

# An Analysis on Demographical Factors Influencing Tourist Behaviour in Bangladesh

Mustakkima Afrin<sup>1</sup>, MSc UK, AMBA, AFHEA, PGCTHE

## ABSTRACT

This research paper analyses the vital decision-making variables of tourists choosing a particular tourist destination. Tourism is one of the buzz words of the modern age. Bangladesh, being known as the land of the Royal Bengal Tiger is a country of natural beauty of unique fascination. The eco-naturals of the country composed of hills, rivers, lakes, forests, sea-beaches and the greeneries. Tourist destinations of Bangladesh also have excellent old monuments and religious architectural places. Bangladesh is still unaware about the potentials of this sector though the global tourism industry is steadily expanding. Research on tourist's behaviour indicates a country can maximise its tourism potential through efficiently managing its tourism policy based on the tourist's behaviour. In 2012, around 0.6 million tourists came to Bangladesh to visit and enjoy its beauty. The total contribution of tourism to GDP was 4.4%, 3.8% to employment and 1.5% to investment in 2013. Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) looks after the tourism sector in Bangladesh under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism. The importance of happiness parameters and available amenity information can help in synthesizing ecotourism programs in hill-piedmont bound and terrace basin sea beach-delta Bangladesh. This paper analyses Bangladesh as a tourist destination using available appropriate methods. The major concern of the research is to focus the factors by which Bangladesh can be one of the tourist attractive countries in the world. The implications can aid the decision makers in Bangladesh to develop at least one eco-tourism policy in the competitive business world.

**Keywords:** *Terrace basin, eco-tourist destination, generational theory, brand image, tourist behaviour*

## Introduction

Bangladesh is naturally a tourist friendly country because of its geophysical attractions, historical monuments and cultural richness (Roy and Roy, 2014). Bangladesh is called the land of reveries and it offers huge tourism activities. The country also consists a lot of archaeological sites, hilly areas, mosques and other localized heritages. As per the report of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in 2013, Bangladeshi's tourism programme create 2% of her total employment though it is low as it has great potential. The country is ranked 157 out of 178 countries globally as a tourist destination (Kruskal and Wish, 1978).

As the world tourism sector is expanding, Bangladesh is still less aware about the potential of the sector. The ministry is currently promoting Bangladesh through a campaign named "Beautiful Bangladesh" and facilitating the respective department and persons in maintaining the heritage of this vital tourist destination.

Presently tourists getting access to information regarding a tourism from media as well as regular sources of information, importantly the positive word-of-mouth as stated by many workers (Alegre and Juaneda, 2006; Pitts and Woodside, 1986). It is significant to look at how in the last 20 years many Asian countries have changed their fortune based on tourism related development. Several scientists opined that (Money and Crotts, 2003; Pike 2002; Kotler, et al. 2006) several countries branded themselves as a tourist friendly country and they do whatever they can to induce tourists in greater numbers. An integrated tourism policy is a basic thing for the success of any tourism industry. Tourists seek multiple destination choices to access for travelling. Destinations are implementing tourist policies to attract potential clients. Therefore, it may be difficult in the near future for Bangladesh to adjust with other countries if its tourist policy is not upgraded. This report will provide a guideline to Bangladesh's tourist policy makers about the tourists' evaluation in the country based on amenities, information availability and their performed tour satisfaction.

<sup>1</sup> Doctoral Researcher and Part Time Lecturer Aberystwyth University

Address of the first author for communication- E-mail: mua@aber.ac.uk, Tel: +447747683249



Tourism is an important driver of sustainable development. Besides people have opportunity to exchange of original culture. Tourism can create employment, bring many socio-economic and environmental benefits, particularly in rural areas and newly emerged developing countries like Bangladesh. Tourism may provide fiscal support for the conservation of ecosystems and management of natural resources making the destined sites authentic and attractive to visitors. Siraj et al., (2009) studied the similar issues and forwarded that Government of Bangladesh (GOB) reformed the national tourism policy in 2010. Aims and goals of this policy is to increase employment, ensure development and environmental safety. The objective of the policy was to develop integrated eco-tourism through conservation of natural resources, preservation of cultural values of the community and sharing stake holder's benefits. GOB launched Act of Protected areas of tourism and specialized tourism zone (Kabir et al., 2012). Bangladesh in the South has the least arrivals and revenue earned from tourism sector (Pennington and Thomsen, 2010). Tourism was described and projected as one of the productive sectors in Bangladesh (Elena et al., 2012) among others for the current need.

The mentionable Organizations like Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism (MOCAT), Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC), World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) working with closer development targets in an integrated way. The importance of tourism sector has increased overtime. Now Bangladesh is a developing country (low-mid income). Its average GDP growth rate is  $>7\%$ . The economy is highly dependent on work force export. Recently GOB has passed the Cox's Bazaar Development Authority (CDA) as a part of tourism sector development. The GOB should place befitting emphasis in its policy on the expansion of the tourist spots over the country. Thus, the following measures may be prioritized for the extension of eco-tourism sectors in Bangladesh: such as i) up-date the present tourism policies in Bangladesh compared to the world tourism market, ii) political stability should be maintained to attract the foreign tourist, and iii) GOB should take the steps improving the security system at the tourist place.

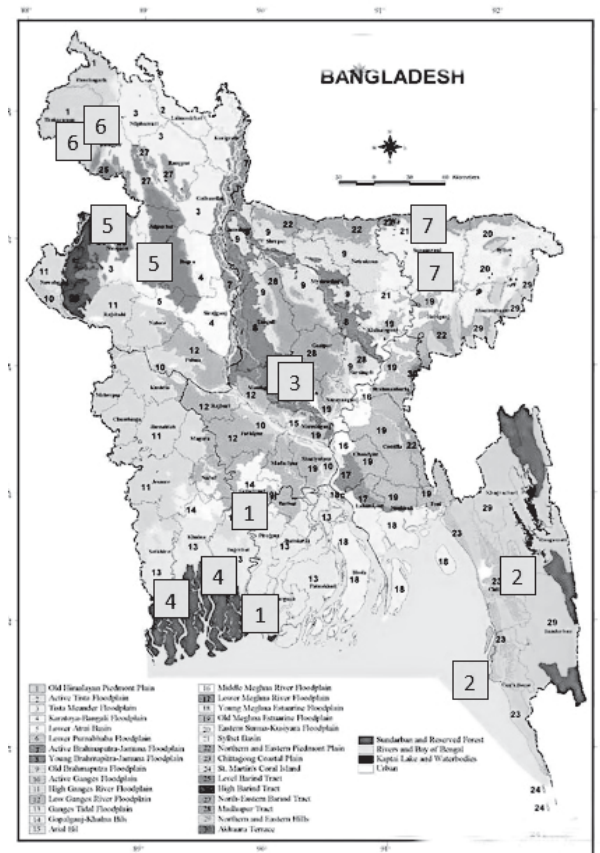
### Methodology

In qualitative research approach, a structured interview was taken through a closed end survey among unique people from different generations and attributes. The participants are from different parts of the Bangladeshi society. Almost all of them are related to tourism in Bangladesh. Some of them are regular tourists of Bangladeshi destinations, some of them are members of the regulatory bodies related to tourism in Bangladesh, some of them are also foreign tourists who visited Bangladeshi destinations and others are related to tourism business in Bangladesh. The results extractable from the duly structured interviews and the survey questionnaire guidelines to be analysed using descriptive statistical tools, chi-square analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test were formulated using previously recommended procedures (Money and Crofts, 2003; Pike 2002; Kotler, et al. 2006; Siraj et al., 2009). All the analyses are done as an extensive applied experiment for Bangladesh to search for the right tourism policy mix. All the interviews were taken one-to-one and the interviewees were based on similar characteristics including tourism inclination, visit wish, traveller behaviour. Key features of the questionnaire were-information source preferences, demographical information, satisfaction level of Bangladesh tourism offerings and positive word-of-mouth spreading tendency. In this research targeted interviewees are the tourists of both Bangladesh, native and foreigners (Table 1).



Division	Respondent's identity
1. Barisal	Patuakhali ST Univ, Kuakata
2. Chittagong	Cox's Bazar, Rangamati
3. Dhaka	Jatiya Smritisaudha, Ahsan Manzil
4. Khulna	Sundarbans, Shat Gombuj Mosque
5. Rajshahi	Mahasthangarh, Paharpur
6. Rangpur	Kantagir Temple, Ramsagar
7. Sylhet	Jaflong, Madhabkunda

**Table 01:** Classification of sample respondent sites: Tourists and tourism service providers (About 50% respondent from each division sites.)



**Fig 01:** Classification of sampling techniques and strategies as eco-diversity tour destination study sites. Mapping done by UNDP-FAO 1988 with MPA-GOB.





### Findings and Outcomes Quantitative Analysis

Based on the questionnaire survey, the detailed analysis is given below:

#### Descriptive Analysis of Tourists

Average Spending in Tourism Tours					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average Spending	111	3000	75000	12815	13366

**Table 02:** Descriptive Statistics on Average Spending

From Table 01 it can be observed that the minimum spending in each Bangladeshi Tourism tours is around BDT 3000 and the maximum is around BDT 75,000 per person. The average spending is in the higher side which is around BDT 12,815 and the std. deviation is BDT 13,366.

From this data analysis it can be said that Bangladeshi tourism tours are not that cheap as expected and the findings are backed by the research explained above.

#### Gender:

Gender Frequency		
	Frequency	Percent
Male	28	25.2
Female	82	73.9
Others	1	0.9
Total	111	100

**Table: 03:** Gender Frequency

From Table 3 it can be observed that there were 28 (25.2%) male participants, 82 (73.9%) female participants and 1 participant (0.9%) did not want to identify the gender in the survey. Women are more participative in tourism as they are interested in more and want to see new attractions.

#### Age:

Age Frequency		
	Frequency	Percent
25 -34	5	4.5
35 -44	10	9
45 -54	36	32.4
55 -64	35	31.5
65 and older	25	22.5
Total	111	100

**Table 04:** Age Frequency



From Table 4 it can be observed that there were 5 (4.5%) tourists are in the 25-34 age group, 10 (9%) tourists in the 35-44 age group, 36 (32.4%) tourists in the 45-54 age group, 35 (31.5%) tourists in the 55-64 age group and 25 (22.5%) tourists in the 65 and older age group. The highest tourists in the gender frequency are found in the 45-54 age group whilst the lowest is found in the 25-34 age group.

Age frequency in tourism plays a vital role in deciding the perfect policy optimisation. Residual citizens (aged over 40) are the main contributor in the global tourism industry. The numbers of tourist in each age group also justifies the previous research.

***Educational Background of Tourists:***

Education Background of Tourists		
	Frequency	Percent
None	5	4.5
Primary	10	9.1
Secondary	21	18.9
Higher Degree	35	31.5
Masters and Research	40	36.0
Total	111	100

**Table 05:** Educational Background

Table 05 shows that most of the participants have rich academic background as 67.5% participants have at least higher degree or more. The educational qualifications show that educated people are greater travellers than those with a low or no education background.

***Relationship between education and satisfaction***

The Correlation Coefficient between our education variable and the “unhappiness” variable is negative and very high (-0.828), suggesting that the more educated people are unhappier than the less educated people. It is reasonable to argue that educated people tend to have higher standards in terms of factors such as hygiene, safety and security and cultural and historical experiences.

In this analysis, in accordance with generation theory, interviewees were divided into four groups-Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y.





Parameter of Happiness with Ministry of Tourism							
	Silent Generation (%)	Baby Boomers (%)	Gen X (%)	Gen Y (%)	Chi-Square	P-Value	Cramer's V
NO	39.4	55.4	60.8	71.9	123.88	0.00	0.194

**Table 06:** Parameter of Happiness with Ministry of Tourism's Destination Branding

From the Table 6, we observe that all three generations, except the silent generation, are not happy with the current tourism scenario within Bangladesh.

**Conclusion:**

The surveyed information of a sample pool of tourists from Bangladesh thus summarized for drawing conclusions. The travel characteristics in terms of targeted satisfaction level, revisiting tendency, IT service availability and local amenity access should be the typical tourist elements based on analysis and inclusive branding perspective. As tourism industry is flourishing rapidly and tourists are becoming more conscious, the countries should preferably play the very competitive performance. The internet users increased significantly in the last decades and most of them belong to the Baby Boomers group, the generation group is still reliable on more realistic sources (Beldona et al., 2009). The crucial discovery of the research is that gen-Y is not only reliant on internet but also professional research about a particular tourist destination (Furr et al. 2002). The info-system in the tourism industry is increasing significantly and it is pay-advertising or branding including social media. Bangladesh has immense scope in tourism but still lack vision and strategy. The country should brand its destinations through effective IT system to increase the probability of a strong position. Already the tourism industry of Bangladesh proved as one of the remarkable revenue generating sectors and if proper steps are taken based on the analyses, this industry expects to create a cash cow for the country.

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