Critical Appraisal of Aspect of Attractions for Tourist Destination Competitiveness of India and Singapore

Archana Bhatia Nee Malhotra

Abstract—Tourism today is a leisure activity of the masses. People today travel to international destinations to break the regular monotony of life. They are mainly attracted by either the scenic beauty of its nature or by fascinating leisure, sports and adventure activities offered by the destination. But what the tourists actually want? Are they really influenced more by the natural attractions or by the man made ones? The paper makes an attempt to explore the answer to this question. The foreign tourists’ perception of Indian tourism’s attractions are compared with Singapore tourism attractions on various variables which are based on different articles of destination competitiveness, the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report (TTCR) issued by World Economic Forum and also from various published media. Primary data through questionnaires containing 5 point Likert scale and secondary data from web resources and books are used in the paper. The findings show that today’s tourists prefer more of the man made attractions as compared to the natural ones. Therefore, though India already has a vast natural heritage, if it cultivates more of the man made attractions then the Indian tourism industry can really get an upward push and enhance its ranking globally.

Keywords—Travel and tourism natural and manmade attractions, tourist and perception.

I. INTRODUCTION

From the very inception of life, travel has fascinated man. Travel and tourism have been important social activities of human beings from time immemorial. The urge to explore new places within one’s own country or outside and seek a change of environment has been experienced from ancient times. Tourism as we know it today is distinctly a twentieth century phenomena. Historians suggest that the advent of mass tourism began in England during the industrial revolution with the rise of the middle class and relatively inexpensive transportation. The creation of the commercial airline industry following World War II and the subsequent development of the jet aircraft in the 1950s signaled the rapid growth and expansion of international travel. The growth led to the development of a major new industry: Tourism. In turn, international tourism became the concern of a number of world governments because it not only provided new employment opportunities, but it also produced a means of earning foreign exchange.

Tourism is one of the world’s most rapidly growing industries. Much of its growth is due to higher disposable incomes, increased leisure time and falling costs of travel. As airports become more enjoyable places to pass through, as travel agency services become increasingly automated, and as tourists find it easier to get information on places they want to visit, tourism grows. The internet has fuelled the growth of the travel industry by providing online booking facilities. It has also provided people with the power to explore destinations and cultures from their home with personal computers and explore choices before finalizing travel plans. With its immense information resources, the internet allows tourists to scrutinize hotels, check weather forecasts read up on local food and even talk to other tourists around the world about their travel experiences for a chosen destination. Thus to attract a foreign tourist every international destination must have something special in it to portray to the world.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Attractions are important to the tourism industry because they are the stimulating force for tourism. Visitor attractions can be classified into two categories, first Natural attractions which include everything from beaches to mountains and the second Man made attractions, which include everything from Disneyland to the world's biggest ball of yarn. Natural resources and man made attractions in the form of tourism infrastructure are important priority factors (pillars) as per the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) [1] issued by World Economic Forum. The attractions’ attribute of India are compared with that of Singapore as it is the most visited destination in the Asia Pacific region (as per the TTCI Index 2011) [2]. The irony of the situation here is that as per the TTCI Index 2011 on the pillar of natural resources India is placed on the 08th position whereas Singapore is placed on the 96th position out of the 139 economies assessed whereas on the pillar of tourism infrastructure India is placed on 89th position and Singapore is placed on the 33rd position. As per the overall rankings, India is placed on the 68th position and Singapore is on the 10th position. Therefore it entails a research area as to which factor attracts the foreign tourist more: Natural attractions or Man made attractions. Thus the present research work has been conducted keeping in view the following objectives:

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III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To examine the perception of foreign tourists regarding the attractions’ attribute of Indian tourism industry.
2. To examine the perception of foreign tourists regarding the attractions’ attribute of Singapore tourism industry.
3. To carry out a comparative analysis of perception of foreign tourists regarding the attractions of Indian and Singapore tourism industry.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Academic literature on the tourism industry in India has spanned across several disciplines from the regional as well as the national perspective. As the largest country in terms of size and population in the South Asian region, India has a large influence on the regional tourism industry. India featured prominently in the work of various scholars “Reorienting HRD strategies for tourists’ satisfaction”- a study by Nageshwar Rao and R.P. Das (2002)[3] sought to highlight how the Indian Tourism Industry can reorient its HRD strategies in order to satisfy and delight its customers to survive in the global competition. With a better qualified younger workforce occupying the positions in the future and with tremendous opportunities opening for them elsewhere, the key task before the policy makers in organizations is to keep the tourist contact employees satisfied.

Joaquin Alegra Marin and JaumeGaràNTaberner’s study “satisfaction and dissatisfaction with destination attributes, influence on overall satisfaction and the intention to return” [4] point to the need to reconsider the usual structure of tourist satisfaction surveys. The results of this study illustrate that tourists evaluate the attributes of a destination differently depending on whether the survey elicits an opinion relating to a dimension of dissatisfaction.

“International Tourist satisfaction and destination Loyalty : Bangkok, Thailand”[2010][5]- a study conducted by SiripornMcDowall tried to compare the demographic characteristics between first time and repeat international tourists in Bangkok and found that overall, international tourists were satisfied with their visit to Bangkok. First time tourists were more satisfied with the visit repeaters as their mean score was higher but there is no statistical difference between these two groups.”Travelers’ Perception of Malaysia as their next holiday destination”[6] a study by Anon Abdul basah Kamil (2010) sought to have information and data on knowledge and perceptions of potential tourists about Malaysia to formulate appropriate and effective marketing and promotional strategies. This study found that knowledge is the most significant factor in determining tourists decision to visit Malaysia except for African, West Asian and South/Central American tourists. “Tourist satisfaction with Mauritius as a holiday destination”(2008)[7] a research work by Perunjodi Ladsawut used the expectancy – disconfirmation model to study the tourist satisfaction across 18 destination attributes as well as overall satisfaction with the destination. Tourists satisfaction with individual destination attributes revealed that 13 attributes were positively disconfirmed whereas 5 attributes were negatively disconfirmed. “Tourist satisfaction in Singapore- a perspective from Indonesian tourists”[8] a study by Theresia A. Pawitra and Kay C. Tan (2001); analyzed the Indonesian tourists’ satisfaction scores about Singapore and showed that from the ‘Indonesian tourists’ point of view, Singapore Tourism Board was successful in promoting and maintaining the performance of the local tourism industry. “Factors influencing choice of tourist destinations: A study of North India” (2009) [9] is a research paper by Neeraj Kaushik, Jyoti Kaushik, Priyanka Sharma and Savita Rani. This paper attempted to determine the factors responsible for determining the attractiveness of a tourist destination in North India and found that there are seven factors which are considered important by the tourists while selecting their destinations. These factors are- communication, objectivity, basic facilities, attraction, support services, distinctive local features and psychological and physical environment. David Foster’s paper “The customer’s perception of Tourism Accreditation”[10] sought to know the level of awareness among consumer of the tourism accreditation system in Australia and found that a lot of work needs to be done before we can be confident that consumers are aware of the existence of the tourism accreditation system. It has also demonstrated that even when tourists are aware of accreditation, there is confusion about what it actually means. “Foreign Visitor’s evaluation on tourism environment”(2010)[11]- a study by Takeshi Kurihara, and Naohisa Okamoto sought to understand the relative importance of the items that define the tourism environment and how foreign visitors evaluate Japan’s tourism environment. It discussed the tourism environment evaluation from the viewpoint of the qualitative approach given by the foreign visitor’s evaluation & the quantitative approach which is calculated by the principal component analysis based on the objective data.

V. HYPOTHESES FORMULATION

In order to accomplish the above mentioned objectives following null hypotheses have been formulated:

1. Ho1: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding attraction attribute of tourism sector of India and Singapore.
2. Ho2: There is no significant difference in the perception of male & female foreign tourists regarding the attractions of Indian tourism sector.
3. Ho3: There is no significant difference in the perception of male & female foreign tourists regarding the attractions of Singapore tourism sector.
4. Ho4: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding the attractions of Indian tourism sector.
5. Ho5: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding the attractions of Singapore tourism sector.
VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive and exploratory. Both primary and secondary sources of data are used in this research study. Secondary data has been collected from various books, articles, print media and internet. Primary data have been collected through questionnaire designed to get first hand information from foreign tourists who have visited both India and Singapore. The foreign tourists were approached at various popular tourist spots of Delhi like Qutub Minar, Dilli Haat, Red Fort and Iskcon Temple and of Singapore like Sentosa, Marina Bay, Jurong bird park and Night Safari. Moreover some of the respondents were also contacted at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi and Changi Airport, Singapore. In total 500 questionnaires were got filled up from respondents selected by random judgement sampling out of which 250 were from India and 250 were from Singapore. The respondents were asked to rate the different variables of the attribute of attractions on a scale of 1-5 (1 =extremely poor and 5=excellent). The attractions are classified into natural attractions and man made attractions. The attribute of natural attractions includes -Natural resources, climate & weather conditions, festivals, historical monuments, international art exhibitions and multi cultural heritage. The attribute of man made attractions include games &activities, nightlife, shopper’s paradise and tourism infrastructure.

VII. SAMPLE DESIGN

In our sample of 500 respondents 286 (57.20%) are males and 214(42.8%) are females. Out of the total respondents, 66 (13.2%) respondents belong to the age category of less than 25 years, 303(62.6%) belong to the age category of 25 to 40 years and the remaining 121(24.2%) respondents belong to the age category of above 40 years.

VIII. TOOLS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Before analyzing the data, its reliability has been checked by calculating Chron Bach Alpha that comes out to be 0.759. It shows that the data collected is reliable. After confirming the reliability of data collected, the data have been analyzed using independent sample t-test and one way ANOVA on SPSS version 18.

IX. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The data collected has been analyzed to test the various hypotheses as already stated. To test the first null hypothesis, following two affiliated null hypotheses have been framed:

Ho1n: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding the natural attractions of India and Singapore.

Ho1m: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding the man made attractions of India and Singapore.

To check the null hypothesis Ho1n the data has been analyzed using independent sample t-test the results of which show that for all the variables of the attribute of natural attractions except for the variable of international art and exhibitions the p value of t statistics are less than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H01n is rejected. It means that there is significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding these variables of India and Singapore. For the variable of international art exhibitions the p value of t statistics is greater than 5 percent level of significance. Hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H01n is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding this variable of India and Singapore. The mean scores for different variables show that the position of India is better regarding all the variables of the attribute of natural attractions.

The null hypothesis H01m was tested using the independent sample t-test which shows that for all the variables of the attributes of man made attractions the p value of t statistics are less than 5 percent level of significance. Hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H01m is rejected. It means that there is significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding these variables of India and Singapore. The mean scores for different variables show that the position of Singapore is better than that of India regarding all the variables of the attribute of man made attractions.

After analyzing the foreign tourists’ perception of natural and man made attractions individually, now we proceed to analyze the overall comparison of attractions of India and Singapore by checking the null hypothesis Ho1 using independent sample t-test the results of which are shown as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>T Statistic (P Value)</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall comparison of attractions</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>5.0 (0.000)</td>
<td>Significant Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that for overall comparison of attractions the p value of t statistics is less than 5 percent level of significance. Hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H01 is rejected which means that there is a significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding overall comparison of attractions of India and Singapore. Moreover mean scores indicate that Singapore is better than India on the basis of overall comparison of attractions.

After testing the first null hypothesis, now we proceed to test the second null hypothesis.

To test the second null hypothesis, following two affiliated null hypotheses have been framed:

Ho2n: There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female foreign tourists regarding the natural attractions of Indian tourism sector.

Ho2m: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding the man made attractions of Indian tourism sector.

To check the null hypothesis Ho2n the data has been
analyzed using independent sample t-test the results of which a show that in case of India for all the variables of the attribute of natural attractions the p value of t statistics are greater than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H02n is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of both male and female foreign tourists regarding all the natural attractions of India.

The null hypothesis H02m was tested using the independent sample t-test which shows that in case of India for all the variables of the attribute of man made attractions the p value of t statistics are greater than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H02m is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of both male and female foreign tourists regarding all the variables of man made attractions attribute of India.

After analyzing the perception of male and female foreign tourists of natural and man made attractions of Indian tourism sector individually, now we proceed to analyze the overall comparison of attractions of India on the gender basis by checking the null hypothesis H02 using independent sample t-test the results of which are shown as under:

### Table II
**Overall Comparison of Attractions of Indian Tourism on Gender Basis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean Score (S.D)</th>
<th>T Statistic (P Value)</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall comparison of attractions</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>731 (8.18)</td>
<td>2.41 (0.001)</td>
<td>Insignificant difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>742 (6.20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that in case of India for overall comparison of attractions the p value of t statistics is greater than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H02 is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of both male and female foreign tourists regarding the overall comparison of attractions of India.

After testing the second null hypothesis, now we proceed to test the third null hypothesis.

To test the third null hypothesis, following two affiliated null hypotheses have been framed:

H03n: There is no significant difference in the perception of male & female foreign tourists regarding the natural attractions of Singapore tourism sector.

H03m: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding the natural attractions of Indian tourism sector.

To check the null hypothesis H03n the data has been analyzed using independent sample t-test the results of which show that in case of Singapore for all the variables of the attribute of natural attractions except for the variable of International art and exhibitions the p value of t statistics are greater than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H03n is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of both male and female foreign tourists regarding these variables of natural attractions of Singapore.

The null hypothesis H03m was tested using the independent sample t-test which reveals that for all the variables of man made attractions the p value of t statistics are greater than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H03m is accepted which conveys that there is no significant difference in the perception of both male and female foreign tourists regarding the man made attractions of Singapore.

After analyzing the perception of male and female foreign tourists of natural and man made attractions of Singapore tourism sector individually, now we proceed to analyze the overall comparison of attractions of Singapore on the gender basis by checking the null hypothesis Ho3 using independent sample t-test the results of which are shown in table:

### Table III
**Overall Comparison of Attractions of Singapore Tourism on Gender Basis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean Score (S.D)</th>
<th>T Statistic (P Value)</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall comparison of attractions</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4.28 (0.71)</td>
<td>.999 (.321)</td>
<td>Insignificant difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4.41 (0.82)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that in case of Singapore for overall comparison of attractions the p value of t statistics are greater than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H03 is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of both male and female foreign tourists regarding overall comparison of attractions of Singapore.

After testing the third null hypothesis, now we proceed to test the fourth null hypothesis.

To test the fourth null hypothesis, following two affiliated null hypotheses have been framed:

H04n: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding the natural attractions of Indian tourism sector.

H04m: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding the manmade attractions of Indian tourism sector.

To check the null hypothesis H04n the data has been analyzed using one way ANOVA the results of which show that in case of India for all the variables of the attribute of natural attractions except for the variable of natural resources the p value of F statistics is more than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H04n is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourist of different age groups regarding these variables whereas for the variable of natural resources p value of F statistics is less than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H04n is rejected which means that there is significant difference in the perception of foreign tourist of different age groups regarding this variable. The null hypothesis H04m was tested using one way ANOVA the results of which show that for the variable of nightlife and
shoppers paradise the p value of F statistics is less that 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H04m is rejected which means that there is significant difference in the perception of foreign tourist of different age groups regarding these variables. However for the variables of games and activities and tourism infrastructure the p value of F statistics is more that 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H04m is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourist of different age groups regarding these variables.

After analyzing the perception foreign tourists belonging to different age groups of natural and man made attractions of Indian tourism sector individually, now we proceed to analyze the overall comparison of attractions of India of foreign tourists belonging to different age groups by checking the null hypothesis Ho5 using one way ANOVA the results of which are shown as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table IV</th>
<th>OVERALL COMPARISON OF ATTRACTIONS OF INDIA ON AGE BASIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>AGE GROUPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall comparison of Attractions</td>
<td>Less than 25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 to 40 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above 40 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that when overall comparison of attractions is done then the p value of F statistics is less than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H04 is rejected which means that there is significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding this variable. After testing the fourth null hypothesis, now we proceed to test the fifth null hypothesis.

To test the fifth null hypothesis, following two affiliated null hypotheses have been framed:

Ho5n: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding the natural attractions of Singapore tourism sector

Ho5m: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding the man made attractions of Singapore tourism sector

To check the null hypothesis Ho5n the data has been analyzed using one way ANOVA and the results of which are shown that in case of Singapore for all the variables of the natural attractions except for multi cultural heritage the p value of F statistics is more than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H05n is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourist of different age groups regarding these variables.

After analyzing the perception of male and female foreign tourists belonging to different age groups of natural and man made attractions of Singapore tourism sector individually, now we proceed to analyze the overall comparison of attractions of Singapore by checking the null hypothesis H05 using one way ANOVA the results of which are shown as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table V</th>
<th>OVERALL COMPARISON OF ATTRACTIONS OF SINGAPORE ON AGE BASIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>AGE GROUPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall comparison of Attractions</td>
<td>Less than 25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 to 40 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above 40 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the overall comparison of attractions of the p value of F statistics is more than 5 percent level of significance hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H05 is accepted which means that there is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourist of different age groups regarding overall measure of attractions.

X. CONCLUSION

The foreign tourists choice of destination is primarily driven by the natural and the man made attractions. Every international tourist destination must possess either one of them to lure the tourist. But in this modern era, the tourists attach more weight age to the man made attractions more than the natural ones. From the analysis of primary data it is found that both India and Singapore have the potential to become international tourist destination, but it is also a fact as per the secondary data that Singapore is placed way up from India as per foreign tourists’ arrivals. Although India is highly chosen by the foreign tourists for its natural beauty but when we consider the other aspect, that of man made ones, then Singapore definitely has an edge. Therefore India has yet to develop its tourism infrastructure, leisure, games and sports activities and nightlife tourists’ options which dominate the today’s tourist’s choice. This will certainly give a boost to the Indian tourism industry and help in attracting more of the foreign tourists so as to increase its foreign exchange earnings and better place India on the global map.

REFERENCES

[10] David Foster, Centre for Management Quality Research, RMIT University