Shahidul Islam

Tazrin Akter

THE ROLE OF BRANDING IN THE PROFITABILITY OF TOURISM INDUSTRY OF BANGLADESH.

A study of Britto Travel and Tourism

ABSTRACT

Centria University of Applied Sciences	**Date** December 10 2023	**Author** Shahidul Islam Tazrin Akter

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With emphasis on Britto Travel and Tourism, in this thesis we explored the revolutionary significance that branding has in Bangladesh's rapidly developing tourism industry. Notwithstanding the country's stunning scenery and rich cultural legacy, the industry nevertheless confronts obstacles including inadequate infrastructure and a lack of worldwide reputation. Under the visionary guidance of Mr Tawhidul Islam Shawon, a well-known personality in Bangladesh's travel sector, the research investigated how strong branding may raise Bangladesh's status as a vacation destination.

The theoretical framework emphasized tourism's economic and societal contributions, cultural preservation, and branding strategies. The empirical part focused on the complex relationship between branding, profitability, and sustainability with a focus on Britto Travel & Tourism. The recommendations supported infrastructure growth, improved security measures, focused marketing, and a customer-centered strategy.

The research highlighted the revolutionary possibilities of social branding and recommends companies, such as Britto Travel and Tourism, to take advantage of interesting social media marketing initiatives. As the cultural tourism movement gets traction, the critical aspect is the emphasis on cultural values and the respect of local rights. Finally, the study contributed to the discussion regarding Bangladesh's growing tourist sector by emphasising the importance of social media strategy, community participation, cultural preservation, and storytelling in developing destination brands and raising income.

Key words Branding strategies, Cultural preservation, Economic and societal contributions, Tourism, Tourist.

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1   INTRODUCTION

The tourist sector has grown to play a significant role in the development of the world's economies through promoting international trade, economic growth, and job opportunities. The tourist industry has enormous potential in Bangladesh, a nation renowned for its vast cultural history, scenic beauty, and historical landmarks (Nazrul 2012,13).

Bangladesh has seen a consistent rise in visitor numbers over time, which is indicative of its tourism potential. The country's many attractions, which range from peaceful river deltas to historic temples, provide a broad range of impressions (Munar, Gartner and Cai 2009, 33.). However, Bangladesh's tourist sector has a variety of difficulties, such as poor global recognition, a lack of progress on infrastructure, and sustainability-related problems. A promising way to deal with these issues and realise the industry's full potential is to use strong branding techniques (Hassan 2021).

The aim of this study is to determine how branding influences Bangladesh's tourist industry, particularly Britto Travel and Tourism. We want to learn more about the unique branding techniques used in the Bangladeshi tourism industry, how they affect visitors' perceptions and decisions, and how they could have larger effects on the development and sustainability of the sector. This thesis's main objectives include- assessing the current branding tactics used in Bangladesh's travel and tourism sector, evaluating how branding affects tourists' perceptions and decision-making, determining obstacles to and chances for improving branding activities within the industry and formulating suggestions based on the study results for Britto Travel and Tourism.

The theoretical framework laid out in this study emphasises the intricate and multifaceted impact of tourism on both the economy and society of Bangladesh. Based on fundamental insights from different secondary sources, the beneficial benefits of tourism are highlighted, emphasising its critical role in contributing to the country's GDP, earning foreign currency income, and providing job opportunities. The theoretical framework also emphasises the role of tourism in preserving cultural heritage, which includes historical sites, traditional crafts, and indigenous knowledge.

This thesis is divided into a number of separate parts. Following this introduction, we will go on to the commissioner portion where we will present the gentleman Tawhidul Islam Shawon of Britto Travel and Tourism, who has aided our study much. Britto Travel and Tourism tailors' itineraries to each

traveller's preferences while emphasising environmental and community care. Shawon's dedication to promoting Bangladesh as a travel destination is seen in their support of research on the impact of branding on the sector. Britto Travel & Tours displays adaptation to changing traveller demands with a dynamic community of 100,000 followers and 58,000 group members. The agency's uniqueness stems from its devoted workforce, ethical practises, and inventive leadership, which fosters exceptional and socially responsible travel.

The thesis used a mixed-methods approach, surveying fifty randomly chosen participants to get quantitative data on their buying patterns and opinions on destination brands. Ten employee interviews yielded qualitative information about branding strategies and cultural impacts. The study approach combines qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to thoroughly examine the connection between branding and profitability. The use of statistical methods for quantitative data and theme analysis for qualitative insights allows for a thorough understanding of the cultural, social, and economic implications of branding in the Bangladeshi tourist sector.

2   COMMISSIONER

The commissioner of the thesis project on "The Role of Branding in the Profitability of the Tourism Industry in Bangladesh: A Study of Britto Travel and Tourism" is Britto Travel and Tourism. The representative of the commissioner for this thesis is Mr Tawhidul Islam Shawon, co-founder and CEO of Britto Travel. Mr. Tawhidul Islam Shawon, an influential figure in Bangladesh's travel and tourism business, has played a vital role in the growth of Britto Travel & Tourist. His support for studies on how advertising raises the industry's reputation demonstrates his commitment to marketing Bangladesh as a travel destination (Amin 2021, 182). The organization's support of the research demonstrates its dedication to encouraging development and innovation in Bangladesh's tourism sector.

Britto Travel and Tours is a dynamic travel company dedicated to producing one-of-a-kind and bespoke travel experiences. A group of passionate travellers formed the organisation with the purpose of going above and beyond normal trip planning by inspiring individuals, promoting cross-cultural contacts, and having a beneficial influence on the regions visited. (Britto Travel and Tourism 2023.)

The design of unique trips catered to the unique interests and preferences of each customer is at the centre of the agency's goal. Supported by a group of seasoned travel consultants, Britto Travel & Tours offers professional advice, customised trip plans, and strong partnerships with internationally renowned travel industry organisations to guarantee customers receive the best prices and advantages.
The agency's distinguishing traits include round-the-clock client service, a firm dedication to ethical travel practises, and an uncompromising focus on sustainability. Britto tourism and Tours was established with the belief that tourism ought to benefit local communities and aid in the preservation of the natural beauty of the earth. (Britto Travel and Tourism 2023.)

The term "Circle" represents the interconnectedness inherent in travel, where chance meetings with familiar people foster a sense of community. The organisation emphasises the joys of travel while advocating for everyone's respectful connection with environment. (Britto Travel and Tourism 2023.)

Britto Travel & Tours, which caters to the growing travel trends in Bangladesh, has a strong following of 100,000 individuals and a community of over 58,000 group members, demonstrating its dedication to providing exceptional tour management. This proves the agency's capacity to meet the evolving needs of the Bangladeshi traveller population. (Britto Travel and Tourism 2023.) There are total 12 permanent

members working in the team. However, there are numerous tour guides who are working with this company on temporary or contractual basis. Britto Travel & Tours is a business which is gradually expanding its business and this expansion positively impacts the company's revenue stream. The financial statement of the company published that its annual turnover is 25.7 million and the profit margin is 25%. (Britto Travel and Tourism 2023.)

In summary, Britto Travel & Tours differentiates itself by its continuous dedication to designing outstanding and socially responsible travel experiences. This dedication is reinforced by a devoted workforce, powerful industry alliances, and Mr. Shawon's imaginative leadership.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN BANGLADESH

The tourist business in Bangladesh is a multidimensional sector that has witnessed tremendous development and evolution over the course of the years. Bangladesh is becoming more well-known as a developing destination for tourism in South Asia because of the country's varied landscapes, abundant cultural legacy, and many historical monuments. Bangladesh's tourist industry's historical growth is evidence of the country's adaptability and progress. Bangladesh's tourism scene has seen an incredible metamorphosis, starting with the days of traditional travel and ending with the creation of prominent tourist destinations. This progress has been greatly aided by the development of tourism-related organizations, the building of infrastructure, and the identification of cultural treasures. awareness of how the industry has changed throughout time to accommodate passengers' ever-changing demands and tastes requires an awareness of the past. (Nazrul 2012,20.)

3.1 Historical Development

In 1971, Bangladesh, under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, attained independence, a significant turning point in the country's history. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman established the Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) in 1972. The legislative framework pertaining to the BPC outlined a thorough approach; but, over time, obstacles have arisen to prevent its ideal realisation. (Hassan 2021.)

Despite these obstacles, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has led the way in reviving the tourist industry and has always placed a high priority on its growth. In 2016, she planned a variety of events and named it the 'Year of Visit Bangladesh,' sanctioning projects like as the Tourism Bhaban, among others. When tourism was identified as an important business, the government adopted the National Tourism Policy and the "Tourism Protected Area and Exclusive Tourist Zone Law" in 2010. A coordinated and cooperative approach is demonstrated by the founding of the Bangladesh Tourism Board the same year, which was carried out in conjunction with commercial partners. (Hassan 2021.)

After 45 years of struggle, Bangladesh's socioeconomic environment has transformed, moving from high income to lower middle class. The country's trajectory is being reshaped by the simultaneous elements of increased buying power, steady GDP growth, elevated life expectancy, and improved education

metrics. Because of the government's persistent commitment to building tourist destinations that correlate with these positive changes, Bangladesh is positioned as a rising power in the worldwide tourism sector. As the country grows while honouring its ancient past, these sociopolitical and economic successes are anticipated to attract an increasing number of local and foreign tourists in the near future. (Islam 2020.)

3.2 Current Status and Trends

Bangladesh has been a popular tourist destination due to its natural beauty and lush green landscapes. As a tropical climate and historic civilization centre, the nation has plenty of resources to entice travellers. The tourist industry contributes a substantial one tenth of the world's GDP and is expanding at a rate of 3.9% per year. The government believes that it has the potential to generate large amounts of foreign exchange earnings with the right support. (Roy & Roy 2015,54.)

Tourism in Bangladesh currently accounts for 3.0% of total GDP as of 2019. It indicates an increasing trend. The government has allocated thirty-four billion BDT for the Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry in the Fiscal year 2019-20 budget. This budget allocation is more than double the previous fiscal year's allocation. This shows the government's commitment to the initiative and how important it is for the government to grow the tourism industry. (Roy & Roy 2015,54.)

The tourist industry's economic importance in Bangladesh has grown significantly during the previous decade. It is contributing steadily greater percentages of GDP each year. However, recent patterns imply a drop in tourism spending, which might be impacted by current political issues (Rahman 2021,68). The government-controlled tourism company Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) has demonstrated financial success in spite of these challenges, going from a loss of 194 lakh taka in 2008–2009 to a profit of 612.33 lakh taka in 2012–2013. (Sultana 2016.)

Despite a falling trend in visitor numbers, the tourism sector's contribution to Bangladesh's GDP remains an important indication, and Bangladeshis are increasing their outbound travel significantly. Tourist departures more than doubled at an average rate of just below the percentage of fifteen during the same time, while arrivals increased by 6.8% on average. (Rahman 2021,68.)

Both direct and indirect effects are included in the travel and tourism sector's overall economic contribution. The 'indirect' contribution includes GDP and employment generated by investment in travel and tourism, government spending as a whole (such as tourism marketing and promotion), and domestic purchases of products and services made by businesses that interact directly with visitors. The 'induced' contribution computes GDP and employment that are subsidised by persons who work in the travel and tourism business, either directly or indirectly. The travel and tourism sector's direct GDP contribution is mostly a reflection of the economic activity produced by the hotel, travel agency, airline, and other passenger transportation service companies. This also includes the activities of the tourism-related restaurant and entertainment industries. All things considered, travel and tourism's overall GDP contribution includes both immediate and long-term economic consequences. (Sultana 2016.)

3.3 Employment Generation

The World Travel and Tourism Council conducted research in 2014 that found that the overall GDP contribution of travel and tourism was below five percent and is expected to grow by 6.5% annually to 4.7% by 2024. This complete contribution includes components that are direct, indirect, and induced, emphasising the sector's varied effect on the country's economic environment. (Roy & Roy 2015,57.)

A flourishing tourism sector is essential to a nation's economic growth and attempts to lower unemployment rates since it generates jobs. It is impossible to overestimate the role that the tourism industry plays in creating jobs as it not only gives people more power but also improves the general economic health of the communities it serves. (Rahman 2021,70.) Amin (2021) emphasises this multidimensional contribution and its positive implications on regional economies as well as the feelings of prosperity and financial security among Bangladeshi individuals.

Beyond only giving people a means of subsistence, the tourism sector actively contributes to the economic stability of local communities by giving people from a variety of backgrounds possibilities for gainful work (Nazrul 2012,21). Though the official unemployment rate in Bangladesh is four percent based on the 2010 Labour Force Survey. In 2010, the unorganised sector employed 47.3 million people which accounted for more than eighty percent of the economically active population. Furthermore, a fifth of those working were working below their skill levels and hence underutilised. (Sultana 2016.)

Acknowledging the necessity of tackling this problem, formal employment sector development becomes essential, with tourism appearing as a workable option. The industry has the capacity to create jobs in a number of different areas, such as transportation, hotel, and allied businesses. In 2014, travel and tourism contributed considerably to direct employment. Jobs in hotels, travel agencies, restaurants, leisure industries, airlines, and passenger transportation were among those available.   That year's total contribution to employment was substantial and estimates for 2025 suggest that the industry may create more jobs altogether. This aligns with Bangladesh's aims of promoting social and economic development and provides a potential future for addressing the country's unemployment issues. (Sultana 2016.)

3.4 Social Impact

The tourism industry in Bangladesh is actively working towards realizing its significant potential to contribute to the country's economy. As a major player in the services sector, tourism is increasingly acknowledged for its role in social and economic development, offering a valuable means to combat unemployment by creating jobs and fostering rural development. Because of tourism, the local population typically benefits from improved public transportation, such bus services, playgrounds, sewage systems, and more roadways. These improvements may greatly improve the quality of life for people, demonstrating tourism's real and positive social influence. Furthermore, tourism promotes cultural interchange and understanding, which leads to greater tolerance and inclusiveness. Travellers who learn about diverse cultures and interact with local people can help to make the globe a more integrated and accepting place. Additionally, the development of amenities like parks and recreational centres might result from tourism-related spending, raising people's standard of living in general. Host cities' social fabric is strengthened when they celebrate Indigenous peoples and invest in the arts and culture. (Patwary, Roy, Hoque & Khandakar 2019,7.)

However, alongside the economic benefits, the negative impacts of tourism on society and culture in Bangladesh are becoming evident. Premature exposure to Western ideas and technologies has led to social problems, including increased crime rates, gambling, drinking, and prostitution. The country has paid a significant price for its tourist business, which has faced issues like traffic congestion, pollution, and increasing living costs. Tourist traffic may disturb local populations, cause road congestion, and contribute to noise and other types of pollution in rural areas. Additionally, tourism has been linked to crime generation, as efforts to attract tourists sometimes lead to criminal activities that create friction between the host population and visitors. Tourism also influences the lifestyle of residents in tourist

regions, often inducing a desire for a better standard of living. Unfortunately, this may result in frustration if opportunities for improvement are limited. The tourism industry has replaced traditional occupations in some regions, causing conflicts of land use and environmental damage through hotel construction and waste disposal. There is also a risk of cultural heritage vandalism and illegal trade in hard currency. (Lincoln 2013.)

3.5 Cultural Preservation

Bangladesh possesses an extensive cultural heritage that is deeply ingrained in its history and encompasses elements. The Bengal Renaissance of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was essential in the development of Bengali culture. As Bangladesh's cultural tourism business has risen in importance, so has the country's particular cultural experiences. Festivals, traditional music, gastronomy, and clothes, all strongly embedded in the nation's identity, highlight the cultural variety. Pohela Baishakh, Ekushey February, Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Azha, Durga Puja, Pohela Falgun, Nabanna Utshab, Poush Parbon, and Shakrain are notable holidays. These events provide a look into Bangladesh's diverse cultural tapestry, with traditional costume, music, and gastronomic pleasures. (Shoeb-Ur-Rahman 2020.)

The country has a rich musical heritage, with contemporary, folk, and classical music all contributing significantly to the enjoyment of visitors from outside as well as those from domestic markets. Traditional clothing, such as the "saree" for ladies and the "panjabi" for men, has cultural significance and represents Bangladesh's unique textile traditions. The food is influenced by the country's scenery and ancient trade routes, and it features dishes with fish, rice, and diverse spices, providing a distinct South Asian gastronomic experience. Cultural sports, such as 'Ha-du-du,' 'Kabaddi,' and 'Nouka Baich,' contribute to Bangladesh's cultural identity and amusement. UNESCO-designated cultural heritage sites in the nation include the Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat, the Ruins of the Buddhist Vihara at Paharpur, and the Sundarbans. (Shoeb-Ur-Rahman 2020.)

Cultural tourism is important in Bangladesh's tourist industry because it allows visitors to discover the country's rich cultural tapestry, historical landmarks, and different traditions. When it comes to seeing the unique features and cultural roots of this culturally diverse country, Bangladesh is a compelling travel destination since it prioritises real experiences.

3.6 Government Policies and Initiatives

The government of Bangladesh has put in place a number of policies and laws to encourage the growth and promotion of the tourist industry. The Bangladesh Tourism Board Act, the Tourism Policy 2010, the Medium-Term Budget Framework (MTBF), and the Perspective Plan 2021 are examples of these. The main goals of the Bangladesh Tourist Board Act are to promote responsible tourism, increase awareness of tourism protection and exploration, and develop the tourism industry via planning initiatives. The statute also highlights how important it is to develop human resources by building training facilities and doing studies on the travel industry. (Sultana 2016.)

As part of the Medium-Term Budget Framework, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and tourist is responsible for developing and executing civil aviation and tourist legislation and policies. Modernising airports and air services, regulating airspace management, guaranteeing safe aircraft operations, and developing legislation for travel agents are all part of this. To efficiently execute the National Tourism Policy, an institutional structure at several levels has been built, including the National Tourism Council, Cabinet Committee on Tourism, Advisory Committee on Tourism, and Inter-ministerial Co-ordination and Implementation Committee. At the divisional and municipal levels, participation is also promoted by the Bangladesh Embassy and its abroad missions. (Roy & Roy 2015.)

4   BRANDING

Brands are implicit promises that are essential to a company's connection with customers, acting as a guarantee from sellers to buyers. Branding requires communicating an organization's particular culture both inside and beyond the organisation. Brands assist customers in identifying items, feeling confident in their quality, and making selections more simply, lowering their risk perception. (Laren 2022.) According to Almeyda-Ibáñez and George (2017), a brand's functions include informing customers and producers of the product's origin and shielding them from similar rivals. Branding boosts the value of a firm for sellers by giving legal protection, easing market segmentation, and streamlining operations. Effective branding fosters loyalty, which leads to increased demand security, predictability, and the ability to charge higher prices. Although brand development has existed historically, the 20th century saw its critical integration, focusing on distinctiveness through relationships to fend against the commoditization of commodities.

4.1 Definition of Branding

The idea of branding encompasses many different aspects and is of utmost importance in the field of tourism. At its most fundamental level, branding may be seen as the purposeful art of developing a distinctive and easily recognisable identity for a good or service, or location. When it comes to the tourist industry, branding encompasses all of the cultural, natural, as well as experiential aspects of a location and weaves them into an interesting story. (Laren 2022.) It extends beyond logos along with slogans, taking into account both physical and intangible aspects of business. A successful tourist brand embodies the core of a location, embodying the destination's values and the promises it makes to visitors. This brand was developed with the purpose of setting the location apart from its rivals and engaging travellers on a level of emotion. It is important to leave a long-lasting impression on guests, one that resonates with them and compels them to pick the place above other possibilities. It is an essential component of the traveller's overall decision-making process. (Hassan 2022.)

In addition, branding is all about being consistent. Every engagement with the company, whether it be via marketing, the experience of visitors, or client service, should serve to strengthen the identity of the brand (Laren 2022). A tourist brand that is successful at attracting customers also cultivates loyalty in those customers, which encourages them to act as brand ambassadors.

4.2 Objectives of Branding

The goals of advertising in the tourist industry are varied and intricately tied to one another. To begin, the purpose of branding is to distinguish a location. Differentiation is of the utmost importance in an environment on a global scale where many diverse locations compete for tourists. It entails establishing the distinctive selling elements that set the place apart from others, whether they be the cultural legacy, the natural beauty, or the immersive experiences. The ability to differentiate makes the place stand out, which in turn attracts tourists who are looking for unique and genuine experiences. Attracting new customers is another aspect of brand management. (Laren 2022.) It generates an intriguing tale and picture that resounds with the intended demographic and encourages them to pick the place as their travel destination of choice. Branding strives to cultivate brand loyalty in addition to drawing in new customers. Coming back to a destination several times increases the likelihood of making a profit in the tourist industry. A powerful brand may generate an emotional connection, which in turn encourages repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth referrals. (Laren 2022.)

Additionally, branding enhances the perception that people have of a place. Experiences that are connected with a powerful and favourable brand are worth more money to travellers, and they are ready to pay extra for such experiences. This not only boosts earnings but also contributes to the tourist industry's capacity for long-term expansion. It makes a positive contribution to the overall economic health of the destination as well as the socioeconomic standing of the community at large. The purposes of a brand go much beyond financial considerations. The development of a successful tourist brand is essential to the maintenance of cultural traditions. The importance of safeguarding cultural assets, customs, and indigenous knowledge is brought to light by this. By using branding, communities are urged to preserve and celebrate their legacy, and cultural traditions from various groups are highlighted and shown. (Hassan 2022.)

Community engagement is also encouraged through branding. It does this by actively engaging local communities in activities such as greeting visitors, offering their expertise, and taking part in cultural events. This engagement opens up prospects for economic growth, helps to improve social cohesion, and guarantees that local community's profit from tourism in some way. In addition, the promotion of sustainability may be accomplished via branding. It highlights the destination's dedication to ethical traveller behaviour, responsible tourism practices, and environmental protection (Laren 2022). It does this by encouraging people to adopt sustainable practices, which in turn reduces the negative effect that their trips have on the environment.

4.3 Branding Strategies

Branding tactics in the tourist industry are dynamic and varied, and they are customised to the particular qualities and objectives of each place. These tactics make use of a wide variety of resources and methods in order to develop a compelling and enduring identity for the brand. (Therkelsen, James & Halkier 2021, 321.) In the tourist industry, some significant branding tactics include the following:

Storytelling is an essential component of every successful branding strategy. Creating narratives that emphasise the one-of-a-kind features and activities of a place is essential to conveying compelling stories about that location. These narratives foster emotional ties with travellers, which in turn inspires people to travel. (Therkelsen et al. 2021,323.) They bring the identity of the place to life, resulting in increased engagement and interest. One further essential tactic is developing a strong visual identity. It contains components such as logos, colours, and design, among others. The trademark of the location is the destination's logo, which should be well-designed and consistent with its visual identity. They provide instant identification in addition to a visually appealing effect, enhancing the identity of the brand. The branding of tourist destinations is greatly aided by authenticity. It entails exhibiting the authentic culture, traditions, and experiences that may be had at the site. Experiences that are genuine and immersive are becoming more and more desirable among travellers. These tourists respond positively to genuine branding, which gives them confidence that the location they are visiting will provide them with genuine, unaltered experiences. (Therkelsen et al. 2021,323.) Participation from the community is a vital tactic. It does this by actively including neighbourhoods in branding activities, which in turn makes those communities an essential component of the identity of the destination. Members of the community become brand ambassadors by greeting guests, sharing their knowledge of the area, and participating in local customs. This engagement not only generates prospects for economic growth but also helps to enhance the cultural fabric of the location. Another essential component of a successful branding strategy is the protection of cultural traditions. It places an emphasis on the significance of conserving cultural assets as well as traditions, and as a result, it becomes an essential component of the brand for the destination. It highlights historical landmarks, traditional handicrafts, indigenous knowledge systems, and performing arts. (Therkelsen et al. 2021,325.)

The tourist industry is seeing a rise in the use of sustainable branding practices. It highlights the destination's dedication to ethical traveller behaviour, responsible tourism practices, and environmental protection. The use of sustainable branding may encourage tourists to participate in environmentally friendly activities during their trips, which in turn can lessen the negative effects on the surrounding

environment. Branding efforts are amplified when travel businesses, airlines, as well as other stakeholders work together in partnerships and collaborations. The brand's reach is expanded via the use of collaborative marketing campaigns and promotions. They increase the destination's exposure by using the marketing knowledge and reach that these other partners provide. In today's branding world, having a strong presence online is very necessary. (Therkelsen et al. 2021, 329.) Websites, networking sites, and online advertising campaigns are essential tools for reaching out to prospective tourists and establishing relationships with them. They provide venues for the telling of stories, the exchange of imagery, and interaction with the audience. One of the most promising emerging trends in the branding of tourist destinations is the provision of individualised experiences. Travel experiences are increasingly being customised by destinations to cater to the specific whims and requirements of individual tourists. The total experience of the visitor is improved by the incorporation of personalization, which makes the encounter more interesting and satisfying. (Hassan 2022.)

In summing up, branding is a dynamic and complex practice in the tourist industry, with purposes that go beyond profitability. The objective is to give the location a unique character, entice tourists, cultivate a sense of brand loyalty, heighten the destination's cultural and social effect, engage local communities, and advance the cause of sustainable travel. Creating engaging and memorable identities for companies that appeal to travellers requires using a variety of branding tactics, such as narrative, visual appeal, authenticity, and community participation, amongst others. Not only does a great brand promote income, but it also adds to the cultural richness and well-being of the location it represents. (Therkelsen et al. 2021, 325.)

4.4 The Role of Branding in Tourism

In the tourist industry, branding plays a pivotal role in distilling the core characteristics of a location into a captivating identity. With so many travel alternatives available to us, branding in the tourism industry plays a critical role in influencing visitors' perceptions, decisions, and experiences. It's the skill of telling stories that pique tourists' interest and entice them to go on a voyage of exploration. (Hassan 2022.) A destination's brand encompasses its distinct features, cultural legacy, and the assurance of unforgettable experiences. It guides tourists in their search for the unusual by acting as a beacon. In the tourist industry, branding goes far beyond creating memorable slogans and logos. The goal is to build a psychological connection between visitors and the location. It is this emotional connection that drives travellers to

choose one location over another. It's the reason their dreams include enjoying coffee on an old city's cobblestone streets or losing themselves in the untainted beauty of a far-off island. (Hassan 2022.)

Additionally, branding affects the whole tourism ecosystem rather than simply specific travellers. Local communities' actions might be galvanized by it, motivating them to save the environment and maintain their cultural heritage. By doing this, it guarantees tourism's sustainability, which benefits both visitors and the local population. The impact of tourism branding extends beyond advertising materials and includes policy choices, infrastructure development, and destination management as a whole. How a resort presents itself in the international tourist industry is shaped by its effective branding. It establishes if a location appeals to tourists who are eco-aware, adventure-seekers, or cultural vultures. It's also a potent instrument for expanding a destination's pool of potential visitors and reducing its susceptibility to volatile economies. (Hassan 2021.) Building and sustaining a favourable image is only one aspect of branding's involvement in the tourism industry, in addition to attracting travellers. It involves controlling one's vision of a place to make sure it corresponds with actuality on the ground. A venue with a strong brand creates confidence in visitors, allowing them to explore with assurance. (Hassan 2021.)

Tourism branding is a purposeful, intentional undertaking rather than something that simply happens. Stakeholder cooperation, extensive research, and a sharp grasp of market dynamics are all necessary. Aspirations of the target audience, competitive advantages, and distinctive qualities of a place are all considered ineffective branding initiatives. All things considered, branding plays a complex and revolutionary function in the travel industry. (Islam 2020.) It influences the experiences of tourists, promotes economic expansion, and supports cultural preservation. It's an influence that can turn a place from an unknown to a must-see, making a lasting impression on the travel industry and those whom it affects. In the parts that follow, we'll look at how branding tactics might be used to help Bangladesh's tourist industry reach its full potential and show the way toward prosperity. (Islam 2020.)

5 BRANDING AND PROFITABILITY IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

The mutually beneficial connection between branding and revenue is critical for destinations seeking sustainability and success in the fast-paced tourist industry. This chapter explores the complex dynamics of how branding plays a crucial role in influencing tourism sector income creation as well as visitor inflow, with a specific emphasis on Bangladesh.

5.1 Impact on Visitor Numbers

In the tourist business, branding is crucial in determining visitor numbers since it has a contagious influence on the whole sector. The development of a recognisable and unforgettable visual identity is the first step in the influence. Travellers are more inclined to recall and recognise a place when they see a well-made logo, eye-catching colour schemes, and a constant brand presence on advertising materials. (Desnim Silvia, Wahyuni & Irfani 2020.) For visitors, this quick detection is a crucial initial step in the process of making choices. It piques interest, encouraging visitors to look into the place further and think about making it their next holiday destination. Beyond simple identification, effective branding regulates and defines the expectations of prospective visitors. A good brand communicates the essence of the travel location, its unique selling propositions, and the kinds of experiences, cultures, and attractions that tourists may look forward to. The chance that a certain set of travellers will choose the location rises when the brand matches their tastes and interests. An important consideration in the process of making choices is the alignment of expectations. Travellers who are looking for tranquil beaches, cultural diversity, and historical attractions are more inclined to choose the location if a brand regularly expresses this promise. (Chatterjee 2009,67.)

Additionally, branding promotes credibility and trust. Because they want to be sure that the trip they take will live up to or beyond their expectations, tourists often pick locations with well-known and recognised brands. A well-defined and recognisable brand shows traits like quality, consistency, and a dedication to keeping its commitments. A strong brand may provide travellers the much-needed certainty in a world where they are risk-averse and circumspect when choosing their locations. An important consideration in the choice-making process is the confidence that a place with a strong brand creates. Practically speaking, this results in a rise in the number of visitors. Tourist numbers may increase in destinations with strong branding and well-run marketing efforts. (Chatterjee 2009,72.) Along with

increasing the number of visitors, this flood of travellers also makes the audience more diversified and international. The brand appeals to a variety of market sectors and demographics, ensuring that a broad spectrum of visitors visit the area. The brand has a significant impact on customers' choices, whether they are tourists searching for historical sites or families looking for a beach getaway.

Branding has a significant influence on the number of tourists visiting a destination. It promotes trust, builds awareness, establishes expectations, and eventually leads to a spike in visitors selecting the branded location. This rise in visitors is essential to the destination's total profitability since it paves the way for all ensuing economic gains. (Desnim Silvia et al. 2020.)

5.2 Revenue Generation

Branding is deeply integrated into the foundation of income production in the dynamic tourist industry. A successful brand is more than just a clever slogan or appealing visual identity; it is a potent income generator with complex systems that affect how visitors spend their money. Tourist spending is the initial and most obvious way that branding affects income generation. Imaginations are captured and a wider variety of offerings, experiences, and products are encouraged when effective branding is used to attract prospective customers. (Islam 2019, 23.) Travellers explore a location more because they want to have experiences that are special and one of a kind. Through its storylines and visual components, a successful brand piques consumers' interest, increasing their propensity to take part in events, visit sights, and try local food. As a consequence, the average amount spent by visitors rises, which is good for the tourism industry. (Islam 2019,24.)

Branding gives destinations the ability to demand premium prices for their products and services in addition to driving more expenditure. This happens as a direct result of a well-known brand. Strong brands are often associated by tourists with excellence, authenticity, and the promise of distinctive experiences. (Ahmad 2021,326.) As a consequence, they are more likely to spend extra for services like lodging, excursions, gifts, and other goods. Tourist-friendly brands arouse feelings of exclusivity as well as uniqueness, enabling places to charge more for their services. This tactic improves the overall perception of the place while increasing income per visitor. Another benefit of successful branding is repeat business, a big source of income. Tourists are more inclined to return when a destination's brand delivers enjoyable and memorable experiences for them. Travellers are encouraged to revisit a location because of the emotional connection created by branding. Returning tourists often partake in a larger

variety of operations, visit more places, and make use of more of the area's attractions. When visitors stay longer, they spend more money when they return, thereby increasing the income for the resort. (Ahmad 2021,330.)

Branding may result in prolonged stays. Visitors who are enthralled by the brand's story and the distinctive experiences it offers can decide to extend their trips. The branding process fosters an emotional connection that motivates visitors to further immerse themselves in the location, backed by efficient marketing initiatives. Longer stays result in more money being spent on lodging, food, and activities, which helps the destination's income stream. Another method of generating income is via brand collaborations, a strategic by-product of strong branding. A place with an established and well-known brand is an appealing partner for neighbourhood companies and organisations. These collaborations may lead to special events, deals, and promotions that meet the needs and expectations of travellers. Through these partnerships, both the destination as well as its partners see greater income, creating a win-win situation. (Nazrul 2012, 23.)

Branding has a significant effect on how much money is made in the tourist industry. It affects tourist spending, higher rates, and repeat business in addition to lengthening stays and fostering successful brand alliances. The secret to increasing income per visitor and, thus, the destination's total profitability, is effective branding.

5.3 Cultural and Social Impact

Branding has a significant and far-reaching cultural as well as social influence on the tourist industry. It touches on the foundation of destination identity, preserving culture, interaction between cultures, and social ties in addition to income. The contribution that branding makes to cultural preservation is one of its most important effects. A destination's strong cultural legacy is often celebrated and promoted via effective branding. Promotion of historical sites, traditional crafts, live performances, and systems of indigenous knowledge may all fall under this category. The presence of tourists who come to take in this cultural diversity generates revenue for the upkeep and preservation of cultural treasures. Traditions won't be lost to the unrelenting march of time thanks to this financial boost. Branding provides local communities with protection for cultural practices that could otherwise be in danger of disappearing. (Desnim Silvia et al. 2020.) Communities are directly motivated to carry on these practices by the monetary value put on cultural preservation, which ultimately helps them preserve their cultural legacy.

Cultural interchange is another essential branding cultural influence. Travellers who are eager to explore and interact with the culture of the region are drawn in by compelling branding that generates an attraction. Tourists actively participate in cultural exchanges rather than being passive onlookers. They get completely engrossed in the practices, traditions, and customs of the place, which helps them comprehend the people there better. Both tourists and local populations benefit from this reciprocal interchange of cultures. It promotes tolerance, cross-cultural relationships, and cultural understanding. Travellers' increased understanding of other cultures and customs when they return home helps create a more connected and peaceful global community. (Desnim Silvia et al. 2020.)

Another essential result of branding is cultural enlightenment. Effective branding may increase consumer demand for cultural events and activities. Travellers are more likely to take part in cultural activities, seminars, and performances while a destination's brand communicates its cultural diversity and legacy. Due to the participation of both tourists and residents in the promotion and preservation of cultural traditions, this results in cultural enrichment. Cultural enrichment leaves a legacy as well as economic advantages. It guarantees that regional customs continue to be alive, and that the heritage of culture endures and develops. (Chatterjee 2009,72.) Additional cultural and social consequences of marketing in the tourist business include social bonds and understanding. Travellers often develop relationships with locals when they completely lose themselves in a destination's culture. Through encounters that cut through language hurdles and cultural divides, social bonds and intercultural understanding are fostered. In addition to memories, travellers often bring new friendships and a wider view of the world back home. Encouraging cultural tolerance and understanding benefits the larger society environment. One key social benefit of branding is community participation. Local communities are more inclined to actively engage in and profit from the tourist sector when they relate to the destination's brand. Locals become ecstatic representatives of their region, hospitably greeting visitors and taking part in local festivities. Increased economic prospects, community growth, and social cohesiveness may result from this engagement. It enhances local communities' general well-being in addition to the tourist business. (Islam 2019, 23.)

Branding in the tourist industry has a wide range of cultural and social effects. It supports cultural interchange, improves cultural experiences, strengthens social bonds and understanding, and promotes community engagement in addition to contributing to cultural preservation. With the increasing worldwide interest in cultural as well as socially responsible travel, effective branding makes tourism more than simply generating money; it also involves protecting cultural heritage and enhancing lives. (Desnim Silvia et al. 2020.)

5.4 Future Outlook: Branding for Sustainable Growth

The foreseeable future of branding in the tourist industry seems quite promising in a constantly changing environment. As the globe struggles with shifting consumer tastes and environmental issues, branding becomes a crucial instrument for attaining sustainable development. This section looks at how branding might help Bangladesh's tourist sector become more resilient and sustainable. Sustainability is becoming a crucial factor for the travel and tourism industry, not just a trendy term (Islam 2020). Travellers of today are more aware of their influence on the environment and society when they visit new places. They look for experiences that are consistent with their beliefs and choose travel locations that show a strong commitment to sustainability. In this situation, encouraging sustainable tourist practices may be accelerated by branding. Bangladeshi branding for sustained development entails redefining the destination's identity. It's about presenting the nation as a guardian of the environment and culture, stressing resource conservation, and encouraging deep connections between visitors and the people they visit. In addition to improving the traveller experience, a sustainable branding strategy helps to protect Bangladesh's distinct cultural legacy as well as beautiful ecosystems. (Islam 2020.)

Furthermore, sustainability includes social and economic aspects in addition to eco-friendly actions. In order to support community-based tourism projects that give local people more authority, branding might be very important. It may support the development of prospects for generating revenue, jobs, and community capacity building. This inclusive branding strategy makes sure that the advantages of tourism are shared more fairly and improves the general welfare of the populace. (Emami, Rezaei, Sangani & Goh 2019.) In the future, a narrative that prioritizes authenticity and ethical travel should be the main emphasis of branding in Bangladesh's tourist industry. It needs to emphasize the nation's dedication to protecting the environment, upholding traditional customs, and empowering regional communities. This strategy not only draws in more ethical tourists but also sets Bangladesh apart in a saturated travel industry. For a branding plan to be durable, cooperation is essential. It is crucial to include all relevant parties in the process, including local governments, firms in the tourist industry, and community groups. By working together, they may establish a common goal for sustainable development and see it through to completion. By use of collaborations, the tourist industry may formulate and execute strategies that alleviate adverse effects while amplifying favourable outcomes. (Shoeb-Ur-Rahman 2020.)

A strong framework that takes social, economic, and environmental variables into account is necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of sustainable branding initiatives. In order to keep the branding strategy in line with the changing demands and expectations of passengers, it entails ongoing monitoring as well as

change. Bangladesh may establish itself as a pioneer in sustainable tourism, leading by example for other travel destinations, as it looks to the future. It is essential, not optional, to include sustainability in branding. It's a route to sustained prosperity and resilience where the tourist industry can flourish and the natural and cultural assets that make Bangladesh special are preserved. (Hassan 2022.)

6   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to determine how branding influences Bangladesh's tourist industry, particularly Britto Travel and Tourism. The study design, which serves as a thorough roadmap, takes a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The thesis surveyed fifty randomly chosen participants to get quantitative data on their buying patterns and opinions on destination brands. Ten employee interviews yielded qualitative information about branding strategies and cultural impacts. Through the integration of various approaches, the research design explores aspects of branding related to community engagement and cultural implications, in addition to quantitative data. The subsequent sections delineate the techniques employed for data collection, sample design, and data analysis to conduct an exhaustive investigation of this complex problem.

6.1 Research Design

This thesis's success depends on a solid research plan that uses a multifaceted strategy. The whole investigating procedure is steered by the research design, which acts as a road map. Using qualitative as well as quantitative techniques, a mixed-methods study methodology is used to investigate the part branding plays in the Bangladeshi tourist industry's profitability. In order to obtain numerical information on a wide scale, quantitative approaches are used. Tourists travelling to different locations in Bangladesh are surveyed. The survey consists of well-structured questions intended to extract precise data on visitors' views, preferences, and branding-related behaviour. The quantitative method offers statistical data that measures the effect of branding on traveller numbers, revenue creation, and profitability.

On the contrary, qualitative methodologies are used to get a better knowledge of the subtleties and complexity of the link between branding as well as profitability. Ten employees from Britto Travel and Tourism are interviewed in-depth. Because these interviews are informal, detailed discussions and open-ended inquiries are permitted. The qualitative method offers deep insights into the subtleties of branding strategies as well as the cultural and societal effects of branding (Guetterman, 2020). A complete picture of the study issue is made possible by combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies, resulting in an in-depth and thorough analysis. The study design explores the underlying mechanics, cultural

ramifications, and community engagement in addition to identifying the effect of branding on profitability.

6.2 Data Collection Methods

The study makes use of secondary as well as primary information-gathering techniques. These techniques were carefully selected to guarantee the collection of thorough and relevant data. Surveys and interviews are used to gather primary data. A systematic questionnaire for the survey is created using the body of current research on marketing in the travel industry The survey asks about travellers' knowledge of destination brands, how branding affects their travel choices, and their purchasing habits. To guarantee variety and representativeness, survey respondents are randomly chosen from different locations in Bangladesh. It is to be added here that, the size of the sample for quantitative research employing survey technique will be 50.

Interviews have been conducted with the company's employee. Because these interviews are partially structured, open-ended questions may be used to probe the subtleties of advertising in the travel industry. The qualitative information gleaned from interviews offers perceptions of the underlying branding methods used in Bangladesh as well as the cultural and societal effects of branding. The sample size for the interview would be 10.

Secondary information is gathered from a variety of sources, such as academic journals, government papers, business periodicals, and current research on branding in the tourist industry. This secondary material is essential for setting the stage and giving background knowledge, as well as for comparing the results of this study to previously published works.

6.3 Sampling Strategy

In order to identify participants who correctly reflect the target population, the sampling technique is a crucial aspect of the study design. A strategy known as simple random sampling is used for the quantitative survey. Travellers in Bangladesh come from a variety of backgrounds and are looking for a range of experiences, from immersion in culture to beach getaways. The survey respondents are chosen from a variety of destination categories, such as cultural, coastal, as well as natural sites, in order to

represent this diversity. By ensuring that each group is well represented in the number of participants, stratification guards against the dominance of one category that can bias the findings. Random sampling is used to choose survey participants within each stratum. This strategy guarantees a sample that fairly represents the distribution of visitors to the different kinds of destinations (Guetterman, 2020).

Using a purposive sample method, qualitative interviews are conducted. On the basis of their knowledge of and engagement in the tourist industry, industry experts, destination executives, branding specialists, and community leaders are selected. This deliberate selection process guarantees that a wide range of opinions and ideas from people who are actively involved in the sector are included in the interviews.

6.4 Data Analysis

The process of data analysis is complex and includes qualitative as well as quantitative techniques. Statistical analysis is used for analysing quantitative information from surveys. To summarise and characterise the data, descriptive statistics like frequencies, means, as well as percentages are utilised (Kumar 2012, 25). To investigate the links between variables and to calculate the effect of branding on profitability, inferential statistics, such as regression analysis and correlation analysis, are used. Data analysis is done using statistical software like SPSS.

Interview-derived qualitative data are subjected to theme analysis. The interview transcripts are meticulously examined to find reoccurring themes, patterns, as well as insights. These topics are arranged into a logical framework that offers a thorough grasp of both the cultural and societal effects of branding and the branding tactics used in the tourist industry. The examination of qualitative as well as quantitative information together guarantees a thorough and complete interpretation of the study results. It offers a deep comprehension of how branding affects profitability as well as the relevant cultural and social aspects.

6.5 Validity, Reliability and Generalizability

Validity, an essential component of research, guarantees that a study is conducted correctly, systematically, and professionally. It makes research findings more credible in the eyes of study participants. The use of validity in current management research entails thorough vetting of the research

activity, applying reliable empirical tests to identify information sources and their influence on the quality of produced data. Data and conclusion alignment with intended outcomes is critical for relevance in a variety of management and commercial scenarios. Another critical notion is reliability, which helps researchers to achieve defined goals and understand how their studies affect diverse populations. (Carrig, and Hoyle, 2011.) Openness, discussion, and objectivity serve as indicators of the dependability of research projects and their outcomes. To ensure the application of the information obtained in many domains, researchers must justify their methodology using evidence-based, real-life circumstances. Generalizability is important because it allows researchers to draw conclusions about many occurrences by employing existing bodies of information. This allows students to comprehend the rationale for their research as well as the unique characteristics of the phenomenon under consideration. Researchers improve their understanding of numerous paradigms within present research knowledge by using generalizations to connect data collection, methodologies, and theoretical applications as they go from known to unknown conceptions. This method makes it easier to find the gaps between theory and practice, which affects how knowledge from research is used. (Carrig and Hoyle 2011.)

The researchers also made use of the concepts of validity, reliability, and generalizability in investigating how branding affects the earnings of Bangladesh's tourism sector, specifically as seen through the prism of Britto Travel & Tourism. The demystification of assumptions through theory integration encourages academics to comprehend the interaction between theory and practice. Reliability helped the researchers to achieve set research goals while maintaining impartiality, whereas validity helped a study's rigorous and professional conduct, increasing its reputation. Generalization helped the researchers draw conclusions and forecasts and link their findings to reveal previously undiscovered information. By applying these concepts to the development of questionnaires for the thesis, it was feasible to ensure broad data collection, methodological consistency, and alignment with reasonable criteria, all of which resulted in thorough and rigorous research results.

7   PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter delves into the research findings on the importance of branding on the profitability of Bangladesh's tourist business, with a study of Britto Travel & tourist. The study employs a mixed-methods strategy that combines qualitative and quantitative procedures to gather primary data through surveys and interviews. Based on existing travel marketing research, the poll investigates travellers' knowledge of destination brands, the influence of branding on their trip decisions, and spending habits. A random sample size of fifty people is selected from all throughout Bangladesh. In-depth interviews with ten employees also give qualitative insights on branding tactics and cultural influences in the Bangladeshi travel business.

7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

To acquire broad numerical insights, a quantitative technique is adopted, surveying visitors across several areas in Bangladesh. The well-crafted questionnaire includes specific questions designed to gather information on the viewpoints, inclinations, and branding-related actions of the visitors. This strategy produces statistical statistics quantifying the influence of branding on passenger numbers, revenue creation, and overall profitability. The survey is aimed at travellers, with the sample drawn at random from those who visit online travel and tourism websites.

7.1.1. Gender

Figure 1 shows a pie chart indicating the gender distribution of survey participants, a significant demographic topic. The survey shows a slight imbalance between male and female participants. According to the survey result, male participants accounted for 56% and females accounted for 44%. Although the ratio of male and female is not equal, but such imbalance is not significant enough to induce bias.

Gender
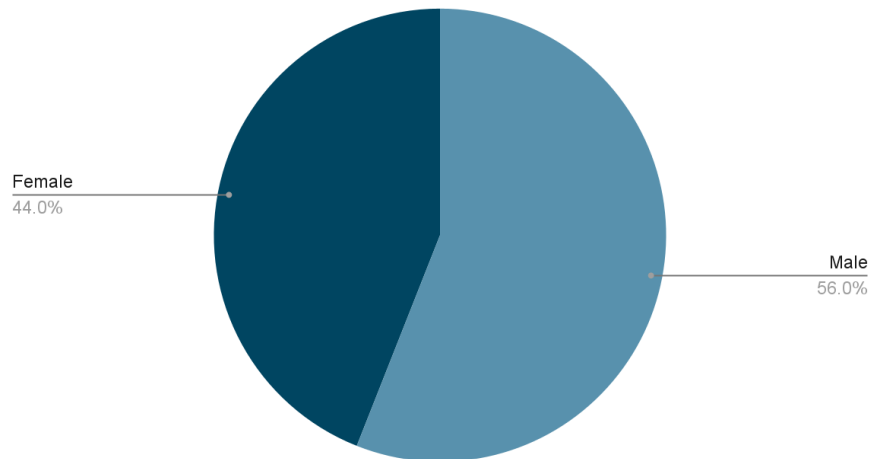
FIGURE 1. Gender

7.1.2 Travel Frequency

The following question asked respondents about their travel frequency. According to the results from surveys, a little less than quarter of respondents (24%) travel three or more times each year. Meanwhile, most individuals travel twice a year, with just less than half of respondents choosing this choice. Furthermore, just 32% of respondents stated they would prefer to travel once a year.

Travel Frequency
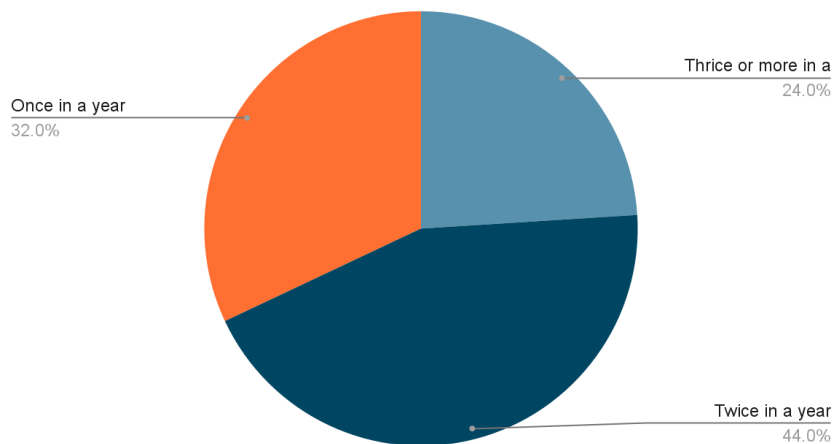
FIGURE 2. Travel Frequency

7.1.3 Frequency of Using Travel and Tourism Agent

Next, the participants how frequently they use a travel and tourist agent's assistance. Survey result show that less than one tenth of participants responded on a weekly basis. Whereas nearly 25% responded on a monthly basis and the remaining 68% responded on an annual basis. The result shows that a sizable portion of participants used travel agents on a yearly basis.
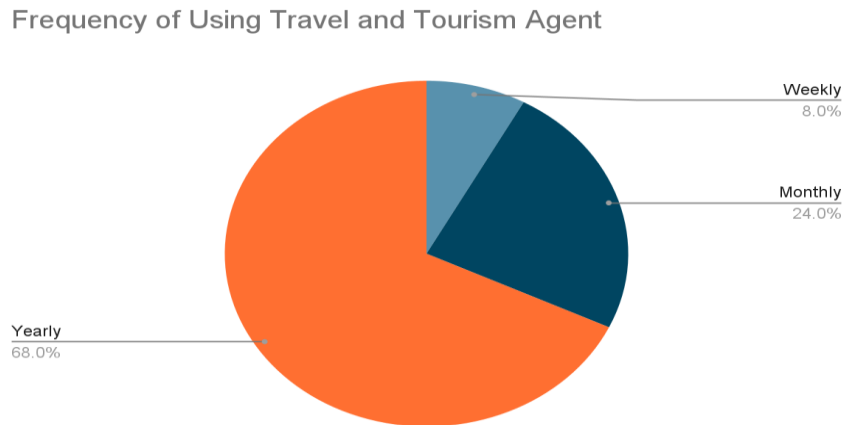

FIGURE 3. Frequency of Using Travel and Tourism Agent

7.1.4 Impact of Travel Agent Assistance on Travel Experience

Following that, respondents were asked whether they believe hiring a travel and tourism agency improved their trip experience. A sizable proportion of respondents (60%) said favourably, implying that it improves their travel experience. Whereas just less than a quarter of respondents responded negatively, claiming that it did not improve their travel experience. Meanwhile, the remaining respondents chose the "no answer" option.

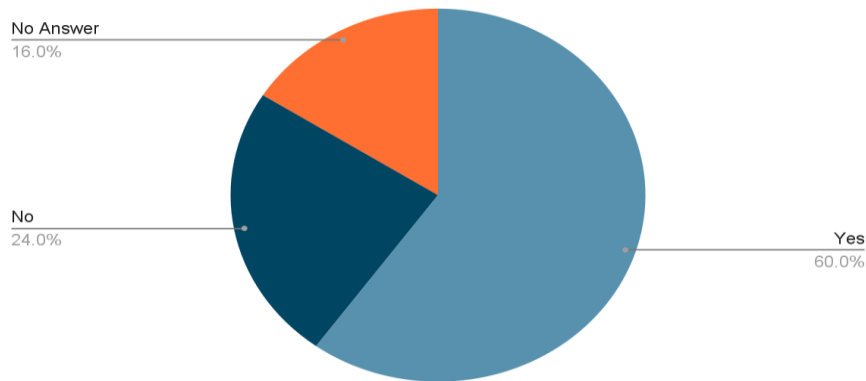Impact of Travel Agent Assistance on Travel Experience

FIGURE 4. Impact of Travel Agent Assistance on Travel Experience

7.1.5 Reliance on Brand When Seeking Assistance from a Travel Agent

The participants then were asked about their reliance on brand when seeking assistance from a travel agent. More than a half of the respondents answered positively that they rely on the brand while seeking assistance from a travel agent. In contrast, slightly more than a quarter of respondents responded negatively, with the remaining 17.8% indicating that they sometimes rely on the brand and sometimes do not.

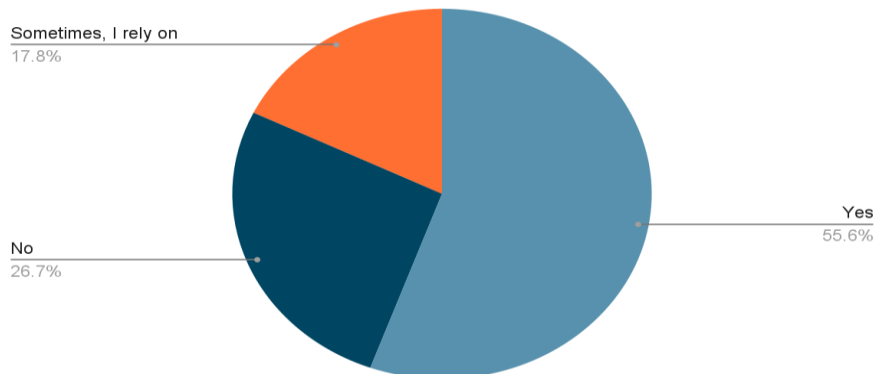Reliance on Brand When Seeking Assistance from a Travel Agent

FIGURE 5. Reliance on Brand When Seeking Assistance from a Travel Agent

7.1.6 Frequency of Encountering Advertising from Travel Agents

In the next question, the respondents were asked how often they find advertising for travel agents. A significant portion of the participants replied that they "very frequently" encounter the advertisement of travel agents. Whereas a fifth of the respondents replied that "sometimes" indicating that they sometimes encounter advertisements by travel agents. Only one tenth of the respondents replied that they "rarely" encountered advertising from travel agents.
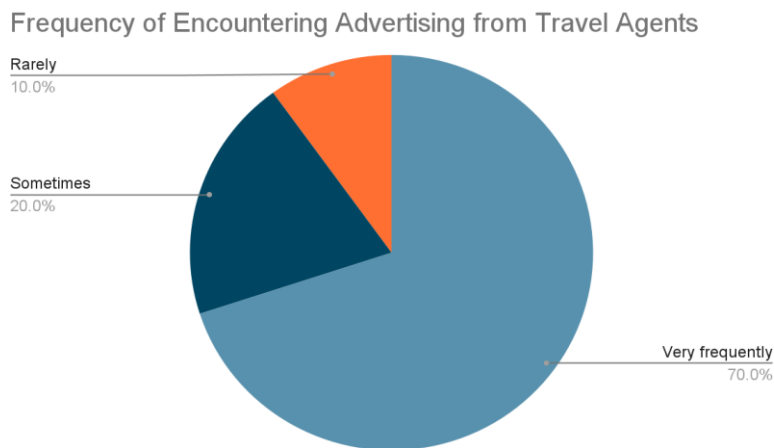
Frequency of Encountering Advertising from Travel Agents

Rarely
10.0%

Sometimes
20.0%

Very frequently
70.0%

FIGURE 6. Frequency of Encountering Advertising from Travel Agents

7.1.7 Influence of Advertisement on Choosing a Travel Agent

After that the respondents were asked whether any advertisement influenced them to take assistance from a travel agent. According to the survey result, 64% respondent were influenced by the advertisement in case of selecting a travel agent. Whereas the advertisements do not influence the decision of thirty four percent of the participants. Meanwhile, a fifth of the participants opted for the option "I am not sure" indicating they do not know whether the advertisement have any influence on their decision or not.
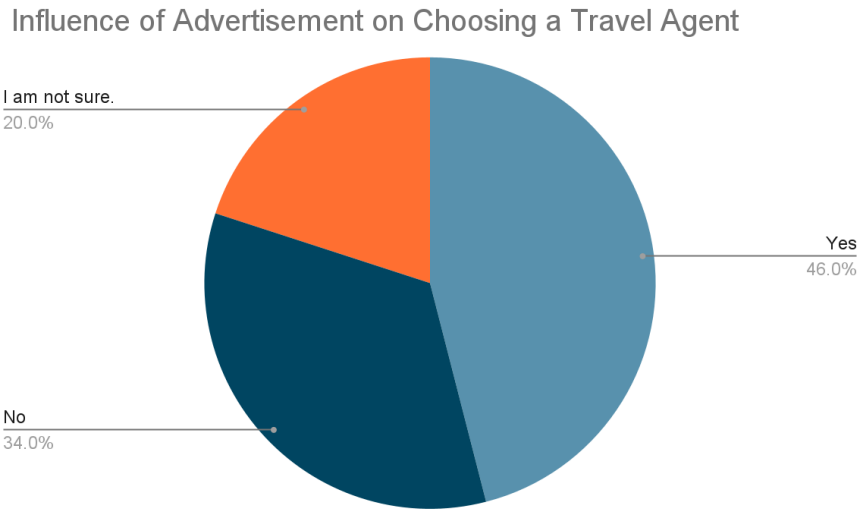
Influence of Advertisement on Choosing a Travel Agent

FIGURE 7. Influence of Advertisement on Choosing a Travel Agent

7.1.8 Effect of Social Media Advertising on Customer Reach

The next question was related to their opinion about whether advertising on social media increases customer reach for travel agents or not. A significant portion of the respondents, which accounted for sixty percent of the total respondent, answered positively suggesting that the advertisement on social media increases customer reach for travel agents. However, fourteen percent of the respondents do not agree with their viewpoint as according to them advertisement on social media does not increase the customer reach. Whereas twenty six percent of participants opted for "no answer" option.
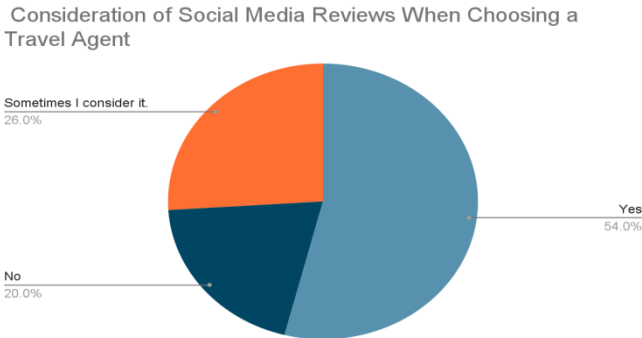

FIGURE 8. Effect of Social Media Advertising on Customer Reach

7.1.9 Consideration of Social Media Reviews When Choosing a Travel Agent

Participants were asked whether they consider social media reviews while looking for a travel agency in the following question. A slightly above a half of the respondents answered affirmatively suggesting that they take in consideration social media review while selecting a travel agent. However, contrary to that, a fifth of the respondents opted for "no " suggesting that their decisions are not based on social media review. Meanwhile twenty six percent said that they sometimes consider it.
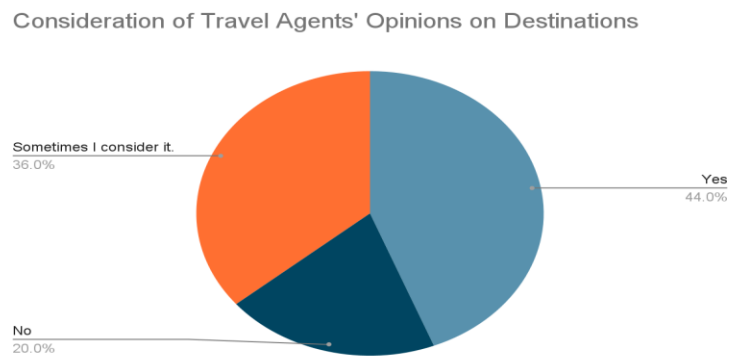

Consideration of Travel Agents' Opinions on Destinations

Sometimes I consider it.
36.0%

No
20.0%

Yes
44.0%

FIGURE 9. Consideration of Social Media Reviews When Choosing a Travel Agent

7.1.10 Consideration of Travel Agents' Opinions on Destinations

The participants were then asked if they consider travel agents' opinions on destinations while booking a trip. Forty-four percent of respondents said positively, indicating that they consider travel agents' opinions while choosing a trip. However, a fifth of respondents chose "no," implying that their selections

Effect of Social Media Advertising on Customer Reach

No Answer
26.0%

No
14.0%

Yes
60.0%
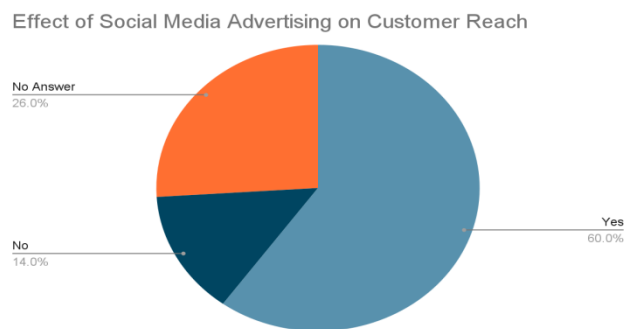
are not based on their personal preferences. Meanwhile, 36% stated they think about it from time to time.

FIGURE 10. Consideration of Travel Agents' Opinions on Destinations

7.1.11 Consideration of Travel Agents' Views on Local Communities

In the following question, respondents were asked whether they consider a travel agent's view on local communities while planning on a vacation. Most respondents, which accounted for 70 percent of the total, answered affirmatively, suggesting that they take in consideration the travel agent's opinion of local communities. However, contrary to that, thirty percent of the respondents opted for "no " suggesting that their decisions are not based on the travel agent's views on local communities.
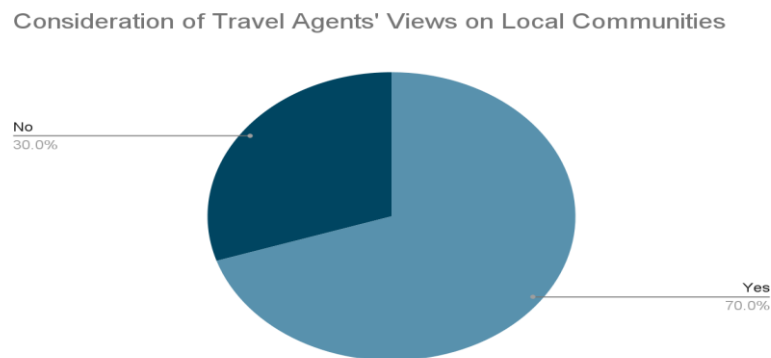
FIGURE 11. Consideration of Travel Agents' Views on Local Communities

7.1.12 Perception of Travel Agents Enhancing Overall Travel Experience

The respondents were then asked whether they regarded travel agents as improving the overall travel experience. In this case, 46 percent of participants responded favourably, implying that travel agents improve the entire trip experience, whereas 30 percent responded negatively. The remaining 24% are unsure if the travel agency improves the entire trip experience or not.

FIGURE 12. Perception of Travel Agents Enhancing Overall Travel Experience

7.1.13 Preference for Suggestions

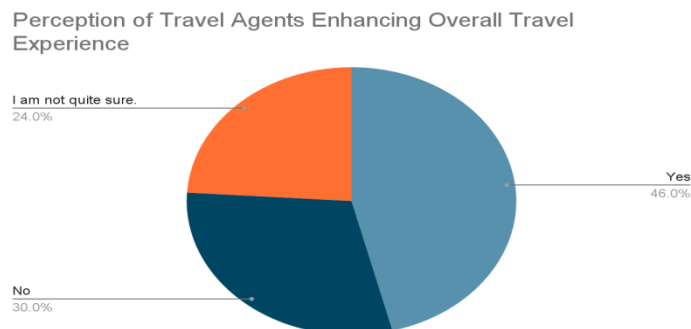The following question was regarding their preference of taking suggestions. In this case, a sizable proportion of respondents (74%) stated they prefer getting advice from friends and family, while 26% said they prefer taking suggestions from a travel and tourist firm.
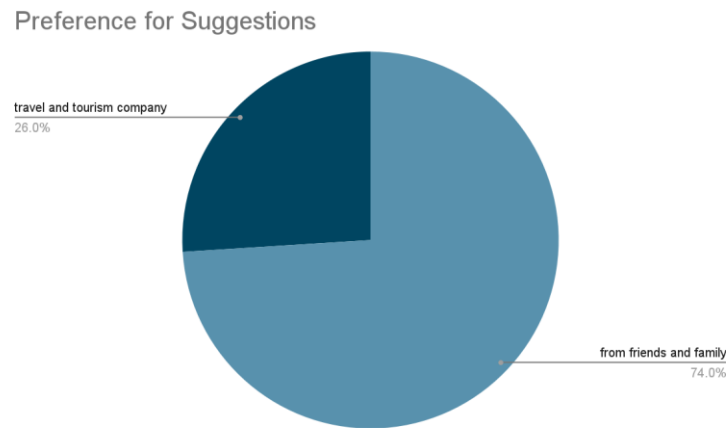
FIGURE 13. Preference for Suggestions

7.1.14 Perceived Worthiness of Giving Money to a Travel Company

The respondents were then asked whether they regarded giving *mInoney* to a travel company as worthwhile. In this case, 30 percent of participants responded favourably, implying that giving money to a travel company is worth it, whereas 36 percent responded negatively. The remaining 34% stated that it varies case to case.
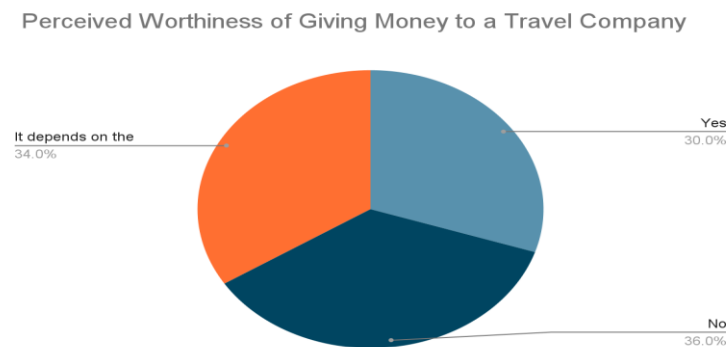
FIGURE 14. Perceived Worthiness of Giving Money to a Travel Company

7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative methods are employed to gain a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between branding and profitability. Key stakeholders, destination managers, branding professionals, and industry experts are interviewed in-depth, enabling informal and thorough discussions with open-ended questions. This qualitative technique dives into the complexities of branding tactics, revealing cultural and societal consequences (Guetterman, 2020). Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches enables for a thorough investigation of underlying mechanics, cultural consequences, and community interaction, all of which contribute to a holistic analysis. The research design examines the larger features of community participation as well as the influence of branding on profitability. Interviews were conducted with the ten employees of Britto Travel & Tourism and the interview was done through zoom meetings. The interview was conducted from 10th November to 13th November. In the first two days, a total six interviewees were interviewed, and the rest of the interviewees were interviewed in the last two days.

TABLE 1. Position of the Respondents

Respondent	Position	Interview Duration
Employee 1	Travel Consultant	20 minutes
Employee 2	Travel Consultant	15 minutes
Employee 3	Travel Consultant	15 minutes
Employee 4	Marketing	25 minutes
Employee 5	Finance	10 minutes
Employee 6	Operations	10 minutes
Employee 7	Marketing	15 minutes

Employee 8	Customer Service	10 minutes
Employee 9	Tour Guide	12 minutes
Employee 10	Tour Guide	10 minutes

7.2.1 Current Situation of the Travel and Tourism Industry in Bangladesh

In the first question, the interviewer asked the respondents about the current situation of the travel and tourism industry in Bangladesh. A few employees of Britto Travel & Tourism emphasised the continuous expansion of Bangladesh's travel and tourism sector. They stated that despite this hopeful development, the country still confronts obstacles on its path to becoming a well-known worldwide holiday destination. One of the main issues brought up by them was the low number of visitors from Western nations, which are important participants in the global tourism industry. Bangladesh continues to provide a disproportionately little contribution, despite tremendous progress in adjacent South and Southeast Asian countries. Foreign countries, like the US, acknowledged security concerns by issuing warnings due to crime and terrorism. Interviewee 2 said that while Bangladesh's security rating has improved, attitudes take time to change. Interviewee 4 expounded about the necessity of significant enhancements in tourism infrastructure and promotional initiatives. They claim that Bangladesh has poor infrastructure for visitors and that problems with the local airline industry drive up the expense of travel for travellers. Interviewee 7 agreed that more efficient marketing techniques are needed, notwithstanding the board's attempts since its founding in 2010. Further obstacles include an undeveloped transport sector and a deficiency of sufficient tourism services, with traffic jams and collisions becoming major issues. Additionally, employee 6 underlined the need to address these problems in order to improve Bangladesh's attractiveness as an international holiday destination and unleash the full financial potential of the tourist sector.

7.2.2 Perspective on the Branding of Travel and Tourism Companies

In the following question, the interviewer asked about their perspective on the branding of travel and tourism companies. Employee 7 said he thought branding went beyond problems with logos and

slogans. Providing their guests with a comprehensive experience is the main goal. Employee 1 said that clients are left with a lasting impression of our brand because of its physical, emotional, and visual aspects. When they do this, clients not only remember them for a few weeks after their trip but also establish long-term loyalty. Interviewee 3 mentioned that recognition is important and that their brand should be easily recognizable, from their website to emails and social media advertisements. This degree of notoriety increased its reputation and ensured that Britto Travel & Tourism would be remembered by its consumers. Furthermore, interviewee 8 remarked that the topic on brand equity is relevant to them. Developing a strong brand boosts bookings and creates avenues for expansion, including opening tour offices in other locations. Consistent exposure and recognition are the foundation of brand equity, so firms may boost their value in the cutthroat travel and tourism industry by focusing on these traits.

7.2.3 Opinion on the Growth of the Industry in Terms of Tourists and Development of Tourism Destinations

In the following question, the interviewer asked about their opinion on the growth of the industry in terms of tourists and development of tourism destinations. According to employee 5, tourism contributes to income production, employment development, and general economic growth from an economic standpoint. As a result of successfully using their natural resources to construct robust tourist sectors, several poor nations have risen in the global income rankings. Employee 5 stated that they used growing labour prices in well-known tourist destinations and growing rivalry from developing nations as examples of this problem. Employee 10 and 9 mentioned that Bangladesh's tourist business is expanding and shows off the nation's variety of attractions. They said their country has a rich natural and cultural legacy, ranging from historical sites like the Sundarbans to stunning beaches like Cox's Bazar. They emphasised on rural tourism and the simple way of life in villages is a distinguishing feature that gives tourists with a memorable experience. The tough element, in their opinion, is ensuring that our tourist potential is appropriately marketed on a global basis. But as far as employee 4 concerned, the difficult part is making sure that our tourism potential is properly marketed on a worldwide scale. Employee 2 stated that the Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation's (BPC) rising foreign exchange revenues over time demonstrate the country's expanding tourist sector. The six unique seasons enhance the allure of Bangladesh, rendering it a desirable travel destination. However, employee 1 argued that in order to capitalise on this expansion, certain planned actions must be followed. Sub-regional zone establishment, regulation formulation and change, and infrastructure upgrading can all help to improve the overall tourism experience.

7.2.4 Explanation of the Impact of Positive Branding on Growth and Development

In the next question, the interviewer asked them about the impact of positive branding on growth and development. Employees at Britto Travel & Tourism jointly emphasised how crucial positive branding is to the growth and development of their company in response to the question about how it affects growth and development. Employee 7 underlined how social branding can transform a situation, transforming social networking into a global phenomenon. Interviewee 4 expounded on the importance of social media platforms as a distinctive channel for promoting reciprocal contact with clients. Through this active engagement, customers may share their vacation experiences and anecdotes, which builds a sense of community and provides a vital source of feedback. Interviewee 6 elaborated on the idea that having a good brand helps to create a unique brand voice that successfully highlights the special features of their trip packages. Employee 9 highlighted that positive client experiences shared on well-known social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter significantly help to create a positive perception of the place. This good perception, which is supported by the literature evaluation, is critical in influencing prospective visitors' decision-making. Employee 5 also emphasised the importance of social media as a research tool for consumers choosing where to go their next holiday. They clarified that these choices might be favourably impacted by positive branding, which is attained through engaging content and happy client endorsements. According to this point of view, continually portraying the brand in a positive light aid in establishing credibility and trust with the audience. Furthermore, all of the respondents believed that positive social media branding is a great tool for bringing in new companies for expansion and development. Positive customer experiences shared online may have a domino effect, and this makes them valuable marketing tools. This word-of-mouth marketing, which reaches a large audience actively looking for testimonials and recommendations on social media, may persuade prospective tourists to choose Britto Travel & Tourism.

7.2.5 Opinion on the Incorporation of Cultural Values and Rights of Local People in Advertising by Travel and Tourism Companies

In response to a question regarding the inclusion of local cultural values and rights in travel and tourism advertising, employee 4 acknowledged the extraordinary rise in cultural tourism, highlighting its popularity as a tourism segment that outpaces the global growth rate of tourism. Employee 2 saw the importance of cultural assets in boosting tourism and referred to them as significant tourist assets. Destinations' distinctive cultural offers have been identified as important motivators for travellers worldwide, attracting millions each year. Employee 1 defined cultural tourism as the introduction of unique cultural elements that showcase the diverse range of cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and landscapes. Both tangible and intangible cultural resources support cultural tourism and gain importance when they are transformed into products that tourists may buy. Employee 7 underlined the need of examining the information that the vendor imparts to the buyer while elucidating the idea of culture as a commercial good. This resulted in the definition of a cultural tourism product as anything supplied to visitors to meet their cultural requirements and desires, with cultural tourism resources serving as the foundation. employee 8 also mentioned the distinctness of cultural tourism goods, which are positioned by suppliers who focus on key cultural features such as cultural places, surroundings, or events. The employee indicated support for the inclusion of cultural values and local people's rights in advertising. Employee 10 appreciated the change in focus, realising that cultural tourism businesses must set themselves apart from the competition by highlighting core cultural traits. Employee 4 claims that this change not only aligns with the evolving dynamics of cultural tourism but also acknowledges the importance of upholding the traditional rights and values of the local community.

7.2.6 Incorporation of social media in Britto Travel and Tourism's Branding Strategies

When asked how Britto Travel & Tourism uses social media in its branding initiatives, an employee outlined the most often stated aims of the social media initiatives, which included promoting and growing awareness of the region, getting worldwide attention, motivating tourists to make vacation arrangements, and cementing the destination's status as a favourite. Employee 8 mentioned that among the most popular social media marketing formats include contests, interactive campaigns including celebrities and online influencers, and travel planners. Employee 4 mentioned that among other social media sites, Britto Travel & Tourism uses Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc. Interviewee 7 also emphasised how the promotions were participatory and encouraged participants' inventiveness. These

initiatives urge users to write guides, blog and articles Employee 6 underlined the importance of emotions in advertising, stating that Britto trip & Tourism leverages emotions to increase the romantic appeal of locations, make tourists fall in love with and rely on them, and ultimately increase trip reservations. Emotions are conveyed through story, romanticization, a rendezvous feeling, customised avatars, and positive and negative allusions. Employee 2 also mentioned the competitive nature of these campaigns, in which contestants may win gifts like dream getaways, ideal jobs, remakes, or media exposure. Employee 5, in addition to a return on investment (ROI), Britto Travel & Tourism will benefit from increasing visitor numbers, favourable recognition, plaudits, media, and the hiring of new ambassadors for the site. Employee 4 did, however, emphasise that building a successful social media campaign is a difficult process. It is important to quantify how social media initiatives affect income, and travel destinations should assess how their social media growth correlates with visitor numbers.

7.2.7 Influence of Social Media Support on the Profitability of Britto Travel and Tourism

The conversation concluded with a question about the impact of social media support on the profitability of British travel and tourism. All of the employees agreed that social media has played a critical role in broadening Britto Travel & Tourism's marketing reach. The firm has been able to reach a larger audience by promoting its travel packages, destinations, and services on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Employees stressed that the enhanced exposure has resulted in a greater number of potential clients. Employees agreed unanimously that potential consumers frequently base their trip selections on information, reviews, and experiences published on social media. Britto Travel & Tourism's visually appealing content, which consists of images, quotes, and travelogues, has been cited as a key element in convincing customers to choose them over competitors. Social media platforms have proven to be effective promotional channels for exclusive offers, rebates, and travel packages. Employees claimed that these incentives create a sense of urgency and exclusivity, driving potential clients to act quickly. This has resulted in more bookings and, as a result, improved profitability for the organisation. Additionally, the employees underlined that Britto Travel & Tourism has a competitive marketing edge because of its active social media presence. Being at the forefront of interaction, high-quality content, and responsiveness has helped the business become a preferred option for tourists, which contributes to long-term success.

7.3 Analysis of Findings

The study, utilizing a quantitative technique with a well-crafted questionnaire, aims to understand the impact of branding on passenger numbers, revenue creation, and overall profitability. The 50-person sample, which was chosen at random from users of travel and tourism websites online, offers an insight into the larger population. The study starts by looking at the survey respondents' gender distribution to explore the demographic landscape. There is slight imbalance between the ration of male and female participants, but this difference is not large enough to introduce bias. Aside from demographics, the survey investigates travel frequency, discovering that most people travel twice a year. The frequency with which individuals utilise travel and tourist agencies is a significant consideration. According to the survey, 25% of participants utilise these agencies on a monthly basis, compared to less than 10% who do so on a regular basis. The majority, 68%, utilise travel companies only once a year. This implies a high reliance on travel companies, emphasising how important it is to understand how they impact the entire trip experience. Following that, the impact of travel agent support on the trip experience is investigated, with 60% of respondents reporting a favourable influence and fewer than a quarter reporting a negative impact. The use of a brand while requesting assistance from a travel agent is also studied, with more than half of participants acknowledging their use and only a quarter expressing a negative attitude. The study dives into participants' exposure to travel agency advertising, indicating that a sizable majority (about 70%) routinely encounters such promotions. This research highlights the importance of advertising in the tourism sector. Furthermore, the survey looks at the impact of advertising on hiring a travel agency, discovering that 64% of respondents are favourably impacted, 34% are not, and a minor percentage is unsure. The function of social media in advertising is investigated, with 60% of respondents stating that it has a beneficial influence on consumer reach for travel agencies. A fifth of respondents denied using social media, but slightly more than half of respondents acknowledged using it, indicating that these assessments are also taken into consideration when making decisions. The survey result indicated that their decision-making was significantly influenced by the opinions of travel agents on places and local communities. The perspective of travel agents improving the entire travel experience is divided. According to the preference for ideas, 74% of respondents prefer advice from friends and family over travel and tourism companies. Lastly, a study is conducted on the perceived value of making a financial contribution to a travel agency. The result implies a more nuanced view of the worth of financial interactions with travel providers. Finally, the study gives extensive insights into the dynamics of the tourist business in Bangladesh, notably the significance of branding in Britto Travel & tourist's profitability. The results underscore the significance of travel agents, branding, and advertising in shaping the preferences and choices of passengers. The diverse responses highlight

the complexity of the variables influencing the profitability of the tourism industry and provide insightful information for those involved in the field.

In the context of Britto Travel and Tourism in Bangladesh, the qualitative data analysis provides a sophisticated and thorough knowledge of the intricate link between branding and profitability. The research investigates many elements, giving light on cultural effects, community relations, and underlying mechanics through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, destination managers, branding specialists, and industry experts. The interviews give insights on the present state of Bangladesh's travel and tourist business. Although there is recognition of the need for further growth, problems including the dearth of Western tourists, security worries, and infrastructural constraints are highlighted. Promotional initiatives, resolving security issues, and major tourism infrastructure upgrades are needed to make Bangladesh a more desirable travel destination worldwide. Diverse viewpoints are captured by the qualitative study with regard to the branding of travel and tourist organisations. Respondents highlight the importance of providing a comprehensive and memorable experience, noting that branding extends beyond logos and slogans. Positive branding and subsequent business success are attributed to critical components such as recognition, easily recognisable branding, and the significance of brand equity. Divergent views exist on the expansion of tourism destinations and the industry's growth in terms of tourists. While some appreciate tourism's economic benefits, others express concerns about its long-term viability, potential decline in returns, and the need to take cautious actions to fully achieve its potential, such as building sub-regional zones and modernising infrastructure. The effect of positive branding on development and progress is examined, with Britto Travel and Tourism staff members highlighting the revolutionary potential of social branding. The importance of social media platforms in building a distinct brand voice, fostering community engagement, and employing pleased consumers as marketing assets is stressed. Positive word-of-mouth spreads like wildfire on social media, and it is critical in attracting new clients for growth and development. The inclusion of cultural values and local people's rights in travel and tourist promotion is debated. The necessity to showcase certain cultural traits and the rise in cultural tourism are acknowledged by the respondents. The trend towards emphasising key cultural qualities in advertising is considered as matching with emerging dynamics and honouring the local community's traditional rights and values. The qualitative investigation also dives into the use of social media in the branding initiatives of Britto Travel & Tourism. The relevance of social media efforts that are interactive and creative, the usage of numerous platforms, and the role of emotions in advertising are all emphasised. The competitive nature of advertising, as well as the requirement to assess the impact of social media activities on income and visitor counts, are acknowledged. Lastly, employees unanimously agree that social media support has a positive effect on Britto Travel &

Tourism's bottom line. Social media is thought to be essential for increasing marketing reach, reaching a larger audience, and influencing the travel decisions of prospective customers. Social media platforms' visually appealing content, unique offers, and incentives have been cited as drivers of greater bookings and enhanced profitability. Long-term success and a competitive marketing edge are seen to be provided by a robust social media presence.

7.4 Recommendation

After doing a thorough examination of the survey data and conducting interviews, the researchers consider that the tourism sector has to address its current challenges and concerns. The analysis also underscores the need for targeted marketing initiatives, more robust security protocols, and significant improvements to tourism infrastructure in order to position Bangladesh as a more enticing vacation destination worldwide. Furthermore, qualitative observations from key stakeholders emphasise the varied character of branding that extends beyond logos and slogans. It is suggested that travel and tourism organisations, such as Britto Travel and Tourism, focus on providing customers with complete and memorable experiences. The study highlights the significance of brand recognition, recognisable branding, and building brand equity. To make a lasting impression on customers, branding campaigns should incorporate these components. The report also highlights social branding's revolutionary potential, especially when it comes to using social media platforms wisely. It is thus advised that businesses, such as Britto Travel and Tourism, keep funding engaging and innovative social media campaigns. Positive word-of-mouth marketing may be considerably boosted by employing emotions in advertising, promoting community engagement, and deploying satisfied consumers as brand ambassadors on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These methods can also aid in attracting new customers and accelerating business growth. Furthermore, it is thought that two significant developments in advertising are the incorporation of cultural values and the recognition of local people's rights. To stand out in the market, it is essential that travel and tourism businesses in Bangladesh, like Britto Travel and Tourism, keep emphasising and showcasing distinctive cultural features. This displays a commitment to honouring local customs and traditions and is consistent with the growing trend of cultural tourism. Finally, the fact that staff members all concur that social media has a good effect on profitability implies how important it is to keep up an active social media presence. Therefore, it is advised that Britto Travel & Tourism continue and expand its efforts on various social media platforms in order to increase marketing reach, interact with a wider audience, and favourably impact potential clients' travel selections.

8 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this thesis has examined the critical role that branding plays in shaping Bangladesh's tourism industry, with a particular emphasis on Britto Travel & Tourism. The research began by recognising the rising importance of tourism in global economies and described Bangladesh's huge potential as a tourist destination, which is enhanced by its cultural past, scenic beauty, and historical sites. However, it also highlighted the country's tourist sector's limitations, such as inadequate worldwide awareness, infrastructural deficiencies, and sustainability-related issues.

The study's main focus was on how branding influences Bangladesh's tourism industry, particularly in relation to Britto Travel and tourists. The goals were to evaluate existing branding strategies, determine their influence on visitor views and decisions, identify possibilities and difficulties for improving branding activities, and make suggestions based on the research results. The commissioner section featured the introduction of Mr. Tawhidul Islam Shawon, a prominent figure in Bangladesh's travel and tourist industry and the brains behind Britto Travel & tourist. His commitment to marketing Bangladesh as a major tourism destination, as well as his support for this study, highlighted the significance of successful branding in the business.

The findings research, which included both quantitative and qualitative data, gave insights into the dynamics of the tourist business. The quantitative method produced useful information on travel patterns, the effect of travel agents, exposure to advertising, and the impact of social media on decision-making via a well-crafted questionnaire. The qualitative analysis highlighted the multifaceted nature of branding, cultural considerations. It investigated the economic and sociological contributions of tourism to Bangladesh, emphasising the importance of a thorough knowledge of these factors for long-term growth. The debate also emphasised the twin advantages of tourism in terms of cultural preservation and community empowerment. The proposal section synthesised the study's findings, recommending focused marketing campaigns, stronger security measures, and considerable infrastructural enhancements to boost Bangladesh's appeal as a tourist destination. It also called for a comprehensive strategy to branding, which included combining cultural values, successfully using social media, and offering unique visitor experiences.

Finally, the study adds to the greater conversation on the dynamic character of Bangladesh's tourist sector by providing light on the critical role of branding in creating perceptions, moulding decisions, and

ultimately generating profitability. The suggestions provide concrete ways for all parties involved, especially tourists and Britto Travel, to get over the obstacles and take use of the enormous potential of the nation's tourism sector. As Bangladesh continues to be a popular travel destination, strong branding becomes apparent as a vital component of sustained success and expansion.

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APPENDIX

Survey Questions

1. Gender

2. How often do you travel?

3. How often do you take assistance from a travel and tourism agent?

4. Do you think taking assistance from a travel and tourism agent improves your travel experience?

5. When you plan for taking assistance from a travel agent, do you rely on brand?

6. How often do you find advertising of travel agents?

7. Does any advertisement influence you to taking assistance from a travel agent?

8. Do you think advertising on social media increases customer reach for travel agents?

9. When you look for a travel agent, do you consider examining the review posted on social media?

10. Do you consider travel agents' opinion for travel destinations when you plan a visit a destination?

11. Do you consider travel agents' view about local communities of a tourist destination when you interact with local people?

12. Do you think travel agents increase overall travel experience?

13. What do you prefer? Taking suggestions from friends and family or taking suggestions from a travel and tourism company?

14. Do you think giving money to a travel company is worthwhile?

Interview Questions

1. What is the current situation of the travel and tourism industry of Bangladesh?

2. What do you think about the branding of travel and tourism companies? Does branding influence tourists?

3. What is your opinion on the growth of the industry in terms of tourists and development of tourism destinations? Do you think positive branding has any impact on growth and development?

4. Travel and tourism companies are now incorporating cultural values and rights of local people while advertising. What is your opinion about this change?

5. Social media is a real breakthrough in branding. How does Britto Travel and Tourism incorporate social media in its branding strategies?

6. Does social media support Britto Travel and Tourism for increasing profitability? Please explain your opinion.