

Community Based Tourism: An Analysis of consumer Behaviour

Joydeep Mukherjee & Prof. Sharmistha Banerjee

Department of Business Management, University of Calcutta, Kolkata – 700027, India

Abstract

As one of the global economic success stories, tourism has experienced continued growth to become one of the largest and most competitive economic sectors in the world. But this success has been often counterbalanced by the negative impact of unplanned growth of mass tourism, which jeopardizes the sustainability of environment and damages economic and socio-cultural structure of a region. As a result, academics, practitioners & advocates of sustainable development often propose Eco tourism as the future avenue of the sustainable tourism. At the same time, for Eco tourism to be an ideal instrument for sustainable development, there is a growing need to address the interest and benefits of local communities and their active participation in tourism activities. Like mass tourism also eco tourism treats local communities as passive receiver of tourism impacts rather than active player to be involved and participate in the process of tourism development. So this paper throws light upon a modified version of sustainable eco tourism, community based tourism (CBT), which focuses on the protection of host communities' socio-cultural values, ensuring their active participation in tourism development, conservation of natural environment along with generating economic benefits. Literature provides that Consumer or tourist behavior is the pivotal point of planning and promotion of any tourism services. Tourists are influenced in their decision making processes by many push and pull motivating factors when they choose their holiday destinations. This paper diagnoses sampled tourists' behaviour pattern to develop and manage the newly emerged concept of community based tourism. The study has analyzed the tourist behavior pattern to identify the critical factors in developing and managing CBT in a destination. Questionnaire based survey method is used for this purpose.

Keywords: *Community based tourism, Consumer behavior, Travel motivation, Critical factors*

Introduction

Although tourism has brought economic benefits, it has significantly contributed to environmental degradation, negative social and cultural impacts. Tourism's unplanned growth has damaged the natural and socio-cultural environments of many tourism destinations (Domet, 1991 ; Frueh, 1986). As a result, managing tourism in a destination ensuring the measures of sustainable development is the future. Therefore, Eco Tourism which aims at minimizing the negative environmental, social and economic impact of main stream tourism is emerged as an alternative sustainable form of tourism. But Eco tourism also mostly treats the local communities as passive receiver of tourism development. But active participation of local communities is very

essential because they are involved in tourism process regardless of their willingness. So the academics and practitioners are very fast shifting their attention towards a new form of sustainable tourism, Community Based Tourism (CBT). The objective of CBT is the participation of local communities in sustainable tourism planning, development and management processes (Beeton, 2006 ; Inskip, 1994) and ensuring their control over development of tourism. However, CBT as a newly emerged concept (Gangotia, 2013) in his paper suggests that there is an immense need to develop grassroots experience in developing and marketing community-based tourism programmes.

Williams (2006) states that in most cases tourism marketing focusing on the destination or the products being offered and lacks focus on the consumer. But study of consumer behavior is the most important part of developing and managing tourism. It is Needless to say that the success of tourism industry depends on the choice of consumers or tourists in general and in case of CBT also. So this study identified the most important factors for developing and managing CBT in a destination by analyzing and understanding consumer behavior of the tourists. Motivation is considered to be one of the most essential factors explaining tourist behavior (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996). A wide range of variables motivate tourists to select a tourism destination or product. These can be largely categorized into two groups. Push factors or internal motivating forces and pull factors or external destination attributes that work as travel motivation (Al-Haj Mohammad & Mat Som, 2010). Although push and pull motivation theory is accepted as a useful framework for understanding tourist behavior but there is no widely accepted theoretical or conceptual framework in analyzing travel motivation (Huang, 2010). This study identified the most critical factors for CBT management using push and pull travel motivation theory framework and also depicted their influence on tourist visit in case of CBT. The findings of the study will provide valuable insight to tourism service providers, individual entrepreneurs or communities, government bodies or any others organizations involved in CBT development for efficiently and effectively manage CBT in a destination. Though CBT is an alternative form of tourism, still it needs some competitive advantage to sustain in highly competitive tourism industry.

Literature review

This section attempts to review the existing literature on theory and practice of consumer motivation and the present state of CBT to develop the theoretical framework of opportunities for the proposed study

While the emphasis on community-based tourism (CBT), using this name, has become greater since the discussion on sustainable tourism intensified much later in the 1990s, the idea of including the host community into tourism planning and development has been discussed much before that (Doxey, 1975), (Murphy, Community attitudes to tourism: A comparative analysis , 1983). Due to the significant negative consequences of excessive and unplanned tourism development, the focus on local involvement has been considered as one of the ways to control the pace of development, and mitigate socio - cultural, environmental and economic impacts (Murphy, Tourism: A community approach, 1985), (Richards & Hall, 2000). The publication

'Effective community based tourism: a best practice manual'(2010) suggests that the term Community Based Tourism (CBT) emerged in the mid 1990s. CBT is generally small scale and involves interactions between visitor and host community, particularly suited to rural and regional areas (Asker, Boronyak, Carrad, & Paddon, 2010).

Timothy (1999) found that tourism planners in developing countries have to deal with the four major constraints to participatory principles, namely cultural and political traditions of the community, poor economic conditions where the most concern is on basic survival, lack of expertise in tourism planning, and lack of understanding by locals about tourism.

Consumer behavior in tourism is the perceptions, attitudes and decisions regarding the choosing, buying and consuming the tourism product and services and post consumption and post travel reactions (Fratu, 2011). It is very complex construct to understand why people travel and choice a certain destination i.e. tourist consumer behavior. Research in leisure travel has recognized “a wide variety of motivators ranging from the psychologically based motivations to physical characteristics of tourist destination” (Chiang & Jogaratnam, 2006). “Several theories were developed and among all the motivation theories the push-pull theory is the widely applied for explaining motivations, given its simplicity and intuitive approach” (Pawaskar & Goel, 2016). Al-Haj Mohammad & Mat Som, (2010) suggests that people travel because Push factors or internal motivating forces and pull factors or external destination attributes motivate them. Yousefi and Marzuki (2015) applied push and pull motivation framework to understand the travel motivation of international tourist to Malaysia.

Till date, research into CBT has viewed the CBT from one sided perspectives, few studies focused only at the supply side of the tourism development, addressing planning, development and management issues (Lynch, 2000), economic and sociological issues are concentrated by some other studies(Shakur & Holland, 2000). Few papers addressed the tourists' experience and perception (Jamal, Othman, & Muhammad, 2011). But in most of the current literature there is a lacuna of studies which integrate the supply and demand side components in case of CBT or any other form of alternate tourism. Present study addressed the factors involved in planning, organizing and managing the success factors of CBT from the consumer view point.

The objective of the study is to identify the critical factors for developing and efficiently managing CBT following the responses of tourists who are effectively the potential customers of CBT. Consequently inferences from the perception of respondents will be generalized, to the extent possible produce a CBT development and management guideline. Such guidelines may act as handbook for CBT owners and managers and tourism policymakers.

Research methodology

Measure

A questionnaire was developed to collect empirical data which covered the demographic profile of the respondents, travel characteristics (travel frequency, team size, booking medium etc.) and also push and pull motivational factors for leisure tourism and destination selection

gathered from literature . 6 push factors or internal motivating factors and 12 pull factors or destination attributes that motivate tourists were generated. The opinion of the respondents on each of the factors were assessed using a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Data is also collected on respondents' CBT programmes awareness level and visiting willingness to a CBT destination in future. A pilot study on 20 respondents was conducted and necessary correction was implemented in the questionnaire.

Study site

Kolkata, in the state of West Bengal was the study site for the purpose of data collection. The focus of the study was emerging CBT destinations in the North Bengal region, so the data was collected from the respondents from Kolkata and adjacent areas from where the most of the tourists in North Bengal crowds around throughout the year. Specifically the data was collected from the visitors in Travel Tourism Fair 2016 held in Netaji Indoor Stadium from 8-10th July, 2016. The approximate footfall was 8000.

Sampling

Simple random sampling method was used for the study. The data was collected by selecting every visitor entering on every 15th minute in the fair premises through the main entrance as a respondent. Total questionnaires were collected 104, among which 100 were used for the study after cleaning.

Findings

Demographic profile

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variables	Description	%
Gender	Male	68
	Female	32
Age	18-25	12
	25-34	42
	35-44	28
	45 & above	18
Income in a month (Rs.)	Less than 20k	10.2
	20k-40k	34.7
	40k-60k	30.6
	60k & above	24.5
Holiday Travel Frequency	Once in a year	56
	More than once	44

Analysis of the demographic background of the respondents depicted that the majority respondents were male (68%) and belong to age group of 25-34 (42%). It also revealed that majority of the respondents were from monthly income group of 20k-40k (34.7%) and 40k-60k (30.6%). Most of them (56%) go for a holiday trip at least once in a year and rest (44%) go for a holiday trip more than once in a year i.e. frequent traveler.

Respondents were asked regarding their CBT programme awareness level, with dichotomous choice responses. Further they were asked about their willingness to visit a CBT destination in future regardless of their awareness about CBT. Responses were collected in three options: No, Not sure, Yes. Pearson's Chi-Square Test was applied to test the relationship or the association between CBT awareness level and willingness to visit a CBT destination in the respondents. The result showed that Pearson's Chi-Square statistic $\chi^2 = 100.463$ and $p = 0.000$ (Less than 0.05). So a statistically significant relationship exists between CBT awareness level and visit willingness. The respondents who are aware about CBT among them 77.8% have shown a willingness to visit a CBT destination in future holiday trips. 13.9% are not willing to visit and 8.3 are not sure. This clearly indicates that as awareness increases more and more people would be interested in visiting CBT destinations.

Table 2 CBT awareness * CBT visit willingness

CBT Awareness		CBT visit willingness			Total
		No	Not sure	Yes	
Aware	72%	13.9%	8.3%	77.8%	100%
		10	6	56	72
Unaware	28%	50%	50%	0	100%
		14	14	0	28
Total	100%	24	20	56	100

Table 3 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	100.463 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	123.110	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	74.593	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	200		

Descriptive statistics

All the respondents were asked to rate the influence of various push and pull factors on their travel motivation and destination selection. At first, the study has calculated the mean score of each push and pull factor from the responses to identify the most important push and pull variables to the tourist which influence their travel behavior. Using descriptive statistical analysis on the basis of mean score three most important push variables and five most important pull

variables from tourists' perception have been identified. Result showed that Enjoying Nature (mean 4.76), Experiencing new people and culture (mean 4.28) and Visiting popular destinations (mean 4.08) were having highest mean among the push variables. Again Natural Beauty (mean 4.88), Safety and security (mean 4.60), Clean & tidy ambience (mean 4.32), Accommodation (mean 4.04) and Transportation (mean 4.00) having the highest mean score among the pull variables.

Table 4 (Push Factors)

Descriptive Statistics						
	Rest & Relax	Enjoy Nature	Experience New People & Culture	Fun & Adventure	Learn History	Visiting Popular Destinations
Mean	3.32	4.76	4.28	3.36	2.96	4.08
Std. Deviation	1.823	.657	1.386	1.793	1.784	1.412
Variance	3.324	.431	1.920	3.215	3.182	1.993

Table 5 (Pull Factors)

Descriptive Statistics						
	Value for Money	Natural beauty	Culture & History	Accommodation	Service	Safety & Security
Mean	3.64	4.88	3.28	4.04	3.44	4.60
Std. Deviation	1.588	.480	1.715	1.160	1.631	1.069
Variance	2.521	.230	2.940	1.345	2.660	1.143

	Communication and Transportation	Food	Information on destination	Recreation	Shopping opportunity	Clean & Tidy
Mean	4.00	3.16	3.96	2.44	1.88	4.32
Std. Deviation	1.355	1.557	1.628	1.809	1.466	1.253
Variance	1.837	2.423	2.651	3.272	2.149	1.569

Direct booking to the hotel/ service provider is identified as the most preferred booking method for the tourist from analysis. It is having an outstanding mean value of 4.40 much higher than others.

Table 6 (Booking Preference)

Descriptive Statistics				
	Via Travel agency	Online booking portal	Direct through hotel	Booking on arrival
Mean	2.72	2.92	4.40	2.32
Std. Deviation	1.896	1.850	1.294	1.743
Variance	3.593	3.422	1.673	3.038

Exploratory factor analysis**Table 7 Total Variance Explained**

Comp	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.170	27.129	27.129	2.170	27.129	27.129	1.897	23.718	23.718
2	1.521	19.011	46.140	1.521	19.011	46.140	1.599	19.989	43.708
3	1.220	15.255	61.395	1.220	15.255	61.395	1.415	17.688	61.395
4	.915	11.437	72.832						
5	.866	10.828	83.660						
6	.655	8.192	91.852						
7	.413	5.165	97.017						
8	.239	2.983	100.000						

Since the responses yielded a many variables that were critical in influencing tourists to visit CBT destinations, a more summarized understanding was felt necessary. In order to reduce the dimension of the survey responses, an exploratory factor analysis was carried out with principal component analysis extraction method and varimax rotation method to extract the critical factors from the identified important 8 push and pull variables. The result depicted that 8 variables was reduced to 3 factors which explained 61.395 % of cumulative variance.

The table 9 depicts the factor loading of the variables constructing respective factors. The variables which are having factor loading greater than 0.5 chosen for each factor. Factor 1 is identified as Tourism Infrastructure and facilities which is combining four variables i.e. Communication and transportation, safety and security, accommodation, visiting popular destination. Factor 2 is identified as Nature and environment attraction which is clubbing three variables i.e. unspoiled natural beauty, to enjoy nature, clean and tidy ambience. Factor 3 is

identified as Cultural attraction which is explained by single variable Experience people and culture.

Table 8 Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
Communication & Transportation	.735		
Safety & Security	.723	.440	
Accommodation	.642		-.486
Visiting Popular Destination	.631	-.372	
Unspoiled Natural beauty		.664	
To Enjoy Nature		.663	
Clean & tidy ambience		.563	-.475
To experience new people & culture			.901

Table 9 Factor Loading

Factor 1 : Tourism Infrastructure & Facilities		Factor 2 : Nature & Environment Attraction		Factor 3 : Cultural Attraction	
Variables	Factor Loading	Variables	Factor Loading	Variables	Factor Loading
Communication & Transportation	.735	Unspoiled Natural beauty	.664	To experience new people & culture	.901
Safety & Security	.723	To Enjoy Nature	.663		
Accommodation	.642	Clean & tidy ambience	.563		
Visiting Popular Destination	.631				

Multinomial regression (MLR)

Thereafter it was felt necessary to estimate the influence of these variables in inducing a customer who was in the ‘not interested to visit’ category to move to the ‘may visit’ or the ‘yes will visit’ category. Hence given the possible moves a Multinomial regression model is used to analyze the impact of identified critical factors from factor analysis to predict the tourists’ intention or willingness to visit CBT destinations in their future holiday trips. MLR is used to regress the tourist visit willingness outcomes against the critical factors identified in factor analysis. The multinomial dependent variable has three categories ‘Not willing to visit’, ‘Not sure’, ‘Willing to visit’.

Table 10 Model Fitting Information

Model	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	692.238			
Final	597.186	95.052	6	.000

Table 10 is used to see the overall relationship between the visit willingness and the identified factors which highly influence the tourists’ holiday destination choice based on chi-square distribution. The test statistic value is 95.052 and significance level is 0.000 (p value < 0.05). So the test is statistically significant.

Table 11 Pseudo R²

Cox and Snell	.212
Nagelkerke	.245

The Cox & Snell and Nagelkerke Pseudo R² measure in our study depicts that the variation in the visit willingness explained by the identified holiday destination choice influencing factors ranges between 21.2% and 24.5%.

Table 12 shows the accuracy of classification in the model by comparing observing and predicted levels of visiting willingness. There is one group i.e. ‘Willing to visit’ has very high level of accurate classification (85.7%). Accurate classification for ‘Not willing to visit’ and ‘Not sure’ is 16.7% and 20% respectively. The overall correct classification is 56%. The overall classification accuracy rate (56%) is greater than the proportional by chance accuracy criteria of 51.4%. So the model is adequate. Proportional by chance accuracy criteria can be calculated from the marginal frequencies. Calculation: $(0.24^2 + 0.20^2 + 0.56^2 = 0.4112) + 25\%$ improvement = 51.4%.

Table 12 Classification of Accuracy

Observed	Predicted			
	Not willing to visit	Not Sure	Willing to visit	Percent Correct
Not willing to visit	16	0	80	16.7%
Not Sure	8	16	56	20.0%
Willing to visit	24	8	192	85.7%
Overall Percentage	12.0%	6.0%	82.0%	56.0%

Table 13 depicts the significance of individual factors. Tourism Infrastructure & Facilities, Nature and environment attraction and Cultural attraction have p value of 0.001, 0.000 and 0.024 respectively which is less than 0.05. This suggests a statistically significant relationship between these three independent variables and the dependent variable.

Table 13 Likelihood Ratio Tests

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept	663.052	65.866	2	.000
Tourism Infrastructure & Facilities	611.745	14.559	2	.001
Nature and environment attraction	667.365	70.179	2	.000
Cultural attraction	604.673	7.487	2	.024

Conclusion

Discussion

Tourists' perception is very essential for tourism industry to continue to attract future tourists to a destination. In this study critical factors have been identified for future development and management of CBT from consumer behavior analysis. For doing this, the study analyzed the internal or push factors and external or pull factors (Destination attributes) which motivate people to travel. The study revealed three most important factors from factor analysis those motivate tourists to travel and influence their choice of destination are 'Tourism Infrastructure & Facilities', 'Nature and environment attraction' and 'Cultural attraction'. Further, Multinomial regression model was developed to test these factors' impact on respondents' visiting willingness to CBT destinations. A statistically significant result was revealed with the three critical factors. So these three factors can influence the tourists' visiting willingness to CBT destinations.

Managerial implications

The study suggests CBT developers should focus on three essential critical factors i.e. 'Tourism Infrastructure & Facilities', 'Nature and environment attraction' and 'Cultural attraction' while developing and managing CBT in a destination. The 'Tourism Infrastructure & Facilities' includes developing tourism facilities like accommodation & services with at least basic amenities, good communication, road condition and transportation facilities, creating a safe and secure environment for the tourists, availability of standard food and drinking water etc. The second factor 'Nature and environment attraction' includes development of CBT in an area with a beautiful landscape, the protection of inherent natural environment and maintaining the cleanliness of the destination. 'Cultural attraction' factor suggests that the developers should protect and highlight on local traditional culture as an essential feature of CBT to attract tourist.

The study revealed that 28% of the respondents are not even aware of the CBT form of tourism. The chi-square test suggests a significant relationship between CBT awareness level and the visit willingness to CBT destination. 77.8% of the aware respondents (this includes who already visited) are willing to visit a CBT destination in future. But only 13.9% is not willing to visit and 8.3% is not sure. So promotion of CBT is essential for increasing awareness level and influencing the already aware tourists. Travel agency is the booking medium in case most of the existing CBT units. But the study revealed that tourists more prefer direct booking to the hotel/service provider than any other mode. So developing hassle free direct booking facility for CBT should be given due importance.

Finally, Government help and support for infrastructure development, environment & cultural heritage conservation, promotion of CBT and imparting requisite training to communities to offer tourism services is very essential. The study suggests a public-private partnership model for future development of CBT as a sustainable tourism practice.

Limitations

The study is limited to the respondents from Kolkata only and focused on CBT destinations of North Bengal. But the study can be replicated on the respondents from different regions. The research is focused on only domestic tourists and the perception of foreign tourists is not accounted.

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