

# Perceived benefits of tourists' satisfaction on a tourist destination: A conceptual study

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**Abstract:** The concept of customers' satisfaction is being adopted worldwide in each sector whether it's manufacturing or service oriented organization. Customers' satisfaction plays an important role in for improvement in market situation of that organization which also attract the attention of researchers and academicians. In tourism, tourists' satisfaction works as a driving force for loyalty and spread positive word of mouth which in return affects profit and revenue of that organization. Customers' satisfaction also provide competitive edge and helps in strengthening the image and reputation. The present research paper focuses on the perceived benefits of tourists' satisfaction. By understanding these benefits, it is expected to be helpful in understanding the tourist's behavior which also would be lead to draft a suitable marketing strategy.

**Keywords:** Tourists' satisfaction, perceived benefits, loyalty, behavioral intention, brand image.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry is one of the world's largest and most vibrant sector comprising a number of sub sectors and industries such as hotel, event management, transport etc. According to World Travel Organization (WTO, 1995), Tourism is one of the fastest and has lot of potential to provide employment. It also has large potential to boost a nation's economy. Governments all around the world has recognize the potential and benefits of tourism sectors that why they are putting intense efforts in promoting tourism services. Many countries are focusing on tourist's satisfaction for developing tourism services.

According to Corte et al. (2015), the positive tourist experience can encourage a tourist's behavioral intention and create positive image for that destination. It also help in changing the negative image about that destination. The positive impact of customers' behavior intention also helps in building strong communication and encourage him to spread good words about that particular tourist destination. Dmitrovic et al. (2009) stated that tourists' satisfaction helps in maintaining long term relationship with the tourist which results in increased revenue and profits for that destination. Customer's satisfaction is proved to be the main factor for encouraging tourist business and gives competitive edge Forozia et al. (2013).

Tourism services are seen by associating it with GDP and employment of a country. Particularly, developing countries are competing with each other to boost their tourist inflow as it also generate strong flow effect in other sectors too such as retails, crafts, transportation, construction etc. (Hui et al., 2007). From last decade, it has been noticed that decision makers or governments are trying hard to increase the level of tourist's satisfaction by providing various ancillary services such as better infrastructure, accessibility, medical facilities and hotels. Therefore, tourists' satisfaction at tourist destination has become one of important research area by both academicians and practitioner (government or travel organizations) (Xia et al., 2009). This research tries to explore the perceived benefits associated with the tourist's satisfaction.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Customers' satisfaction has become one of the major concern for all organization whether associated with manufacturing business or provide intangible services. The similar case is with tourism services which also approves customers' satisfaction as one of the key determinant for their success (Sadeh et al, 2011). The involvement and decision making of customer in determining his experience, make it challenging to satisfy customer. In service industry, consumers are the main focus for which product is designed. Therefore in promotion and advertisement of services consumers are the highlight. The competitive market has also brought many choices before the consumer which makes it more challenging (Kotler & Keller, 2009).

Chen (2008) stated that customer satisfaction is psychological evaluation that involves the feeling of the customer which results from his experience after using that product or service. Further, Vuuren et al. (2012) added that tourist satisfaction is an emotional response which is the result of evaluation or comparison between customer's expectation and perception. It is achieved through actual physical interaction or after consumption of product or services. The increased level of customer's satisfaction results in increased profits and revenue for an organization. Dmitrovic et al. (2009) also found that customer satisfaction has positive relationship with loyalty which results in repurchase intention for that product or service. Lovelock & Wright (2007) described that customer satisfaction helps in isolating his consumer from its competitors and customer repeat the purchase for the time he is satisfy with the experience. Mohamad et al. (2011) stated that customers' satisfaction has direct effect on behavioral intention such as repurchase or revisit intention and willingness to spread positive words about the product or service. Based on the above literature, we can say that customers' satisfaction influences the customer perceived value, service quality, brand image, positive publicity, strong market positioning and reputation.

## **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

According to Hart (1998) review of literature is to use ideas of existing literature to justify the existing research problem and selection of methods. The present study uses the existing literature to collect, identify, compare and analysis of the relevant studies conducted in this research area. The literature was collected from journals, books, online articles, websites and reports related to the study area. The objective of the study is to identify the perceived benefit of tourists' satisfaction on tourist destination.

## **IV. TOURISM SATISFACTION AND PERCEIVED BENEFITS**

**Destination Image:** Organization's image has become one of the major concern as it helps in differentiating its product from the competition. Likewise, tourist destination image also have direct effect on tourist behavior. According to Xia et al. (2009), the destination image is the mental representation of individual mind based on its feelings and overall perception. It was also observed that tourist pre travel expectations are formed by destination image which he formed in mind before coming to that destination. Moreover, tourist assesses all the services and facilities provided at that destination based on the image that tourist have made (Cirikovic, 2014).

### **Perceived value**

Perceived value is based on customers' experience of the product or services and make a perception about product (Zeithaml, 1988). The perceived value directly influences the customer's satisfaction. Many researchers found that customer satisfaction is achieved when the tourist or customer perceive that service quality given to them is value for money or exceed the value (Huang and Su, 2010; Song et al., 2011; Chen and Chen, 2010).

### **Tourist loyalty**

Maintaining Customer loyalty is one of the most important challenge especially for service industry (Huang and Su, 2010). Lee et al (2011) defined loyalty as the feeling of affection or attachment with a particular product, service or brand. Loyalty also helps the companies to separate their customers from the competition. It is also observed that customer loyalty and satisfaction are entwined. If an organization become successful in maintaining its loyal customers then it also help in competition, reducing marketing cost and retaining customers is much cheaper than attracting new customers.

### **Destination image**

Destination image may be defined as an individual mental representation based on his experience, knowledge, feeling and overall perceived value. It was also observed that that destination image had direct effect on tourist behavior intention

(Xia et al. (2009). It was also observed that destination image also influence expectation and perception of the tourist. So it can be said that pre travel expectation are formed by the destination image (Chin and Qu, 2008). Tourist determine their satisfaction level by comparing their perceived services with the pre travel expectations made based on destination image.

### **Competitive Advantage**

In modern world of globalization, making and sustaining the company value in the market is a challenge due to unique needs and demands of customers. Most of the organizations are working hard to create value for customer to sustain their position in the market (Vantrappen, 1992). One of the most effective solution is to increase in level of tourist satisfaction to compete in the market. Tourist satisfaction can be achieved by matching the expectation of the customers. It will not only help in surviving competition but also effect the organization's brand and product loyalty (Roig et al., 2006).

### **Increased Revenue and Profits**

Tourist satisfaction is one of the major determinant for sustaining the market position for longer time periods. It also brought increased revenue and profit for the tourist destination (Dmitrovic et al., 2009). Many researchers also studied the direct positive influence of tourist's satisfaction on the success of the business and improve revenue and profit (Forozia et al., 2013; Jani & Han, 2013). Zeithaml et al. (1996) also explain that tourist satisfaction help in tourist retention which also reduce the cost of market for attracting new tourist or guests. Reducing cost helps in increasing the profit.

### **Word to Mouth Publicity**

The positive experience experienced by a tourist on a destination, can helps in more memory retention about tourism services provided and increase positive communication among tourists about the tourist destination. It can also enhance the fidelity to the destination. Furthermore, Lee et al. (2011) observed that willingness to recommend is different for different tourists as it depend on the personal perception about the services received. The negative word of mouth also tends to be more influential that positive publicity. When a tourist is not satisfy, he tends to complained to friends, relative and others three times more than a satisfied tourist (Assael, 1995). According to Matos and Rossi (2008), tourist satisfaction is more related to positive word of mouth publicity rather than tourist dissatisfaction, while infidelity is more inclined toward negative publicity. The tourist satisfaction encourage the tourists to say positive things about the destination and recommend that destination to other tourists (Zeithaml et al. (1996).

### **Effect on Behavioral Intention**

Tourist satisfaction had direct effect on the behavioral intention of the tourists. According to Lai et al. (2009), the higher customer satisfaction will have a positive impact on customer behavior. The level of satisfaction can be increased by providing value for money. The behavior intention of a customer determine the loyalty and repurchase intention. The behavior intention also his position about the product such as positive or negative publicity, loyalty, competitive stand, reputation and repurchase or return intention.

### **Positive impact on Return Intention**

The customer loyalty has always plays an important role in bringing back the customer. In tourism context, revisit intention is used to describe his loyalty toward the destination and travel agency. The future behavior of tourist is also defined as the readiness to return or spread positive words (Canny, 2013). Behavioral intentions are largely influenced by the service quality received at the tourism destination and it can be either positive or negative. The attitude of the customer towards a product or service describe his behavior intention which also leads to revisit at the same destination.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Customer satisfaction is the primary objective of all organizations be it service or product. For the success of any organization customer satisfaction words as the key. It also creates revenue and profits (Dmitrovic et al. 2009). According to Forozia et al (2013) tourist satisfaction also encourage the tourism business which provide competitive advantage. Identifying the benefits of customers' satisfaction will help in providing direction for destination marketing. It will also help a manager in decision making and refining their services in order to enhance the level of travelers' satisfaction. The present research paper explained the various perceived benefits of customers' satisfaction such as Perceived value, Tourist loyalty, and Destination image, Competitive Advantage, Increased Revenue and Profits, Word to Mouth Publicity, Effect on Behavioral Intention etc.

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