

## **Tourists' Attitude towards Urban Tourism: Problems and Perspectives of Dhaka City as Tourists' Destination**

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#### **Abstract**

Like several other sectors, tourism industry in Bangladesh since long past remains unexplored. Bangladesh faces deficit balances of payments every fiscal year. Tourism industry can play a vital role to remedy the deficit. Urban tourism has been a phenomenal growth since 1990 across the globe. Unfortunately Bangladesh is yet to figure prominently in the tourism map. Some of its neighboring countries are earning considerable amount of foreign exchange from tourism industry. The present study could reveal the problems and the prospects of urban (Dhaka City) tourism industry measuring the field opinion done by the researcher. This research was a conclusive research. Here participant observations, case study, interview and survey techniques are followed to collect primary data. It can therefore be said that the tourism industry offers greater scope for the development in the areas of economy, society, culture and religion.

**Keywords:** urban, tourism, development, economy, culture

#### **Introduction**

Increased leisure time and changes in lifestyle and consumption have given renewed importance to tourism, leisure and recreation in both the developed and the developing world; tourism has become one of the fast-growing industries in the world economy. Urban Tourism

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focuses in particular on the challenges facing older industrial cities in promoting tourism, and the role of tourism in regenerating city centers and inner city areas. In many cities where the traditional economic activities have declined, city authorities have invested in tourism as a means of boosting the image of their city, revitalizing and physically regenerating it and creating new jobs.

Urban tourism is the fastest growing service-industry nowadays and prospects of it are very bright. Tourism creates employment. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the tourism industry accounts for 11% of total global employment. It is said that every twelve tourists create a new job. There are some countries that have traditionally lived off tourism such as Switzerland in Europe. Other countries in Asia, Latin America and elsewhere have joined this elite group of countries over the years known for their tourism, proving its immense potential worldwide. Bangladesh tourism industry, especially Dhaka has great potentials both as a foreign exchange earner and provider of job-opportunities with resultant multiplier effect on the country's economy as a whole.

Tourist attractions can be termed as the central aspects of tourism which have the ability to draw the attention of the potential tourists to visit them. Mill and Morrison (2002) described attractions are the first and most important and a successful tourists destination have the blend of certain elements. Again they concluded that while the attractions are needed to bring people in, they must have adequate facilities, infrastructure and transportation alternatives to make their stay comfortable.

Dietvorst and Ashworth (1995) and Urry (1994) showed the cultural context in which tourism and recreation occurs has changed nowadays: central to the concept of new modernity is the idea of movement. In relation to tourism, the acceleration of mobility in our era entails a sort of 'time-space compression' that has radical effects on how people actually experience contemporary world changing, both, their forms of subjectivity and sociability and their aesthetic appreciation of nature, landscape, townscapes and other societies.

Featherstone (2007) showed that the forms of social discipline (e.g. custom, ideological codes) into which people used to socialize and entertain themselves do not function as they used to do in the past.

### **Objective of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to explore the present state of Dhaka City as urban tourists' destination. The specific objectives are:

- To identify the specific problems of Dhaka city as a urban tourists' destination;
- To assess developments of the Bangladesh urban tourism sector;
- To identify the prospects and problems facing countries tourism industry through the opinion of tourists visiting in Bangladesh.

### **Material and Methods**

Researcher used both, primary and secondary data. Here participant observations, case study, interview and survey techniques are followed to collect primary data. For the secondary sources of information the present research has largely relied on different published materials (government publications, newspapers, periodicals, research works, journals, online database etc.)

### **Sampling Procedure**

Targeted population was the tourist visiting several urban spots in Dhaka City, including foreign tourists, residents and other inbound tourists. Among them most potential elements was selected in random sampling technique. Sample size was 120.

### **Case study method**

Case study method was particularly important for the present research as it provides with some specific information within a timeframe. In the present endeavor, case study method was adopted along with other methods because the research aims relied on describing, understanding and explaining the consumption preferences of the studied people. It assisted for the in-depth findings of the study and mostly relied on individuals and comparative findings. The case study method was very important for the present study as it aided by providing some narrative forms very specifically within a limited time scale.

### **Analysis of the data**

Data was collected from both the primary and secondary sources. Collected data was mostly qualitative in nature as the study was

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to understand the present situation of the Dhaka city as urban tourists' destination. Some quantitative data was also collected to support the qualitative data as all descriptions result from some measurement activity. For the present study, quantitative data has been used with the aim to increase the effectiveness of the qualitative data by increasing reliability and comparability.

### **Analysis of Interview**

In the case of the informal interviews, the data was grouped according to the topic of the information. Cross interview analysis for each question was followed to see the similarities and difference of the data provided by the interviews. Data grouping helped to conceptualise the data. In the case of semi-structured interview, data was in the more precise form. It was grouped according to the questions and the cross analysis of data was done which helped to construct meaningful and useful information.

### **Analysis of Observation**

Analysis of observation was dependent on some points, which were relevant to the fieldwork, field and the people. The important aspects of the observation were noted down and some descriptions were also written according to its significance.

### **Analysis and construction of case studies**

The data of the case study interview was grouped according to the different cases. Then, the data were categorized and analysed to the following steps:

**Step 1:** All the data of a particular case was categorized and followed a systematic way.

**Step 2:** The relevant data for case was selected and irrelevant data was reduced.

**Step 3:** The data was organized and edited for the case study.

**Step 4:** The case was arranged and represented thematically.

### **Limitations of the study**

The study suffers from a number of limitations that were beyond the control of the researcher.

1. Lack of availability of information of Bangladesh tourism was a major problem founded to conduct the study.

2. Some of the respondents were very reluctant to give their time to respond the researcher.
3. Lack of cooperation of hotel authorities in meeting guests was another problem.
4. Tourists were always found to be in a great hurry. Those hurried tourists who gave their kind consent to give response had failed to answer all the queries properly. May be it was due to their hurriedness or may be intentional which also affected the study findings.

Due to the financial problem it was impossible to go every spot of Dhaka city to collect more exclusive information. There are a large number of tourists who did not travel all the spots, so a comparative analysis by them was not very easy.

### **Literature review**

The researcher has viewed a couple of English literatures, articles, newspapers and various national and international reports from multi-disciplines in order to get an overall insight about the present research subject. In this step, an attempt will be taken for examine and review those specific issues, which help the researcher to understand the problems and perspectives of urban tourism regarding Dhaka city of Bangladesh.

Gospodini (2001) showed the relationships between the physical form of the urban environment and leisure activities. It examines how urban space morphology - i.e. spatial patterns and formal patterns - may have an impact on tourists' attraction and preferences in the contemporary cultural context of urban tourism. It explore that urban design and the physical form of space in them determine anything in urban tourism development.

Law (2002) described urban tourism, its patterns and characteristics, the more basic structure of urban tourism and distinguishes between tourism and urban tourism.

Zafar (1996) mentioned that possessing outstanding tourism resources is not sufficient to lure the optimal number of tourists to a tourist destination. According to the author, tourism promotion plays an important role in enhancing the competitive edge of one tourist destination over another. As a result, the aggressiveness of the promotion campaigns launched by tourist destinations has added a new dimension to competitiveness and has resulted in increasing numbers of

image advertisements in travel and tourism literature and in the media which leads the tourist destinations to spend billions of dollars annually on image building and image correction promotion programs.

European Communities (2000) aims in particular to enhance economic prosperity and employment in towns and cities and to improve the urban environment. It said that quality tourism can contribute to the sustainable development of urban areas by improving business competitiveness, meeting social needs and preserving the cultural and natural environment. Although IQM is a relatively new approach, a certain number of urban tourist destinations are making real efforts in this direction. They have defined strategies with the key partners, are implementing good practice and are continually developing monitoring and evaluation tools for adjusting that approach according to its economic, social and environmental impact. The purpose of this publication is to draw lessons from the experience of these destinations and to make recommendations useful for urban tourist destinations. It also recommends that the Structural Funds support tourism development by pursuing these objectives. The Commission intends to foster the exchange of good practice in the area of tourism, with the help of all the public and industry partners concerned.

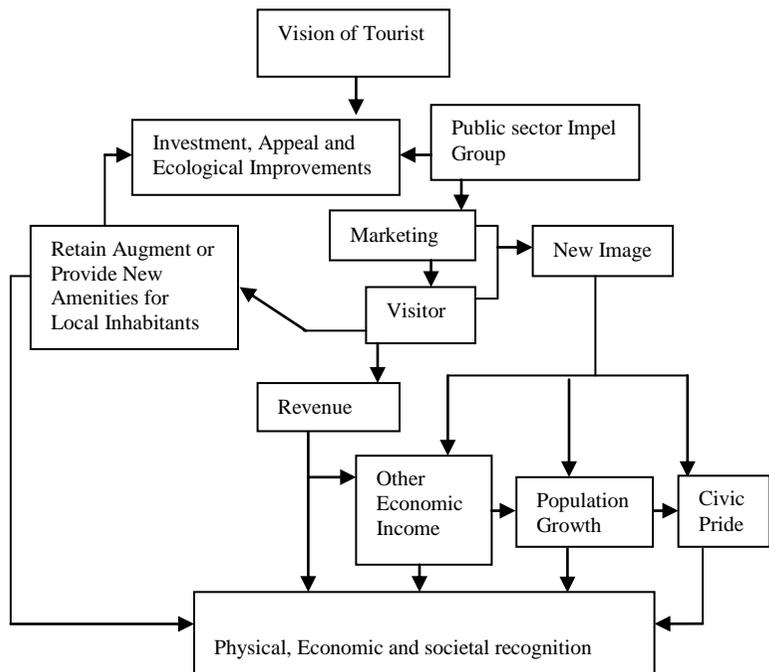
Edwards et al. (2010), find out that urban tourist seek out and spend a large proportion of their time in tourism precincts. Because tourists are constrained by time, the precincts must perform a variety of functions if tourists are to have a satisfying and fulfilling experience of the city overall.

According to Ashworth (1989), there are four extant approaches to analyzing urban tourism. They are as follows:

- i)** Facility approach- special analysis the of location of tourism attractions, facilities, infrastructure and zones - including transport routes, hotels, historic and business zones;
- ii)** Ecological approaches- these refers not to the contemporary 'green' environmental use of the term 'ecological' but the idea of studying structure of urban areas, which are seen to evolve and function in identification of functional zones or districts (e.g. CBD, historic core, markets area, industrial area), which links with the contemporary idea of tourism precincts;
- iii)** User approaches - this approach focuses on the characteristics, activities, motivations, purposes and visitors, particularly related to tourism marketing;

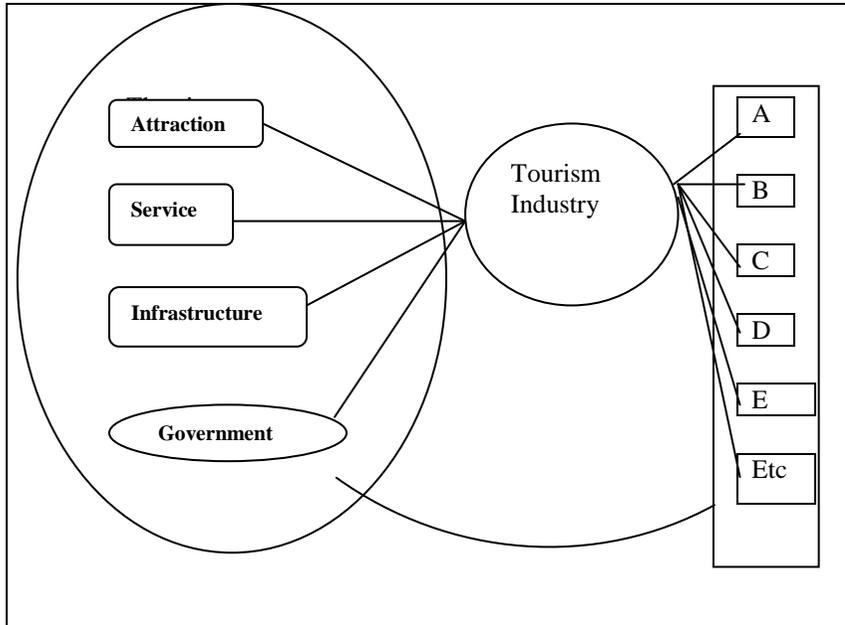
- iv) Policy approaches - this approach arises from the concerns of city governments to accommodate and/or promote tourism and focus on a range of policy issue, including infrastructure provisions and marketing.

Urban tourism strategy can be exposing as in the following figure:



**Fig. no.1:** Urban Tourism Strategy (This Model made-up by the researcher)

The industrial perspective, as shown in figure 2, sees tourism as an industry with ranges of product to sell, markets to identify and access, investments to be undertaken, managements of products distribution and profits to be made.



**Fig. no. 2:** The industrial perspective of urban tourism

## Results

### Statistic of the sample foreign tourists visited Bangladesh

Regarding the country of origin of the sampled tourist, they were grouped according to the major geographical areas. It is found that majority (58%) came from south Asia. Next important area from which tourists visit Bangladesh is Europe (24%). America stands in third position (10%) in terms of tourist generating region to Bangladesh. One important point to mention here is that 80% of the South Asian tourists are from India.

**Table no. 1:** The country of origin of foreign respondents (%)

Geographic origin	Percentage of the tourists
South Asia	58%
Europe	24%
America	10%

Others	8%
Total	100%

**Source:** Primary Data

It means that Bangladesh should focus on SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation) countries to attract more tourists, as the distance among SAARC countries is not an impediment to travel to Bangladesh by people of these countries. Moreover, the costs of travel and tourism may be well within the reach of tourists of these countries. Additionally, SAARC countries have similarities in culture, customs, norms, food habits and behavioral patterns.

**Table no. 2:** The average length of stay (actual/intended) of respondents (%)

Average length of stay (actual /intended)	Percentage of tourists
up to 3 days	12%
4 to 6 days	10%
7 days	72%
more than 7 days	6%
Total	100%

**Source:** Primary Data

In the research, the researcher founded that 72% tourists come here for more than seven days.

### **Opinion of foreign tourists**

They came in Bangladesh not to visit Dhaka but out sight of Dhaka. Most of them felt Dhaka as a city of people. None can move here smoothly. They are not satisfied. They said they have nothing to do at night. Recreational facility is not sufficient. Security, traffic gridlock,

safety, hospitality is deteriorated. Except the people of old Dhaka are still very much friendly. They are very warm and cordial.

### **Opinion of the City Resident**

City resident has a negative image on Dhaka. They are facing problem on the sector including transportation, accommodation, security and safety, night life, Theme park and other facilities.

### **Opinion of the visitors from Bangladesh**

They feel awkward while in Dhaka, they are happy with Zoo, Theme park, Medical care, historical place, city view, shops and price in general. But incase of security they are in great danger most of the time they face cheating, mugging and sexual abused.

### **Total Evaluation of Tourists' Attitude:**

Tourist attitude and their valuation are given bellow, where **1** is **highly negative** and **5** indicate a **highly positive** attitude.

Museums:	4.32
Historical attraction:	3.58
Recreation:	2.58
Theme park:	2.95
Park:	3.08
Transportation:	1.09
Accommodation:	3.16
F & B Facilities:	3.33
Nightlife:	1.09
Shops:	3.57
Hospitality:	2.85
Feeling of safety:	1.09
Quality of the medical care:	3.05
Price/quality in general:	3.27

**Over all satisfaction:** An average satisfaction is found about Dhaka. In five scales it is 2.76.

### **Case Studies**

#### **Case study: 1**

I came across a woman, by the name Yoko Yawazawa, very shaggy appearance and was in a great hurry. She has hail from a middle

class family in Japan. She came to visit Bangladesh for fifteen days. She had visited Cox's bazaar, Saint Martin, Rangamati but she did not visit any historical place. She said with a compliance that old Dhaka and outside of the places of Dhaka is not safe. And abduction, back biting has dangerous effect to the foreigners. Yoko added that, the architect of Old Dhaka and National Assembly house are amazing and fascinating. He also added that, the infrastructure of Cox's bazaar is much better than any other place. She liked that places though there were some problems. She said that, she would again visit Cox's bazaar in future and will suggest her well wisher to visit Bangladesh.

From researcher own field work it is found that most of the tourist felt unsecured while in Dhaka. Needless to say, the security system of Dhaka has collapsed. Even most of the city resident never hangs out in a tourist place alone and after evening. The statistical result researcher found that **the rating of tourist evaluation on safety in a five point scale is 1.09.**

### **Case study: 2**

Rabishanker Sinha came from Srilanka. He said that, he had visited some of the places of the country. He liked the archeological places most. Mr. Sinha complained that the history of ancient Mughal Empire is so representative in the world civilization. But Bangladesh is not taking care of it. He is fade up with the bureaucratic red tapism of Bangladesh. He had faced problem also in getting visa. He complained that it had taken more than 9 days through it was a matter of 9 minutes. Mr. Sinha said that, he did not found any representative in Colombo International Biman Desk. He then came to Bangladesh by Thai airways. Mr. Sinha argued that the major problem of Bangladesh tourism is transportation.

From my own research work I found that most of the tourist faces such type of problem in Dhaka. In Old Dhaka all historical monument and relics are in great danger. There is no one to care about it.

### **Case study: 3**

Stephen Bress, a researcher came from England. He is student of London Trinity College. He did a research about Sylheti aborigines Manipuri. He stayed more than six month. He was in the departure lounged of Zia International Airport. He just concluded by saying that

Good bye Bangladesh, I was very unhappy here; I will never be here and will recommend others not to come in Bangladesh.

He was dissatisfied because of lack of information, security, safety, transportation, night life and recreation. There is no night life in Dhaka.

#### **Case Study: 4**

Mr. Kazi Golam Mortoza is a director of a software firm. He is a good traveler. Dhaka never attracts him in field but historical heritage. He is totally dissatisfied. He said it took two to three hours to go a place not more than 3 to 6 kilometer. Traffic gridlock makes life as hell. He also recommends improving security system, accommodation and recreational facilities.

From researcher own field work, it is found that most of the tourist faces such problem. And they are not satisfied on Dhaka.

#### **Major problem of Dhaka City as tourists' destination**

Since tourism is a multi-sectored and multi-dimensional industrial and its Promotion, Marketing and development largely depend on the composite development of other sectors primarily infrastructure; the development in Bangladesh is primarily confronted in such a situation. To be specific the problems of Dhaka city as tourists' destination facing following problems:

- 1) Lack of the image as an urban tourist destination;
- 2) Lack of park, bar, theatre, night life facility;
- 3) Financial constraints in both, public and private sector for development of tourism;
- 4) Lack of marketing efforts and sales promotion;
- 5) Lack of proper infrastructure development;
- 6) Lack of product development in tourist potential areas;
- 7) Socio-economic impediments to tourist inflow;
- 8) Environmental pollution and unplanned development particularly in tourist resorts;
- 9) Lack of tourism awareness among the domestic people;
- 10) Improper health and unhygienic conditions in the city, particularly in tourist resort areas;
- 11) Lack of proper and suitable transport facilities for tourists;

- 12) Lack of proper and inadequate rules, regulation and enactment etc, for proper development, operation and management of tourist resort and establishments;
- 13) Apart from the above factors, the absence of association of the coordinated agencies, desired to be responsible for tourism development have also affected this sector to a great extent.

### **Recommendation**

This Research outlines through following points, some areas where simple development could bring huge fortune for Bangladesh, especially for Dhaka city:

1. Some exclusive zone may be developed for the tourists, where each facility likes wine, woman, dancing, gambling everything would be available only for the tourist.
2. Exclusive theme park, indore and outdoor sports facility, world class theatre hall should build.
3. For night life need Casino and Bingo, Brothel, special transportation and tour service should introduce.
4. In such spot, especially there are some tourists attractions, some beautiful huts may be constructed for the tourists by private enterprises. In those huts tourists may be lodge and served by villagers with indigenous food and custom. This could give the tourist complete indigenous flavor.
5. Well transportation system may be developed all around Dhaka where sight seeing bus which has no hood or toy trains could be made available to give a clear view of this beautiful nature.
6. Accommodation may be arranged for tourists in the houses of tribal people and there life style.
7. Programs like sight and sound may be made about different places, archaeological sites and monuments. These programs may be presented in respective places about which that program is made of a live commentary about the monument, history.
8. Personnel of Bangladesh missions abroad may be motivated to inform foreign tourists about countries attractive places and facilities.
9. Frequent river cruises in Buriganga, Turag, Shitalakkha, Kirtonkhola, Karnafully, Surma and Padma may be arranged by the BPC with all desired facilities for the tourists.

10. Tight security all around the Dhaka or in old Dhaka may be arranged where tourists could move freely without the fear of being hijacked or looted.

11. Some highly secured and restrictive red-light areas may be established for the tourists.

12. In each of the tourist zones, an extremely good communication system like internet, digital phone, fax, etc. should be made available for the tourists.

Given the premise above, it is the responsibility of both the public and private sectors to come forward in preparing the master plan and the implementation of it for urban tourism development in Bangladesh.

### **Conclusion**

Urban tourism is known to be one of the very prospective sectors of a country's economy, but like others, it is being neglected since long past that's why Dhaka is not prepared as an urban tourism city. Fortunately, it is observed that a number of steps have been taken recently by both public and private sector for accelerating the developments of the tourism sector of Bangladesh. It can therefore be said that the tourism industry offers greater scope for the development in the areas of economy, society, culture and religion. Many countries, therefore, have been priority to this sector in their development programs. In developing countries like ours, tourism can contribute in many areas of which economy is noteworthy. In a country like Bangladesh, which has abundance of manpower, tourism could have a significant impact on our economy by providing employment to employed and disguised employed of millions. Tourism can provide both direct employment in areas like hotels, motels, restaurants, railways, airports and other services directly used or consumed by tourists and indirect employment in entertainment industry. Tourism, through its backward linkage, also provides employment to millions particularly in construction, furnishing and equipment, farming, food and beverage industries. Bangladesh are endowed with most of the high points tourism attractions to offer to foreign tourists and a number of measures like 'Tourism Police' taken by the government from time to time for the development of tourism sector; there is no mention worthy growth and development taken place in this field.

Security nowadays is one of the important determinants of selecting a travel destination. Security for tourists is not cheap, but to be competitive in real terms, host countries must today allocate significant amounts of resources toward it. In an age when tourists include in the price of the trip and implicit estimate of the probability of harm, Bangladesh must include in its economics policy matrix a set of measures to be competitive from the standpoint of visitors safely.

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