveness, they do not address the special considerations relevant to determining tourism 'destination' competitiveness (Dwyer and Kim 2003).

Cox's Bazar was a quiet beach town about two decades ago. Mostly Bangladeshis were attracted towards Cox's Bazar to escape from the noise and pollution of the busy cities. Today's scenario is different. The entire landscape has changed and hundreds of high-rise hotel buildings, apartment blocks and restaurants have mushroomed in the area. By this the uncertainty of Cox's Bazar has increased. The seaside and the hills are facing threats. On the hillside trees are being cut indiscriminately and lands are also being cleared. As a result, frequent landslides during monsoon period killing many people. Dozens of people were killed when mud banks bowed during heavy rain, burying houses. It was the second major landslide in less than four years. The environment is indescribable. Cox's Bazar unique history and culture, combined with its tropical climate and charming beaches make it the ideal place to escape to. It has so many places that can astonish you by their beauty, shortage and uniqueness.

Despite having so many uncertainty, the image of Cox's bazaar as a tourism destination is unique. untouched sandy beaches, coconut palms, sunshine and tropical weather – Cox's Bazaar has these all. People consider it as an ideal holiday destination. Cox's Bazaar possibly the most popular tourist spot in Bangladesh which is visited by a large number of tourists from Britain, America, Korea, Japan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and many other countries each year. Cox's bazaar attracts most of the tourist who welcome warmly the wonders of nature. During the winter there can be 10,000 available rooms in the beach area Accommodations. Many private hotels, Motels and two "Five star" hotels are located on or near the beach. There's a load of restaurants along Sea Beach Rd and in the Hotel Motel Zone, which is mostly serving in Bangladeshi standards.

### **III. Methodology**

This study was conducted in Cox Bazar, Bangladesh, world's longest sea beach. Recently, Bangladesh gets much attention from the international arena and renowned as an emerging tourism destination. International tourist arrivals are outwardly increasing year by year, Tourism is considered as one of a very lucrative and flourishing arena. The more destinations are similar the more tourists are perceived as a relatively homogenous destination and the more likely to choose to visit a few places (Mekong Tourism Competitiveness & Opportunities, 2008). Due to acknowledge of this reason, the current study is designed to provide suggestions to destination managers by exploring the perceptions of tourist. The study has been conducted by primary resources as well as secondary data. The total number of respondent were 100 and they filled a well structured questionnaire .The questionnaire contained both open ended and close ended questions. The research methodology utilized was qualitative case study method. Both primary data and secondary data were utilized for the purpose of the research. Data were analyzed by using content analysis method

#### **Rational and Approaches to Brand Coxsbazar:**

**Rational:** Destination brand as defined geographical region which is understood by its tourist as a unique entity, with a political and legislative framework for tourism marketing and planning. Destination branding should focus producing consistent message. In terms of coxsbazar, the destination image of this place is an amalgamation independent tourism actor. The tourist perception about coxsbazar is reflected as based on the association held by the tourist memory. The image of coxsbazar is something that cannot be imposed on tourist by only advertising campaign which is basically known as one way communication. The tourist perception about coxsbazar is a sum of trip experience as well as all factors of the destination coxsbazar that affected country's image. There is an issue that Indian people are very much emotional and like hospitality. They are also very cost effective. They also like adventure and travelling. To attract them about coxsbazar, firstly marketers have to promote or provide them proper knowledge about coxsbazar. They can offer the tourists for visiting coxsbazar, by showing the facilities like resident, opportunities to visit historical places, security ensured, availability of foods and hotel services and so on. To grab the attention of the tourists we will provide some package offer, it can be personal or family oriented. A huge number of tourists are found in india. If the marketers are able to convince Indian tourists for visiting coxsbazar, a huge amount of revenue may be earned by the government which will help to increase the economic stability of our country. Creating awareness is one of the most important issues when they show their interest for visiting coxsbazar.

#### **Exploratory Findings and Discussion**

Destination branding is possible through direct marketing, brochures, publicity, public relations, media partners, advertising websites, and the it can be through cooperation destination branding associations. As we are branding Cox'bazar .Nowadays, Cox's Bazar is one of the most renowned tourist destinations in Bangladesh, but in earlier times it was not a most important international tourist destination. since 2013, the Bangladesh management teams created the Tourist Police unit to give more focusing on local and foreign tourists, but also to take care of the nature and animals in the tourist spots of Cox's Bazar. So,the most important factor is destination branding, which is is the most powerful marketing tool for the marketers to promote. In that place, we can branding the place such as, the longest sea beach, including these places, Himchuri, Laboni point, Katoli

beach, Banghabandhu safari park. Later on, Every country owns unique culture, landscape and heritage sights. Cox's Bazar is usually known for its wide long sandy beach which is known to be the world's longest natural sea beach all about 120km and the top vacationer magnetism in Bangladesh located in the eastern seashore area mostly. Which is surrounded by the 120 km coastline, 96 km beach area is covered by hill side of that area. There is potential to work stand by stand to make this place beautiful. But due to some limitations, tourists cannot get focused because high standard services of customers standard are now mostly preferable. And that is why, to create unique differentiation for the tourists to brand the places. Then, need to differentiate, the cultural venues and natural environment. The facilities are, accommodation, safety, arts and many more things. And the limitations are-

- ❖ Better maintenance
- ❖ Lacking of promotional Activities
- ❖ Lucrative tourism packages
- ❖ Environmental up gradation
- ❖ Shark safety
- ❖ Lacking of scattered benches
- ❖ Lack of concern of people and government
- ❖ Rescue teams

So, need to work to eradicate the limitations so that markets can grab the attention of tourists. To emphasis more, government need to take some initiatives steps and also motivate the local people to work for the heritage sites to protect and make more better.

In order to discuss the improvement in relative quality of branding coxsbazar as a destination in uncertainty, we need to define what uncertainty could occur when the tourists come to visit this place as their destination. While it is expected there will be no complete unanimity in this regard. Some of the determinants of uncertainty can be easily identified .these are given below-

- A) **Infrastructure failure** : no proper roads and flights.
- B) **Natural disaster**: flood, hurricane, earthquake.
- C) **Environmental pollution**: embarrassing situation will be creating for the tourists.

Branding incredible coxsbazar in terms of uncertainty is a huge challenge. The current critical success factors for branding in terms of uncertainty are given below-

- a) **Brand building**: the first stage in the process of refreshing brand coxsbazar and creates its core value. These should be durable, relevant and communicable and hold saliency for tourist visiting coxsbazar.

Destination brand building process phase

Tourists	Spread positive word of mouth regarding Cox's bazar Play role as a tourist referral Recommending others to visit Cox's bazar Collect souvenir from cox's bazaar for friends and relatives, colleagues etc.
Local community	Welcome the tourist in territory warmly Share local culture, belief, history and tradition Spread positive word of mouth Treat tourists as a family member
DMO	Ensure harmony of infrastructural development Maintain cleanliness of the sea beach Establish information center at different spot of the destination
Hotelier	Provide quality service according to commitment
Tour operator	Ensure safety, security and standard of service
Tourist guide	Spread positive word of mouth about Cox's bazar sea beach Share every positive things about Cox's bazar about sea beach Study everything such as culture, language of tourists before arrival
Government	Ensure proper infrastructure and superstructures development Take effective promotional program
Tourist police	Act as a tourist guide not as a police Ensure security in the Cox's bazar sea beach

We findings shows that people tend to go on vacations once or twice every year preferably on winter (December - January). They prefer to stay for two to three days on holidays. And most people said that good scenery and views can make them to go to a destination where as good environment and packages can make them extend their visit. A lot of people have not yet been exposed to a lot of holiday packages, but the ones that have gone on holiday packages before, want to avail those packages again. Also a lot of people prefer holiday packages over visiting places on their own. There is equal demand for all type of packages (Individual, Group and Couple). The tourism businesses should take these factors in account while designing their packages and also they should promote the packages more, then we believe that they can improve their businesses.

#### IV. Conclusion

Branding brand is timeless. It is a long term effort to do the task. Everyone should work for it such as, the local people, The government, the markets, the media partners and so many more. The sea beach is the most eye-catching and highly visited tourist destination in Bangladesh and it has important economic contribution to the local economy as well as country to uphold the better destination. The tourism policy should make some lucrative packages for the tourists and eradicate the limitations such as: better maintenance, awareness of the people, lucrative packages, make positioning and segment properly.

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Javed Tariq. " Destination Competitiveness: Attributes Affecting Tourist Decisions- A Case Study on Cox's Bazar." *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, vol. 19, no. 10, 2017, pp. 65–68.