Tourists' Perceptions toward Problems of Tourism Destinations: Evidence from Sylhet, Bangladesh

Mohammad Saiful Islam

Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to realize the perception of tourists of the selected tourist spots in Sylhet district to identify the problems of the tourism destinations. Data required for the research have been collected from primary data source taking into consideration total 573 tourists as respondents who traveled all the four selected prominent tourist spots of Sylhet. Factor analysis has been used for dimension reduction that covered 44 variables. This paper has found that selected tourism destinations have severe problems mainly in the areas of quality of food, accommodation and transportation services, conservation of natural beauty, promoting destination brand name together with ensuring security and adequate public services for tourists.

Keywords: Factor analysis, Natural beauty, Food, Accommodation, Transportation.
JEL Classification: M30, M31, M37, M38.

1. Introduction

Tourism seems leisure activity against time and money with the purpose of recreation (Ghosh, 2001). In many developing countries in the world, it emerged as major income driving industry. People move within their own country in domestic

MBA. Mohammad SAIFUL ISLAM

tourism but beyond national boundaries in international tourism with the implication on balance of payment in a country (Zulfikar, 1998). Bangladesh is an attractive tourist destination with discovered and undiscovered natural beauty and historical places such as, beaches, islands, archeological sites, religious places, forests etc. The country has already developed modern hotels, rest houses, restaurants, modern communication systems etc. in almost all the tourist sites throughout the country (Haque, 2005). Domestic tourism industry is dominated by male tourists especially young university graduates who are keen to travel in tourism destinations which scenario is not surprising in a Muslim and male dominated country as Bangladesh where women rarely travel alone (Amin, 2017).

Sylhet is one of the most important cities in Bangladesh after Dhaka and Chittagong due to its spiritual and cultural values and highest amount of tea and gas production. Sylhet is holding the third position after Cox's Bazar and Sundarbans as preferred tourist destination in Bangladesh. Most of the research papers on tourism industry of Bangladesh focused on only the problems of tourism sectors in Bangladesh as a whole or took into consideration only Cox's Bazar and Sundarbans without area specific tourism destinations specially tourist destinations of Sylhet that have high potential for the expansion of tourism industry. Therefore, it has become significant to draw out specific problems based on the perceptions of the tourists of specific tourist destinations of specific areas as Sylhet. Hence, four popular and mostly visited tourist spots of Sylhet district have been taken into consideration in this research paper namely Bichanakandi, Jaflong, Ratargul Swamp Forest and Malnechera Tea Estate to identify the problems of tourist spots of Sylhet. All the selected tourist spots seem rural tourism destinations and situated far from Sylhet City Corporation except Malnechera Tea Estate. However, Sylhet is holding prosperous natural and cultural attractions but tourism sector in this region is facing many problems in the contexts of transportation and communication system, diversification of services for differentiated tourists, accommodation, entertainment, food, washroom, fast aid etc. As the major business industries of Sylhet are in contractionary trend due to the potentiality of importing stone from abroad, declining trading business resulting from establishment of showrooms of major brands in Sylhet and migration of local people to abroad with full family threatening declining foreign remittance, it is high time to promote tourism industry of Sylhet to ensure

better economy, life and livelihood in Sylhet and contribute significantly for GDP growth.

Roy et al., (2017) conducted primary data based research on the factors that are affecting satisfaction of tourists in Sylhet. The study reveals that natural beauty, accommodation and transportation facility, security and costs are the determinants of satisfaction of tourists in Sylhet (Roy et al., 2017). However, the study failed to identify the specific tourist spot wise determinants of tourists' satisfaction in Sylhet (Roy et al., 2017). Besides, only the determinants of tourists' satisfaction in Sylhet cannot reflect the whole scenario of Bangladesh due to having significantly different types of tourist spots in different regions of Bangladesh (Roy et al., 2017). Moreover, this research paper has taken into consideration only 15 variables for factor analysis that could be extended to have more options for the respondents (Roy et al., 2017). Hasan et al. (2019) concluded that attitude of tourist to behave is significantly influenced by destination image of the tourist spot and perceived value, service quality and satisfaction of tourists in Bangladesh but the study was limited to only beach tourism. Quality services especially health and safety measures, customer focus and vibrant communication systems are the vital requirements of achieving business excellence in hotel management (Rahman et al., 2019) which is an integral part of the tourism industry in Bangladesh. The model of the study has been implemented only in few upper class hotels. However, the study can be extended through concentration to develop the business excellence in the budget hotels of specific tourism destinations in Bangladesh. Latif et al., (2017) conducted a secondary data based study on prospect and constraints of tourism industry in Bangladesh which is totally literature based lacking any empirical data analysis. The study recommended identifying and preserving new archeological sites to attract domestic and foreign tourists but did not provide any guideline to do so from evidence based statistical analysis. Moreover, the study covers the tourism industry as a whole where tourism of different regions needs to be treated differently resulting from in-depth analysis on individual tourism sites. Although tourism is a highly potential industry in Bangladesh, literatures have been rarely found that significantly added value to do research in this area for its betterment. Therefore, the **aim** of the research paper is to identify the major problems of the four selected popular tourist destinations of Sylhet namely Bichnakandi, Jaflong, Ratargul Swamp Forest and Malnicherra Tea Estate

based on the responses of the demand side (tourists) through scientific research.

The paper has been organized as follows. Firstly, there is an introduction; second section consists of literature review, followed by a rational of the study as section three; section four consists of methodology; section five includes result and analysis; the last section concludes the paper with some recommendations.

2. Literature Review

Social, economic and environmental responsibilities as well as socio-demographic characteristics are highly positively correlated with tourists' attitude towards responsible tourism management (Amin, 2017). In the context of rural tourism destinations, behavioral intentions of tourists revealed specially through revisiting the destination and recommending it to others are significantly influenced by tourists' satisfaction which is significantly influenced by perceived destination quality (Rajaratnam et al., 2015). To develop positive image towards the rural tourism destinations, service providers of these tourism destinations need to emphasize more to ensure the desired service quality to the tourists (Rajaratnam et al., 2015). Most of the attributes that influence perceptions of tourists toward the destination quality can be managed within the control of decision makers and managers except natural beauty and closeness of the tourist destination to nature and weather (Rajaratnam et al., 2015). Economic and social infrastructure, lodging and food services and tourist activities are the basic factors in tourism that play the role as input to generate the output of attractive environment to tourists (Kreck, 2007).

Tourism is viewed as means of job creation and bringing foreign currency from the economic perspective of debt burdened and dependent Third World (South) governments (D'Sa, 1999). Airlines, tour operators and hotel owners of poorer developing countries find tourism as an opportunity to make profit (D'Sa, 1999). Third World countries were dominated by the Northern investors to standardize the tourist facilities where World Bank, IMF and GATT advised the countries to modernize facilities and introduce technology emphasizing economic development after World War II (D'Sa, 1999). The Third World tourism lacks justice and ethical principle due to the private profit motive of business and political elites of global capitalism (D'Sa, 1999). The benefits of tourism are usually

discussed in terms of income, employment generation, equality between rich and poor, developing lagged behind regions and foreign earning of third world countries but the issues of trafficking of women and girls of Asia as sex workers, dancers and domestic servants from one country to another country to entertain the sex tourists of Europe and USA are rarely discussed and protested (Rao, 1999). In the developing countries, the issue of climate change is huge challenge to preserve the tourist spots where technological progress for developing new and cleaner energy resulting stabilized greenhouse gas emission can be remarkable solution to overcome the problem (Clayton, 2009). Sustainable tourism is supported by social entrepreneurship through instigating new sustainable businesses to provide more alternatives for tourists, promoting competitive pressure on existing firms, underpinning more profitable activities, facilitating social and environmental regulations implementation and fostering economic development resulting more sustainable tourism industry from the existing one (Lange et al., 2017). There are limited projects on tourism and hospitality social entrepreneurship due to lack of recognition and number of such projects (Lange et al., 2017).

As developing countries seem tourism receptor destination, tourism generally flows from the developed country to developing country (Clayton et al., 2014). Due to common language, former colonial powers play role as source of visitors of most developing countries (Clayton et al., 2014). Due to technological advancement, industrialized nations are becoming significant tourist destinations however residents of developing countries are travelling abroad frequently as a result of rising standard of living (Clayton et al., 2014). Tourism industry in the tourism dependent developing nations will go through massive transformations throughout the next decades due to the changes in environmental, social, technological and economic issues (Clayton et al., 2014). As technology is becoming part and parcel of tour plans in the industrialized countries with high technology penetration, the future of tourism as global product in developing countries will depend on proper assessment of their position in the engagement with technology to capture the market share and sustain in the industry (Clayton et al., 2014). Apart from the technological issues, the interactions between local communities and tourists and benefits of residents determine the success of any tourism destination where government and policy makers can create enabling environment through coordination among stakeholders (Clayton et al., 2014). There is increasing

need for more trained manpower with variety of skills in the tourism industry as it is growing in popularity and employment generation (Clayton et al., 2014). However, educational institutions are developing programs to prepare trained manpower who are aiming to develop career in tourism industry where job opportunities are more available due to its nature specially international affiliation of tourism enterprises but many tourism based developing countries do not have well capable educational institutions and well-coordinated training programs of tourism education, skills and knowledge specially for managerial level (Clayton et al., 2014).

Although tourism related information are tremendously prominent in web but it lacks collaboration among travel group members due to not having the capacity of formulating query, dividing search tasks and sharing search results and chatting through collaborative tourism information search as tourism website based on online information for planning travel (Arif and Du, 2019). In searching behavior of tourism information, collaborative tourism information search can perform better compared to Google Talk embedded Trip advisor through incorporating human-system and human –human interaction and providing more functionality not only for pre-trip decisions but also for decisions at destinations as online travelers' agent (Arif and Du, 2019). The positioning strategy for creating brand image in tourism comes through systematic way taking into consideration identification of consumers, pointing mental category, separating vital points of difference, developing mental associations and providing evidence (Liyanag and Jayawardena, 2013). In case of religious places, conflicts exist that can be resolved through social networks and relationships to guard or liberalize religious values of the sites and support the ways religious tourism operates (Shinde, 2015). The study of Fatima et al., (2017) suggested that tourism industries need to emphasize on easy usage and usefulness of mobile learning for the tourism students to create positive attitudes towards it. However, they worked on the behavioral aspects of tourism students towards mobile learning in tourism education considering mobile phone only in the context Dhaka city, Bangladesh (Fatima et al., 2017). Moreover, the study has taken into consideration only 176 respondents with gender imbalance (Fatima et al., 2017). Hence, further study is required for perception analysis taking into account more electronic devices, websites and more sample size with gender balance for better tourism education for tourism students.

3. Rationale of the Study

3.1 Relationship of the aim to current state of knowledge on the subject

In most of the literatures, branding complexity, only components of branding cities, challenges and prospects of tourism industry in Bangladesh have been analyzed frequently as a whole based on only few world heritage sites as Sundarbans and Cox's Bazar ignoring specific regions as potential sources of huge tourist attractions that require significant improvement. Besides, addressing the solutions of the identified problems have been found rarely. Hence, the research paper analyzes the problems of selected prominent tourist spots in Sylhet and recommends some measures to promote specifically the tourism sector of this specific region to contribute more in this industry.

3.2 Relevance of the study to national priorities

Tourism has been recognized as an industry since 1999 in Bangladesh. This country is highly dependent on RMG sector as single dominating source of foreign currency inflow where tourism can be a best alternative source eliminating the over dependence on RMG sector (Hossain and Nazmin, 2006). Tourism has positive economic impact on employment generation, poverty alleviation and industrial expansion.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research setting

The research has been conducted on four popular and mostly visited tourist destinations of Sylhet district namely Bichnakandi, Jaflong, Ratargul Swamp Forest and Malnicherra Tea Estate. Bichnakandi is a quarry spot to collect `rocks from riverbed at Bangladesh –India border where many layers of mountain meet at one point and natural rocks come down from mountains with water streams. Although it is one of the mostly visited tourist spots in Bangladesh but it is vulnerable to have high rate of earthquakes.

Jaflong is a hill station and stone based prominent tourist attraction situated between Bangladesh and India border. The beauty of the tourist destination is rapidly abolishing due to manmade hazards and mismanagement of the concerned authorities. Before 5 years, tourists could view the amazing hills of India breathing clean air during reaching to the

main tourist spot. But, nowadays it seems impossible to enjoy the natural beauty due to establishment of mismanaged stone crashers surrounding the tourist attraction. Tourists are scared to visit the place with family due to heavy noise of stone crashing machine that produces large quantity of dust floating in the air with dust exposure risk. Even, local people sometimes take stone from the main tourist spot and sell to the businessman damaging the main attraction of the tourist destination. Due to the stone crashing business and stone carrying vehicles, tourists cannot go into the main tourist spot with comfort and come back with bad experience.

Ratargul Swamp Forest is the only swamp forest in Bangladesh. This freshwater swamp forest is located by the river Goain and called Sundarban of Sylhet. Tourists mostly visit the 3,325.61 acre forest during monsoon which remains submerged under 20-30 feet water in rainy season and 10 feet deep during rest of the seasons. Malnicherra Tea Estate is the first commercial tea garden of Bangladesh established in 1854 and situated just around 2.5 kilometers away from Sylhet City Corporation. Renowned industrialist Danobir Dr. Syed Ragib Ali is playing extraordinary role to make the greenery enclosure wonderful as a tourism destination since long.

4.2 Questionnaire development and measurement items

Structured questionnaire has been developed including measurement items with 44 statements as 44 variables regarding problems of four selected tourist spots in Sylhet as a tool for data collection. In the questionnaire, the research participants have been asked to respond using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). In developing the questionnaire, few variables have been adapted from the study of Roy et al. (2017) regarding transportation and safety, natural beauty, accommodation costs, food quality, behavior of inhabitants and accommodation facility. Marketing initiative, tourism arrangement, entertainment opportunity, tourism infrastructure and special security related variables have been modified from Haque and Islam, (2015). Some attributes in the areas of core tourism experience and hygiene have been taken from Rajaratnam et al., (2015) that have significant impact on perceived destination quality. As the current research has been conducted taking into consideration 44 variables which has rarely been found in any of the previous studies in this context, a substantial number of variables have been constructed first time and refined with academic experts in the

field of tourism through excluding and better wording few items for better matching with new context (Hasan et al., 2019).

4.3 Sampling methods, data collection and normality test

Data required for the research have been collected from primary data source only. Tourists of all the selected four tourism destinations who have visited all the four selected tourist spots are the respondents of the research. As a qualitative research, initial sample size has been determined as 650 but it has been reduced to 573 with complete and valid data to conduct the study excluding rest of the samples due to incomplete or faulty data. To generate primary data, convenience sampling technique has been adopted to conduct survey. Survey has been conducted through structured questionnaire to take opinion regarding problems of selected tourism destinations in Sylhet. Before proceeding for factor analysis, all the data have been qualified in normality test as shown in table -01 (descriptive statistics) of appendix because for each of the 44 variables the skewness value is less than 3 and kurtosis value is less than 10.

4.4 Respondents' profile

The profile of the respondents has been analyzed from the following six dimensions namely gender, age level, occupation, monthly income, total number of tourist spots visited in Sylhet and how the tourists knew about majority of the selected tourist spots of Sylhet.
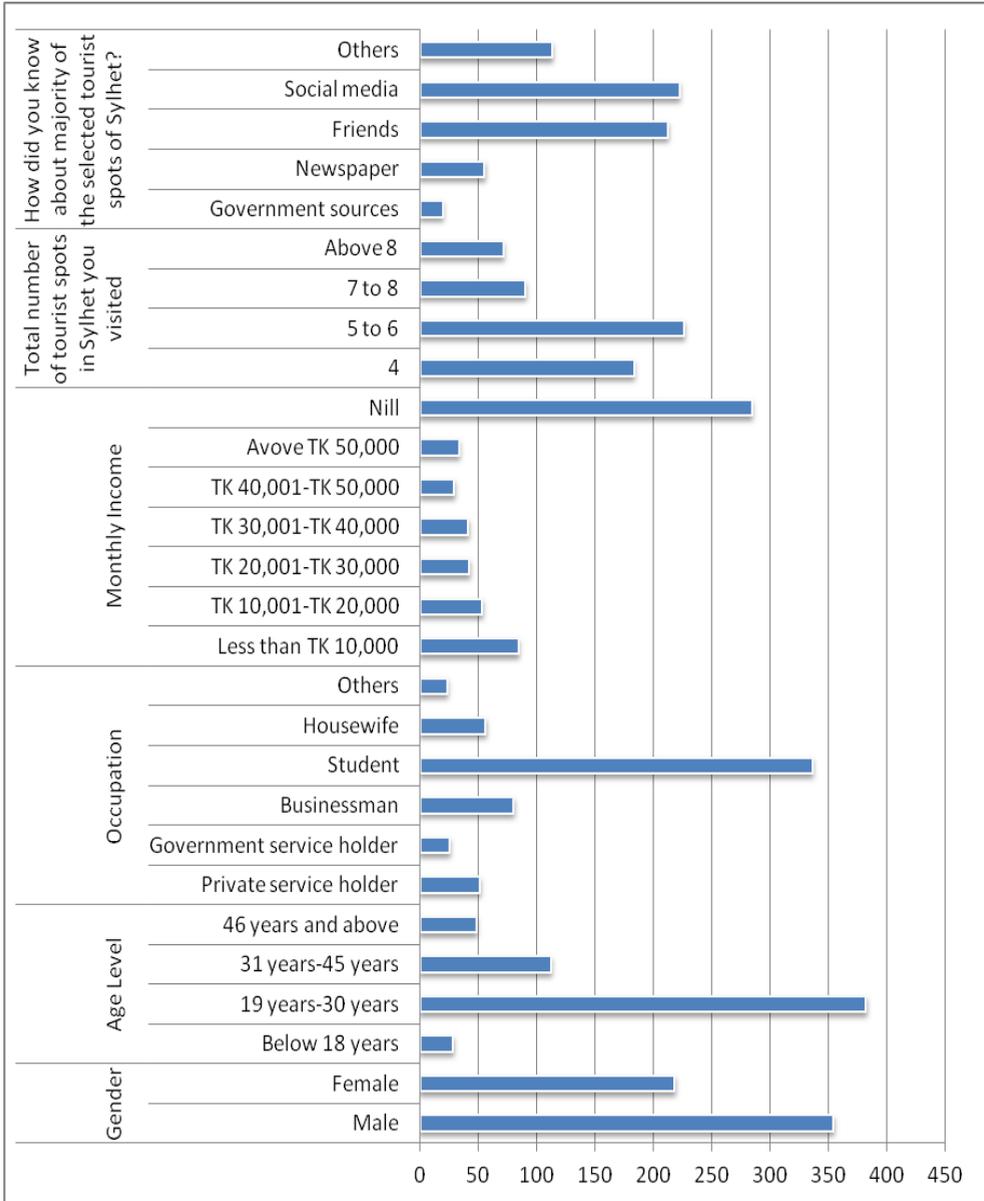
Source: Field survey by author, March-October, 2019

The majority portions of the respondents under the survey are male (62 percent) where 38 percent of the respondents are female. Women are likely to travel with husband and family (Amin, 2017) and less female tourists

visit tourist spots in Sylhet compared to male tourists (Haque and Islam, 2015). The age level of the respondents has been dominated by 19 years to 30 years (67 percent). Most of the respondents (59 percent) are students (Haque and Islam, 2015) who normally get much time to travel a lot and usually travel with their friends and family (Amin, 2017). A significant portion of the respondents does not have any income (50 percent) that is well evidenced from their occupation under the survey as most of them are student. Majority of the respondents visited 4 to 6 tourist spots (72 percent) in Sylhet. Social media (36 percent) and friends (34 percent) have played key role to make the selected tourist spots of the survey familiar to the respondents.

5. Result and Analysis

5.1 Factor Analysis

The factor analysis uses the principal component method to extract the factors with varimax rotation technique. A particular variable has been selected to include as a factor on the basis of high correlation value (factor loading) (Kothari, 2004). The constructs of problems of selected tourist spots in Sylhet have been accepted with factor loading more than or equal to 0.40 (appendix: table-02). KMO value of sampling adequacy measurement is 0.883 (appendix: table-02) (Gujrati, D. N., 2012) which is greater than 0.60 allowing collected data to proceed with factor analysis. The shape of the scree plot (appendix: graph -1) seems normal. The results show that all the accepted factors have eigenvalues greater than 1 with cumulative percentage of variation ranging from 26.272% to 70.339% (appendix: table 02). The study determined 10 main factors with 44 items as the problems of selected tourist spots in Sylhet. For the problems of specific tourist spots, the tourist spots are mentioned in the bracket. Other problems are common for all the selected tourism destinations under the study. The identified factors from the factor analysis are as follows:

Factor-01: Lack of well- maintained change rooms (Bichanakandi and Jaflong), low quality foods and beverages in nearest local restaurants, difficulty in communication with municipality officials, local police etc. (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), lack of first- aid services for immediate health care services, lack of well-maintained washroom/toilet for tourists, low quality of accommodation services in nearest local hotels or resorts or rest houses (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and

Ratargul Swamp Forest), threatening public health and environment due to dust and noise from stone crushing machine and chemical dumps in the water (Bichanakandi and Jaflong), lack of proper training to tourism related human resources of concerned authorities to take care of tourists, inadequate number of instructors to aware tourists for taking security measures to protect own-selves from any danger after entering into tourist spots, roads to tourism destinations are full of potholes and uneven pavements resulting tourists' journey uncomfortable (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), lack of bank branches and ATM booths to do immediate financial transactions, lack of support from youth clubs (scouts) and volunteers, high price charged by each boatmen while hiring boats (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), personal safety and security is threatened due to lack of security measures such as lack of water rescue (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), destroying natural beauty due to illegal excavation and processing establishments of stone (Bichanakandi and Jaflong).

Factor-02: High cost of accommodation in nearest hotels or resorts or rest houses (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), high price of foods and beverages in nearest local restaurants (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), Lack of shops of essential products and medicines, extreme sound pollution produced by engine boats to perish animals to disappear from the natural beauty and destroy biodiversity (Ratargul Swamp Forest), bad condition of surrounding walking roads of the tourism destinations (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), distraction of biodiversity and scenic beauty due to river encroachment and cutting trees (Ratargul Swamp Forest).

Factor-03: No extra care for elderly people as senior tourists, lack of hospital and health care facilities near the tourist spots (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), lack of modern and sufficient recreation facility such as, boating, horse racing etc., lots of smock from the trucks collecting rocks from the sights producing heavy air pollution (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest).

Factor-04: Lack of relaxing environment for tourists due to security concerns, disturbing behavior and lack of cordiality from local people, overly crowded and chaotic due to mismanagement of tourists by concerned authority (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest).

Factor-05: Lack of international reputation to attract foreign tourists, less feelings of tourists to quality of selected tourist spots, low degree of

exploration and natural wonders to attract tourists, low degree of history and heritage (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest).

Factor- 06: Threatening life of tourists from insects and poisonous snakes in the water or in the tree during rainy season (Ratargul Swamp Forest), selected tourist spots are far from major cities which is time consuming (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), Acute shortage of tourist police personnel in the tourist spots to protect tourists from harassment.

Factor- 07: Wildlife and birds flee due to noise from excessive pressure of tourists disturbing calm and quiet environment (Ratargul Swamp Forest), Inadequate parking places at tourism destinations.

Factor-08: Destroying natural beauty as most of the species have already disappeared due to food crisis (no fruit bearing tree) and loss of their habitats (Ratargul Swamp Forest), water pollution due to dropping polyethylene, bottles, chips, biscuits etc. in water (Ratargul Swamp Forest).

Factor-09: Absence of check posts to ensure security.

Factor-10: High cost of rented transportation to reach at tourism destinations (Bichanakandi, Jaflongand and Ratargul Swamp Forest), lack of reputation in home country to attract new tourists.

The respective magnitudes of factor loadings depict the significance of a particular element in a factor and these elements are arranged in order of their magnitudes respectively. The problems of the selected tourist spots consist of several factors. Factor-01 are mainly related to *inadequacy of well - maintained change rooms (Bichanakandi and Jaflong), washroom/toilet, quality foods, immediate healthcare services, quality hotel accommodation (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), trained human resources, volunteers, scouts, banking services (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), precautionary information providers along with difficulty in communication with public service officials, uncomfortable journey to reach at tourism destinations (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest) and threatening public health and environment resulting from dust, noise and chemical dumps (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest).*

The problems of factor-02 are related to *costly food and accommodation (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest), lack of shops of essential products as medicine, worst condition of surrounding roads of the tourist spots (Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest) together with destroying natural beauty and biodiversity resulting from sound pollution, river encroachment and cutting trees (Ratargul Swamp Forest).* Factor–03 consists of

disturbance from local people; huge crowed of mismanaged tourists and lack of relaxing environment for tourists. Factor-04 is related to *discomfort of tourists resulting from lack of cooperation from local people together with chaos due to mismanagement of tourists*. Factor -05 is related to *lack of destination brand image and innovative natural wonders to attract more tourists.*

Factor- 06 consists of *threatening tourists' life due to poisonous insects and snakes (Ratargul Swamp Forest) alone with lack of tourist police*. Factor-07 is associated with *disturbance of wildlife from chaos of tourists (Ratargul Swamp Forest) and concern of tourists from lack of parking places of their vehicles*. Problems of factor- 08 are related to *manmade intentional water pollution and lack of beautification of tourist spots and threatening security of tourists at evening together with food crisis of wildlife (Ratargul Swamp Forest)*. Factor- 9 consists of *security concern of tourists resulting from absence of check posts*. Factor- 10 covers the problems related to *costly rented transportation to reach at the tourism destinations together with reputational risk to attract new tourists.*

6. Conclusions and recommendations

A number of significant problems have been identified in the four selected tourist spots of Sylhet through the research paper especially in the areas of tourism infrastructure, availability of qualified human resources, sustainable environment and information and communication technology which are needed to be taken into consideration urgently to improve the tourism destinations under the study.

- Utmost care is needed from the concerned government administrations especially in the areas of public security, health care, quality accommodation, environment conservation in an organized way with optimal importance as tourism is a highly potential growing industry alone with public awareness to take care of and promote the nature beauty of the tourist spots. Even, widely used transportation and communication system between Sylhet and other tourist based districts have to have at least minimum standard for tourists so that foreign tourists are attracted besides local tourists. Universities have to come forward to develop skilled manpower and entrepreneurs in tourism sector through introducing Tourism and Hospitality Management department and involving the students of tourism as volunteer through internship programs with the support of tourist police. A "Think Tank" can be established as Centre for

Policy Dialogue (CPD) with the professional bodies in the area of tourism sector that will act as professional institute to set operational standard, formulate policy and develop strategic issues that will have significant impact on the development of regional and national tourist destinations (Jayawardena, 2013).

- Protecting the natural beauty through punishment to the people who are destroying the environment for personal interests, fixation of reasonable price for foods and accommodation, ensuring supply of essential products under government regulations and supervision are urgent needs. Separate tourist lane can be introduced with better road for cycling as well so that the local tourists and foreign tourists can reach at distant tourist spots with comfort. Introducing sophisticated stone crashing machine is urgent need to get rid of environmental pollution from dust at the selected distant tourist spots. Architects, heritage conservationists and spatial planners have to be allowed and welcomed to develop innovative ways to get optimum economic value from the tourist destinations (Jayawardena, 2013).

- Local people are needed to be well informed about the benefits they will get if they take care of the tourists. Besides, overcrowded scenario should be properly managed by the concerned government authority to ensure relaxing environment for the tourists.

- Local people can be persuaded to take care of the tourists for better life and livelihood of local habitants resulting from development in the area of employment creation. Tourists should not be exploited through tourist trade where traders place the visitors merely at hotel rooms at scenic spots and charge high mark-up rather they should get dream experience that has high value in tourism development (Jayawardena, 2013).

- Promoting the tourist spots especially with television media, social networking sites users and word of mouth together with exploring new wonders surrounding the selected tourist spots for better branding are needed urgently. Special emphasize has to be given to set tourism marketing strategy and plan based on marketing mix (product, place, price promotion) aligning with the existing campaigns involving concerned ministry of the tourism industry and targeting broad public at grass- roots level (Uzama, 2009). Online based travel agencies need to have their own valid website rather

than only using social networking websites for reliability and better services to tourists.

- Introducing tourist guide and educating tourists about the possible threats just before entering the tourist spots are urgent needs together with support from adequate tourist police. Centralized information providers for tourists with e-tourism mechanism are highly recommended.
- Putting restriction to enter into some remote areas and giving proper instruction on how to interact with wildlife before entering into tourist spots are urgent needs.
- Strict rules and regulations against manmade pollution of tourist spots and planting adequate fruit trees for wildlife alone with proper lighting at tourist spots at evening are highly recommended from the study.
- Checking all the tourists during entering into tourist spots is urgent need for secured and disciplined tourism experience.
- Eliminating syndication of rent a car services for tourists and ensuring comfort for existing tourists for better word of mouth under the support of concerned government administration are highly required. App based customized rent a car services under the surveillance of government can be introduced.

Acknowledgements

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Low degree of history and heritage	573	2.63	1.159	.075	.102	-1.158	.204
Less feelings to quality of selected tourist spots	573	2.73	.958	.092	.102	-.770	.204
Lack of international reputation to attract foreign tourists	573	3.35	1.367	-.331	.102	-1.229	.204
Lack of reputation in home country to attract native tourists	573	3.02	1.347	.119	.102	-1.287	.204
Low degree of exploration and natural wonders to attract tourists	573	3.13	1.218	-.305	.102	-.859	.204
Lack of relaxing environment for tourists	573	3.45	1.287	-.280	.102	-1.260	.204

Extreme sound pollution produced by engine boats to perish animals to disappear the natural beauty and destroy biodiversity (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.24	1.392	-.215	.102	-1.338	.204
Destroying natural beauty due to illegal excavation and processing establishments of stone (Applicable for only Bichanakandi and Jaflong).	572	3.82	1.208	-.928	.102	-.095	.204
Wildlife and birds flee due to noise from excessive pressure of tourists disturbing calm and quiet environment (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.47	1.306	-.541	.102	-.898	.204

Lots of smock and dust from the trucks collecting rocks from the sight producing heavy air pollution (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	572	3.94	1.124	-1.062	.102	.531	.204
Destroying natural beauty as most of the species have already disappeared due to food crisis (no fruit bearing tree) and loss of their habitats (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.78	1.027	-.606	.102	-.248	.204

Threatening public health and environment due to dust from stone crushing machine, noise and chemical dumps in the river (Applicable for only Bichanakandi and Jaflong)	573	3.15	1.386	-.255	.102	-1.181	.204
Distraction of biodiversity and scenic beauty due to river encroachment and cutting trees (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.49	1.120	-.658	.102	-.150	.204
Water pollution due to dropping polyethylene, bottle, chips, biscuits etc in water (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	4.22	.934	-1.088	.102	.659	.204

Low quality of accommodation services in nearest local hotels or resorts or rest houses (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.32	1.387	-.400	.102	-1.151	.204
High cost of accommodation in nearest local hotels or resorts or rest houses (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.41	1.301	-.284	.102	-1.132	.204
Selected tourist spots are far from major cities which is time consuming due to bad condition of road (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.80	1.145	-.879	.102	-.021	.204

Inadequate and poor quality public transport to reach at the selected tourist spots (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.48	1.231	-.390	.102	-.925	.204
High cost of public transportation (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.48	1.296	-.569	.102	-.720	.204
Low quality foods and beverages in nearest local restaurants (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.35	1.420	-.543	.102	-1.086	.204

High price of foods and beverages in nearest local restaurants (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.58	1.013	-.313	.102	-.536	.204
Lack of modern and sufficient recreation facility such as, boating, horse racing etc.	573	3.61	1.136	-.608	.102	-.494	.204
Road is full of potholes and uneven pavements resulting tourists' journey discomfort	573	3.53	1.248	-.614	.102	-.759	.204
High price charged by each boatmen while hiring boats (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.66	1.442	-.838	.102	-.675	.204

Overly crowded and chaotic due to mismanagement of tourists from authority (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.29	1.115	-.054	.102	-1.118	.204
Personal safety and security is threatened due to lack of security measures such as lack of water rescue (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.68	.988	-.455	.102	-.228	.204
Inadequate information to take security measures to protect own self from any danger prior to entering into tourist spots	573	3.14	1.395	-.269	.102	-1.213	.204
Disturbing behavior and lack of cordiality from local people	573	3.09	1.226	-.222	.102	-.912	.204
Not well lighted at night	573	3.70	1.088	-.507	.102	-.471	.204

No extra care for elderly people as senior tourist	573	3.79	1.102	-.968	.102	.509	.204
Difficulty in communication with municipality officials, local police etc.	573	3.12	1.292	-.261	.102	-1.049	.204
Lack of bank branches and ATMs to do immediate financial transactions	573	3.62	1.288	-.594	.102	-.855	.204
Lack of shops of essential products and medicines	573	3.60	1.338	-.750	.102	-.571	.204
Lack of hospital and health care facilities near the tourist spots (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.81	1.289	-1.121	.102	.163	.204
Bad condition of nearest walking roads (Applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.34	1.438	-.487	.102	-1.173	.204

Lack of well-maintained washroom/toilet for tourists	573	3.64	1.193	-.652	.102	-.629	.204
Lack of well-maintained change rooms (Applicable for only Bichanakandi and Jaflong)	573	3.48	1.332	-.513	.102	-1.011	.204
Lack of support from youth clubs (scouts)	573	3.33	1.130	-.321	.102	-.581	.204
Acute shortage of tourist police personnel in the tourist spots to protect tourist from harassment	573	3.22	1.349	-.301	.102	-1.149	.204
Absence of check posts	573	3.57	1.153	-.319	.102	-.987	.204
Inadequate parking places	573	3.18	1.135	-.210	.102	-.841	.204
Lack of proper training to tourism related human resources of concerned authorities to take care of tourists	573	3.56	1.213	-.548	.102	-.639	.204

Insects and poisonous snakes in the water or in the tree during rainy season (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)	573	3.60	1.257	-.732	.102	-.477	.204
Lack of first-aid services for immediate health care services	573	3.89	1.272	-.988	.102	-.139	.204
Valid N (listwise)	571						

Source: Field survey by author, March-October, 2019

Table 2: Rotated Component Matrix[a]

| | Component | | | | | | | | | |
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Lack of well-maintained change rooms (applicable for only Bichanakandi and Jaflong)	**.823**									
Low quality foods and beverages in nearest local restaurants (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	**.729**									
Difficulty in communication with municipality officials, local police etc.	**.709**									
Lack of first- aid services for immediate health care services	**.650**									
Lack of well-maintained washroom/toilet for tourists	**.641**									

Low quality of accommodation services in nearest local hotels or resorts or rest houses (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	**.628**									
Threatening public health and environment due to dust from stone crushing machine and noise and chemical dumps in the water (applicable for only Bichanakandi and Jaflong)	**.620**									
Lack of proper training to tourism related human resources of concerned authorities to take care of tourists	**.549**									

Inadequate information provider to aware tourists for taking security measures to protect own self from any danger after entering into tourist spots	**.543**										
Road to tourism destinations is full of potholes and uneven pavements resulting tourists' journey discomfort	**.532**										
Lack of bank branches and ATMs to do immediate financial transactions	**.526**										
Lack of support from youth clubs (scouts)	**.519**										
High price charged by each boatmen while hiring boats (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	**.473**										

Personal safety and security is threatened due to lack of security measures such as lack of water rescue (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	**.428**										
Destroying natural beauty due to illegal excavation and processing establishments of stone (applicable for only Bichanakandi and Jaflong).	**.401**										
High cost of accommodation in nearest local hotels or resorts or rest houses (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)		**.753**									

High price of foods and beverages in nearest local restaurants (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	**.712**								
Lack of shops of essential products and medicines	**.709**								
Extreme sound pollution produced by engine boats to perish animals to disappear from the natural beauty and destroy biodiversity (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)	**.624**								
Bad condition of surrounding walking roads of the tourism destinations (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	**.537**								

Distraction of biodiversity and scenic beauty due to river encroachment and cutting trees (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)	.524								
No extra care for elderly people as senior tourists		.749							
Lack of hospital and health care facilities near the tourist spots (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)		.717							
Lack of modern and sufficient recreation facility such as, boating, horse racing etc.		.574							
Lots of smock from the trucks collecting rocks from the sight producing heavy air pollution (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)		.540							

Lack of relaxing environment for tourists due to security concern				.714					
Disturbing behavior and lack of cordiality from local people				.643					
Overly crowded and chaotic due to mismanagement of tourists from concerned authority (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)				.438					
Lack of international reputation to attract foreign tourists					.786				
Less feelings of tourists to quality of selected tourist spots					.785				
Low degree of exploration and natural wonders to attract tourists					.615				
Low degree of history and heritage					.505				

Insects and poisonous snakes in the water or in the tree during rainy season (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)						.686				
Inadequate and poor quality public transport to reach at the selected tourist spots (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)	.356									
Selected tourist spots are far from major cities which is time consuming (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)						.599				
Acute shortage of tourist police personnel in the tourist spots to protect tourists from harassment						.426				

Wildlife and birds flee due to noise from excessive pressure of tourists disturbing calm and quiet environment (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)							.811			
Inadequate parking places at tourism destinations							.583			
Not well lighted at evening for beautification and security								.663		
Destroying natural beauty as most of the species have already disappeared due to food crisis (no fruit bearing tree) and loss of their habitats (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)								.630		
Water pollution due to dropping polyethylene, bottles, chips, biscuits etc in water (applicable for only Ratargul Swamp Forest)								.486		
Absence of check posts to ensure security									.796	

High cost of rented transportation to reach at tourism destinations (applicable for only Bichanakandi, Jaflong and Ratargul Swamp Forest)										.821
Lack of reputation to attract new tourists										.511
Eigenvalue	11.559	3.565	3.312	2.926	2.400	1.926	1.654	1.351	1.214	1.041
Percent of variation	26.272	8.103	7.527	6.651	5.453	4.377	3.760	3.070	2.760	2.366
Cumulative percent of variation	26.272	34.374	41.901	48.552	54.006	58.383	62.143	65.213	67.973	70.339

KMO=0.883& only factor loadings ≥0.40 has been shown in the table

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 18 iterations.

Source: Field survey by author, March-October, 2019

Graph 1: Scree Plot