

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER III

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3.1 Introduction:

The tourism industries balance their sustainability on the basis of rendering high quality hospitality services to the tourists. The different dimensions or attributes need to be considered to ensure the level of satisfaction to the visitors. Different theories have been advocated by tourism researchers, stakeholders, and marketers to get an insight into the perception of tourists' satisfaction. The aim of the study is to highlight the different manifest variables which are purely relevant and considered as antecedents having an influence on the level of satisfaction and behavioral intentions of the tourists visiting the homestay in Darjeeling hills. The antecedents used in the study are service quality, destination image, accessibility, safety & security which have an impact on tourist satisfaction followed by the behavioral intentions of the visitors visiting Darjeeling homestays. The various factors or constructs in the study are based on past literature and theories in the field of tourism researches. This chapter provides the theoretical justification for the causal relationship between all the constructs and identifies the hypothesis based on the relationship and also tests the direct and indirect effect among the constructs. The mediating role of the construct has also been highlighted.

3.2 Factors relevant in homestay tourism research

Modern visitors nowadays prefer to stay in a place where they are not bounded by any protocols and are free to explore environmental as well as their cultural about the folks. To meet this requirement as a demand-driven stay, homestay tourism has become more popular in the South-East Asian countries especially in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka and India is not an exception to this phenomenon. In India, the concept of homestay tourism has become popular in

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most states like Goa, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim, and many more destinations across India.

The Government of India (GOI) has enthusiastically started to promote homestay tourism through Bread and Breakfast/ Homestay establishments. To ensure quality service the homestay has been classified on the basis of the quality of service and the infrastructure facilities provided by the homestay operators (Human & Resource Division, Ministry of Tourism GOI 2008). To promote this form of tourism the Government of India has given tax relaxation and rebates to the homestay operators. The sustainability of the homestay venture has paramount importance as the local people get benefitted socially and economically. The sustainability of the homestay venture directly depends mainly on the footfall of tourists. To enlarge the number of visitors, the homestay operators must ensure the satisfaction level by determining the factors which tempt tourists to stay in the homestays rather than the mainstream accommodation such as hotels and resorts.

Satisfaction needs to be ensured by the homestay operators to their guests. The tourists are motivated to stay in the homestay due to various factors. Different researchers have highlighted different reasons behind the tourists' interest to stay in the homestay accommodation. Gunasekharan and Anandkumar (2012) suggested a homely atmosphere, value for money, local touch, and guest-host relationship are the four main factors that influence a tourist to choose alternative accommodation such as homestay. The contemporary tourists try to explore the rural areas to get some understanding of the culture, customs, and traditions of the local people. The friendly relationship between the guests and the host plays an important element to allure the already visited guests to revisit the same destination in the future. Affordable accommodation, home-cooked local food, unique activities specific to the particular destination, safety, and privacy, friendliness of the operators, stay like a family member are always a better choice as reasons for tourists to choose a homestay over a hotel accommodation (Chaturvedi 2015). The authentic

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experience of culture, lifestyle, and traditions, service quality, scene attraction, sensitization and comforts, special attention to the guests, accessibility to the destination are the underlying factors for choosing homestay over hotels as suggested by Wang (2007). The above-mentioned factors are basically the real concept of the homestay establishment. Though, the generalized theory of homestay has not been given by any author. The marketing and tourism theories are necessary to highlight the satisfaction level and destination loyalty of the tourists visiting homestays. The major dimensions must be proposed based on tourism and marketing theories to draw the inference about the perception of tourists visiting different tourism destinations specially homestays. The study conducted by Bavani et al., 2015 have highlighted the factors such as service qualities and facilities, infrastructure, safety, and marketing are found be the important elements to ensure tourists' satisfaction visiting homestays in general. Out of the above factors, the due concern is to be taken on marketing aspects to promote homestays. It has been suggested that the homestays be promoted aggressively in collaboration with government campaigns and private outsourcing activities. The manifest variables focused on homestay tourism attributes are the cultural attraction, hospitability, amenities, safety, and security to ensure tourists' satisfaction in the study reported by Biswakarma (2015). Using factor analysis, these four major constructs have been identified by the researcher using factor analysis. Apart from the cultural attraction, safety and security are also considered important elements in homestay tourism.

3.3 Interrelationship among the constructs

3.3.1 Perceived Service quality

Steven et al., (1995) have pointed out that providing high-quality service to ensure customers' satisfaction is one of the important factors to sustain tourism industries. Service quality leading to tourists' satisfaction helps the tourism sector to build long-term relationships which lead to destination loyalty. Service quality is defined as how well the customers' needs are met and

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delivered as per their expectations. Parasuraman et al., (1988) have defined service quality as the overall excellence and superiority of the service. The theory by Oliver's (1980) disconfirmation model advocated the concept of gap between expectations and experiences perceived for drawing the conclusion about tourists' satisfaction. Hence, the researchers have proposed that the overall service quality performance can be determined by the measurement scale known as SERVQUAL using five attributes namely, tangibles (the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communications materials); reliability (the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately); responsiveness (the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service); assurance (the competence of the system and its credibility in providing a courteous and secure service); and empathy (the approachability, ease of access, and effort took to understand customers' needs). However, some of the researchers have contradicted the idea of conceptualizing the gap between expectations and experiences. Cronin and Taylor (1992) have argued in favor of overall evaluation of services or perception of services rather than using the gap between expectations and experiences. Lee et al., (2000), have also focused deeply on the performance perceived by the customers rather than the difference between perceived performance and prior expectations. Iglesias and Guillén (2004) have identified that a service manager should manage customers' predictive expectations to increase customer perceptions of overall service quality. Bowbrick (1980) considered service quality an important factor in the dynamic environment. Financial performance, costs, customers' satisfaction and retention of customers are deeply correlated with service quality. Improving service quality aims at gaining new customers in the market without sacrificing the existing one (Swanson and Davis, 2003). The role of service quality in any form of the tourism sector has paramount importance. Different theories regarding service quality are advocated by different researchers. Contemporary tourists nowadays prefer to stay in outskirts destinations rather than conventional stays like hotels and in resorts. To ensure sustainability in the long run, the homestay tourism operators have to ensure the minimum level of service quality in the destination.

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Perceived service quality to the tourists in the destination plays a pivotal role in the context of the post-purchase behavior of the guests. This supports the notion that perceived service quality determines the post-purchase behavior of the tourist (Wang et al., 2011). Mutalib et al.,(2018) have studied the importance of the services provided by homestays to report the significance of the quality of services provided by Malaysian homestays and its positive impact on customer satisfaction.

Nguyen (2019).in his study has tried to establish the relationship among homestay service quality, tourist satisfaction, and cultural interaction on tourist loyalty behavior. The findings reveal that tourist loyalty is affected by different components of servqual scale-like reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and tangible in the context of Vietnam homestay tourism.

Muangmee (2020) has studied the concept of customer relationship marketing, and perceived service quality model in the context of homestays in Thailand by applying SEM. The research findings substantiate that the relationship with customers', perceived service quality, satisfaction, and the successful business operator of homestays is considered to be important. The study concludes that managing customer relationships can improve the level of the satisfaction of visitors'.

3.3.2 Safety and Security

Kavoari and Zimanyi (2011) have defined security and safety collectively with the bunch of components belonging to political instability, public safety health, and sanitation, personal data safety, legal protection of tourists, consumer protection, safety in communication, disaster protection, environmental safety, getting authentic information, quality assurances of the services, etc. The tourism market is sensitive to social and political instability in the destination (Kordic et al., 2015). The footfall of tourists is drastically hampered due to various reasons such as social conflict, political instability, terrorism threat, and many other issues. Ensuring the safety of the

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guests is indispensable in the tourism industry. Uncertainties in the destination create chaos in the mind of the tourists and also feel fear to visit the same destination again. It not only hampers the existing customers or guests, especially in the tourism industry but also creates a deep sense of fear in the mind of prospective customers. Other issues incorporating risk in tourism are unhygienic places, traffic mishaps, and catastrophic natural disasters. The government policies need to take into account the way out to bring safety to the visitors. Moreover, the correlation between safety and satisfaction is often ignored by the researchers in the literature (Imbeah, 2018). Baker and Crompton (2000) had not taken into consideration the direct relationship between tourist safety and tourists' satisfaction in the study. Though, the importance of relationships has increased significantly in the tourism industry. The safety issue is a pivotal factor that influences tourist satisfaction and ultimately impacts destination loyalty. The study conducted by Lee et al., (2007) has identified that there is no significant relationship between tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention of the visitors as other variables are also to be considered that affect the formation of the individual expectations. However, the influence of tourists' safety is still a strong factor as the tourists' satisfaction is concerned. According to the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2002), the safety and security of tourists are the utmost concern to everyone in the country. All the stakeholders including the Central and State governments are taking initiatives to provide safety and security to the tourists visiting the country. Researchers often ignore investigating the measures of safety and security to the tourists in developing countries like India, though this sector plays a paramount role in the socio-economic development of the nation. The field of delving safety and security has become a new field in tourism research (De Sausmarez, 2004; Ritchie, 2004). The safety encourages tourists to visit the destination which they plan for. Safety can also be seen as a nature of the physical environment in case of adventurous activities and natural disasters, involving in criminal activities such as theft, and tourists' sometimes being attacked by anti socials (Tan et al., 2017). To keep the tourism activity smooth, the stakeholders are liable to ensure the safety

measures to the tourists' in the destination they visit. Five negative factors that affect the tourism industry as identified by Pizam & Mansfeld (1996), and Ayob & Masroni (2014) are crime, terrorism, food safety, health issues, and natural disasters. Choosing a particular destination is not only based on price and destination image but the personal safety and security provided to the visitors as reported in a study conducted by Eitzinger and Wiedemann (2009).

3.3.3 Destination Image

Lee (2005) defines destination image as the expression of overall objective knowledge, prejudice, impressions, emotional thoughts, and imaginations of individuals have relating to a particular place. Murphy et al., (2000) have defined the destination image as the sum of association and information related to the destination that may include multiple components of the destination and personal perception. The satisfaction of tourists' with the destination is the important point to be focused on if a destination is able to render and satisfy the tourists' needs and wants. These tourists possibly make repeat visits and spread positive word of mouth, and recommend the place to others, which is termed destination loyalty (Bramwell, 1998 and Kozak, 2001). It has been pointed out by a number of researchers that tourists' destination loyalty is increased by positive destination loyalty and high satisfaction (Chi and Qu, 2008). In a competitive world, the ideal destination attributes must be available to the guest to keep the existing visitors happy so that they motivate others to visit the destination. Previous researchers have concluded that destination image has a direct influence on traveling behavior as it plays an important role in selecting the destination since tourists normally prefer a destination with a favorable image (Prayag, 2008). Baloglu & McCleary (1999) have proposed the model dealing with belief informing the destination image. The destination image is affected by external factors that comprise the diverse facets which may be symbolic and social stimuli. Symbolic stimuli are an effort to promote the destination through media and social stimuli are an effort to promote with friends' recommendation and positive word of mouth. It can be

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comprehended that destination image is highly influenced by marketing efforts like promotion, an initiative of tour operators, the internet, social media, and advertisement. More often the travel agencies and tour operators are directly in contact with the prospective visitors and persuade the tourists to visit a particular spot. The destination image is defined as the perception of tourists about the place, its tourism resources, tourism services, and the hospitality provided to the guests. The social and cultural norms and their rules & regulations that influence consumer behavior are to be considered (Ahmed et al., 2006). In the early '70s, the destination image is first recognized as a critical factor in the tourist's destination choice process (Mayo, 1975). Researchers have recently investigated the relationship between destination image and tourists' influx in different tourists spot. Even many tourism researchers have observed that the more positive and distinct image of the destination, the more the footfall of guests in those places. When other factors are almost the same among the destination such as price, socio-demographic, behavioral in that situation destination image plays a decisive role in the holiday choice of visitors (Goodall, 1988). The destination image is a universally accepted element in the tourism sector as it affects the individual's subjective perception and consequent behavior, and choice of destination (Gallarza, 2002). Prebensen (2007) has categorized three sources that influence the image of the tourists' destination. They are the organic image, the induced image, and the modified induced image. Organic image is the perception possessed of a particular place by an individual at school or from mass media, books, or the internet to determine the image of a destination surprisingly not based on tourists' experience and highlights the fact about the place. Induced image is influenced by the stakeholders with the different marketing strategies and promotional tools that aim to allure the potential tourists to visit a destination. Lastly, a modified-induced image is an actual experience possessed by the tourists after visiting the particular destination. It can be conceptualized that different researchers have analyzed the image of the destination as per their perception but the core idea of the destination image

remains the same and has played a vital role in determining tourists' satisfaction and destination loyalty.

3.3.4 Accessibility

Accessibility is defined as the ability of the destinations to provide good quality transportation facilities that enable the people from one place to another location in rural areas (Hall, 2004). The researchers in the past studies have revealed the importance of accessibility for the sustainability of the tourism industry which depends to a considerable extent for selecting a destination. Yeoman et al., (2004) have also highlighted the significance of affordability, and convenience of tourism transportation infrastructure that enhances destination accessibility which in turn leads to the better performance of rural tourism destinations. One study conducted in Uttarakhand by Bagri (2015) concluded that the basic facilities such as accommodation, transportation, tourism infrastructure, hygiene, and sanitation at the destination are significant elements in determining the satisfaction of tourists. Gassiot (2016) highlighted the importance of accessibility to all the tourists' destinations. Coviello et al., (2006) have outlined tourism infrastructure as a range of devices and institutions' tangible material and organizational performances that are indispensable for tourism development. The four fundamental elements are accommodation facilities, food and beverage facilities, transportation facilities, and communication facilities. Previous researchers in the field of tourism have posited the theoretical relationship between tourism development and infrastructure. The infrastructure is a physical element to cater to the needs of the visitors (Adebayo and Lweka, 2014). Smith (1994) asserted the level of development and functional use of tourism infrastructure are pivotal elements in tourism destinations. Lack of which definitely obstructs the experience and satisfaction of tourists in connection with certain tourism destinations. The accessibility and transportation facilities are very important in determining the satisfaction level of tourists visiting the homestays operating in the hills of Darjeeling. The improvement in infrastructure is

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indispensable in promoting the integration of tourists' services, maintaining the number of visitors, encouraging guests to stay longer in the destination, and increasing their spending to the destination (Conejo and Wooliscroft, 2015). Donthu and Yoo (1988) have emphasized the elements of tourism infrastructure that include ancillary and complementary facilities, types of equipment, system, processes, and resources necessary for the smooth running of every tourism destination. This basically includes roads, railways, airports which make tourists' destinations accessible for the visitors. The infrastructure also includes health care systems, services, and public services (Raajpoot, 2004). The infrastructure in rural tourism products has to have a special role in the long term growth of the tourism and general progress of tourists' destinations in providing the required services to the tourists.

3.3.5 Satisfaction

It is widely accepted to have a positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and behavioral intention in the tourism industry. Marketers always make effort to ensure the satisfaction of their customers by any means not only to retain existing customers but also to attract prospective customers in order to have long-term sustainability of their venture. The tourism industry has started to comprehend the importance of satisfaction of the tourists in the tourism business. Bigne et al., (2001) has defined satisfaction as a reaction and outcome of the choice made based on individuals' emotions and inner being. It is a psychological concept that involves the feeling of well-being and pleasures that are the differences between expected service and perceived service (WTO 1995). Many authors and researchers have developed numerous theories on satisfaction on the basis of their perceptions. The expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1980), which compares the expectation and experienced gap perceived by the tourists afterward. The higher the actual experience over the perceived expectation, the more customers are likely to be satisfied and prefer to repurchase the products and the services. The importance-performance theory involves the

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analysis of customer satisfaction on the basis of service attributes to assess customer satisfaction (Martilla and James, 1977). The performance-only approach underlines that the perceived performance is a strong determinant of customer satisfaction (Churchill and Suprenant 1982). The equity theory of customer satisfaction studies the customers' satisfaction as a relationship between the price customers pay and the rewards they anticipate (Oliver and Swan, 1989). To gain a competitive advantage in the market, tourists' satisfaction is considered as one of the crucial elements (Kozak and Rimmington, 1998). The several marketing theories advocated by different researchers and marketers are heavily applied in the tourism literature. Appropriate measurement of tourists' level of satisfaction is a perfect medium to know the behavior of the tourists visiting any destination. Ensuring the expected level of satisfaction to the tourists is definitely helping the service providers to retain the customers and thereby generating positive word of mouth for the destination. Consequently, the service providers are giving no attention to knowing the level of satisfaction of the tourists (Kozak, 2003). The individual researchers have proposed different antecedents on the basis of their own experiences and perception. Most of the studies have focused on the measurement technique and variables related to customer satisfaction (Noe and Uysal, 1997). Many reasons can be cited to make the tourists satisfied including the quality of services provided such as infrastructure, security, cleanliness, natural situation, and consumer protection ((Handszuh, 1995). Nevertheless, the location of the destination is also to be taken into consideration while addressing the issue of tourists' satisfaction. Considering the fact about homestay tourism which comes under the purview of rural tourism, different other activities can be associated to ensure the satisfaction of the visitors.

3.3.6 Behavioral intention

Behavioral intention is one of the frequently discussed issues in developing marketing strategies for products and customer services. The pervasiveness of behavioral intention also has its relevance in

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tourism industries. Many researchers and stakeholders have proved the relevance of behavioral intention in tourism industries through their empirical study. Repeated purchase, positive-word of mouth, and recommendation to the friend and family are itself a tool to promote the rural tourism product in the niche market. Darnel and Johnson (2001) suggested that the determinants of destination loyalty play a crucial role at the management level and in developing individual attraction. The degree of loyalty is reflected by revisit intention and spreading positive word of mouth concerning a destination (Mohamad et al., 2011)). Loyalty is defined as the committed behavior of the buyer manifested by its propensity to take part in recreational services (Backman and Crompton, 1991). It is true that the concept of behavioral intention including destination loyalty has become a useful concept in tourism marketing. However, the effort of the service providers in a destination to assure the satisfaction in order to have a continuous commitment of visitors to the place has been highlighted by past researches. AbuKhalifeh & Albattat (2017) defines loyalty as the relationship between an individual's tendency towards an object and the repeat patronage of that object. The cost of attracting new customers is five times more than the cost to keep the existing customers happy, as many costs and efforts are required to persuade satisfied customers to switch over from their current service providers (Kotler et al., 1999). Some scholars have suggested that the customers' loyalty is not only the cause of satisfaction. There are other factors that compel the customer to favor the product or services due to the unavailability of alternatives. In the past scenario, customers are becoming more and more demanding as such; satisfaction is an important variable to enhance customers' loyalty (Hayes 2008). The study undertaken by Anderson and Sullivan (1990) has found a strong positive relationship between service qualities, satisfaction, and repurchase intention. It can be argued that service quality and satisfaction are important antecedents to impact the behavior of the visitors. It is to be noted that, the degree of relationship between satisfaction and behavioral intention is strong, as there are structural links between the two concepts (Murry and Howat 2002). Zeithaml et al., (1996) suggest that favorable behavioral intentions are

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associated with a service provider's ability to get its customers to say positive things about them, recommend it to other customers, remain loyal to them, spend more with them, and likely to pay price premiums. Boulding et al., (1993) found a positive degree of correlation between customers' perceived quality and their repurchase intention and willingness to recommend. In tourism, it is important because of the reliance on word-of-mouth for new businesses like homestay tourism. Word-of-mouth communication is viewed as trustworthy and reliable because it is based on the experience of a person. Small tourism ventures such as rural tourism depend heavily on the recommendation for sustainability. Spending huge money on the promotion of the destination is not possible for them because of the huge cost of the advertisement.

3.4 Development of a conceptual model

The higher service quality, the higher is the level of customer satisfaction and it is widely recognized as an important factor leading to the success of the tourism industry (Steven et al., 1995). The quality of service provided is considered as one key factor in determining the satisfaction level of the visitors. The study conducted by Ismail et al., (2016) has confirmed the relationship between community-based homestay service quality and behavioral intention, and the moderating role of satisfaction between them. Good quality services and tourist satisfaction develop a long-term relationship with tourists and bring about destination loyalty as reported by Hui et al., (2007) in the study. Buhalis (2000) has observed that better service quality in many cases leads to higher satisfaction of tourists eventually leading to positive word-of-mouth endorsement, referrals, and repeat visits. Parasuraman et al., (1993) have reported that customers' satisfaction is led by perceived service quality and concluded that there is a high correlation between service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty. The studies conducted by Devesa et al., (2010) have found strong evidence of service quality on satisfaction, loyalty, and profitability. Osman and Sentosa (2013) have confirmed the role of satisfaction as a partial mediation between service quality and destination

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loyalty in the study conducted on rural tourism. It also emphasized the role of service quality, tourists' satisfaction, and destination loyalty on the profitability of rural tourism operators. The study conducted by Jamal and Anatassiadou (2009) in the context of the banking industry in Greece has found a strong and positive impact on not only the service quality and satisfaction but also between service quality and loyalty. Hossain and Leo (2009) have revealed the service quality acts as a strong antecedent and is significantly related to the banking industry in Qatar. Hume and Mort (2010) have found a significant and positive impact of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty in the study conducted considering 250 performing arts members and audiences. Tourism marketing researchers (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000) provide empirical evidence that revisits and recommendation of the destination to other people is directly predicted by tourists' satisfaction. Lee et al., (2005) have stated the perception of individuals about the destination is expected to augment greater satisfaction level and behavioral intention. Destination Image is the antecedent of satisfaction which in turn has an influence on destination loyalty as suggested by Chi and Qu (2008). AbuKhalifeh and Son (2016) have investigated the causal relationship among service quality, tourists' satisfaction, and loyalty in star hotels in Jordan for supporting hypothesis regarding the relationship among model constructs. The mediating role of satisfaction between service quality and loyalty has been tested and duly validated. It has been concluded that satisfaction plays a mediating role between service quality and the loyalty of the visitors. A direct relationship between destination image, the perceived service quality, level of satisfaction, and intentions to return or recommend has been reported in the study by Bigne and Sanchez (2001). Destination image has been found to impact several factors such as an intention to revisit and word of mouth both directly and indirectly taking into consideration the construct i.e. tourists' satisfaction (Devesa et al., 2010; Liu & Chi, 2015, and Gursoy et al., 2014). The comfort facilities, safety, and security, cultural attraction and shopping, the attraction of the destination, and ambiance, accessibility are the factors identified in the study conducted by Prayag (2008) which affect tourists

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satisfaction. The direct correlation between tourists' safety and tourists' satisfaction is often neglected by the researchers as revealed in the study conducted by Imbeah & Bujdoso (2018). Baker and Crompton (2000) conducted a study on intentions for repeat visits and have not incorporated the direct influence of tourist safety on tourist satisfaction. Kuilis-Bosimin & Chan (2018) have tried to explore the key factors in Sabah, Malaysia that influence the safety and security of tourists from the perspective of the tour operators. It is found that the most of respondents who have visited that place felt secure due to the beauty, friendliness, peace, and natural environment. It is perceived that the tourists have the intention to revisit the place. The study conducted by Lee et al., (2007) does not identify the significant relationship between satisfaction and the tourists' revisit intention. The intensity between satisfaction and behavioral intention can change depending upon the perception of an individual. However, safety is still an important element in this discussion of tourists' satisfaction. As noted by Cohen and Cohen (2012), the issue of safety and security is of paramount importance for most tourists as well as the tourism sector as a whole. Swansom and Edgel (2013) have pointed out that safety and security have been consistently ranked as one of the global concerns in the world. The sustainability of any tourism unit depends heavily on the arrival of tourists. The tourists hesitate to go to a place where they do not feel safe and secure. The responsibility of the tour operators can never be overlooked to ensure the level of safety of the visitors visiting a particular destination. The safety and security of tourists are to be seen from the perspective of both the visitors and tour operators. Little attention is given by the previous researchers in understanding the safety and security of the destinations in Malaysia (Kuilis-Bosimin et al., 2018). Safety and security in the tourism industry has been identified as one of the forces having significant impact on inbound and outbound tourists (Yang, 2013). The researcher has given implication in the study to have a need to shift from a paradigm in dealing with safety and security in particular, in the tourism industry. There are many factors that influence visitors to choose holiday tourism destinations. One of the factors which cannot be ignored is the perceived safety and

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security of the existing and potential tourists. Visitors select the destination where their perception of risk is minimal (Allen, 2000). The promotion of destination is next to impossible until and unless the assurance is given to the visitors. Perceived and associated risks associated with travel and tourism have made safety and security an indispensable factor in the promotion of tourism (Mopeli, 2009). The concept of security has become more important not only for the host community but also for the guests (Cavlek 2006). Bagri and Devkant (2015) have revealed the attributes related to tourists' products of spiritual nature, atmosphere and climate, varieties of tourists' activities, hospitality, and safety are the important factors in determining tourist satisfaction. Additionally, the basic facilities like accommodation, transportation, tourism infrastructure, hygiene, and sanitation at the destination also have significant importance in augmenting satisfaction. The study by Khuong and Giang (2014) have identified the crucial factor to evaluate the satisfaction level of the visitors and also justified a positive association between those factors and tourist satisfaction. The higher level of service quality, infrastructure and accessibility, natural environment, safety and security, and destination image are positively associated with a higher level of tourists' destination satisfaction. The results of this study have concluded that both functional and tangible components and psychological or intangible attributes of the destination contribute significantly to tourists' satisfaction. In order to measure the satisfaction level of the visitors, different researchers in their past study have given different sets of attributes as they perceived relevance in the destination. Attraction, accessibility services, package availability, activities, auxiliary services are the attributes taken together and believed to have an impact on tourists' satisfaction as a study conducted by Buhalis (2000). A similar study delved into factors that affect tourist satisfaction conducted by Kozak and Rimmington (1998) is an attraction, facilities, and services, hospitality, cost, and infrastructure. Transport, price, level of sincerity, lodging, safety, reputation, and expected level of service quality are the crucial factors taken together in ensuring the satisfaction level of the visitors as reported by Echtner and Ritchie (1991). Similarly, the study conducted by Tosun et al., (2015)

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has found lodging services, local transport services, cleaning services, entertainment services, communication services, and airport services are crucial factors to ensure tourists' satisfaction. Pérez et al., (2017) in the study conducted on the element towards tourists satisfaction concluded that accessibility is an important element in determining tourist satisfaction. It substantiates the variable accessibility has the tremendously influence tourists' satisfaction as confirmed by the study. Lee (2009) has investigated the effect of tourists' satisfaction and behavioral intention in the study conducted in south-western Taiwan. It has been reported by the study that the direct effect of destination image on satisfaction and indirect effect on future behavior. It is also highlighted that the tourists' satisfaction has a direct effect on future behavior and satisfaction plays a mediating role between destination image and behavioral intention. Troung and King (2009) have emphasized tourists' attractions, activities, accessibility, accommodation, and amenities are very relevant for tourists' satisfaction. The conceptual model depicting the relationship between destination image, tourists' satisfaction, and behavioral intention is tested using SEM in a study conducted by Mohamad et al., (2014). The finding reveals that destination image directly as well as indirectly affects destination loyalty and also reported the mediating role of satisfaction. The conceptual model is developed taking various constructs like service quality, satisfaction, and customer loyalty and tried to measure the causal relationships among them using CFA and SEM in a study as revealed by AbuKhalifeh and Battat (2017). Hypotheses are tested and confirmed the positive association among the constructs. Al-Ababneh., (2013) in one study has underlined important destinations such as facilities, destination accessibility, and destination attractiveness to investigate tourists' overall satisfaction. Medlik and Middleton (1973) have illustrated the three main components of tourists' products such as attraction, facilities at the destination, and accessibility to reach the destination. It is reported from the findings that these components have the main role to play in ensuring the overall satisfaction of the visitors'. Similarly, the study of Milldeton and Clarke (2001) have also pointed out that the destination attraction and environment, destination

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facilities and services, accessibility of the destination, images of the destination, and the tariff are the crucial components of tourists' products and played a crucial role to the overall satisfaction of the tourists. There is a direct and a positive impact of service quality on customer satisfaction and has a significant impact and positive relationship with customer satisfaction (Osman and Sentosa 2013). Roy et al., (2016) tried to explore the core factors which influence the satisfaction level of the visitors with special reference to the tourism industry in Bangladesh. The overall impact of satisfaction on behavioral intention has also been highlighted. The core factors identified by the researchers are natural beauty, transportation, accommodation facilities, safety and security, and costs. Zabkar et al., (2010) have explored the complex relationship among service quality, tourist destination, and satisfaction using SEM. The empirical validation of the conceptual model supports the research hypothesis. The relationship between satisfaction and behavioral intention is also confirmed. It is found that destination attributes not only affect perceived quality but satisfaction and behavioral intention as well. The study conducted by Biswakarma (2015) has identified the underlining dimensions which have an impact on the satisfaction of the tourists visiting homestays in Nepal. The manifest variables basically focused on by the researcher are the cultural attraction, hospitality, amenities, safety, and security in homestay's destination. The researcher has concluded that the attribute based on five factors has significantly impacted the satisfaction level of the visitors visiting homestay in Nepal. Basically focusing on Romanian tourists, Herle (2018) has tried to determine the impact of the image of the destination on tourists' satisfaction and loyalty in the destination. The theory of the relationship between destination images, overall image, tourists' satisfaction, and intention to revisit recommendations using social media is tested using SEM in a study conducted by Shafiee et al., (2016). Social media is playing a crucial role in disseminating information as the recommendation is vital in the tourism industry. It is drawn that all dimensions of the destination image have significant and positive effects on the overall image. Further, the overall image has a significant and positive effect on satisfaction and intention to revisit destination

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and positive word of mouth in social media. The intention to revisit and recommend is affected by the satisfaction of the visitors as drawn by the researchers. Rajesh (2013) explored the idea to develop the theoretical model taking into account the tourists' perception, destination image, and tourist satisfaction. The study has analyzed the factors influencing destination image, tourists' satisfaction, and loyalty using the model based on theoretical understanding and past studies from previous literature. Four constructs are included in the model. Tourists' perception is influenced by historical and cultural attractions, destination affordability, travel environment, natural attractions, entertainment, and infrastructure. Destination image is influenced by factors like infrastructure & facilities, heritage attractions, natural-made attractions, destination safety & cleanness, friendly local community and calm atmosphere, rejuvenation, and service price, and affordability. Entertainments, destination attractions and atmosphere, accommodation, food, transportation services, and shopping are the factors that influenced the satisfaction level of the visitors. The destination loyalty construct is influenced by intentions to revisit, word of mouth promotion, and recommendations to friends and family. The study conducted by Prayag (2008) has investigated the relationship between destination image, overall satisfaction, and visitors' loyalty in Cape Town. The multiple regression analysis is used to influence destination attributes on factors and SEM is used to test the hypothesized model. It is concluded that the destination image has a direct and indirect impact on visitor's loyalty. Apart from that, it is also found that overall satisfaction acts as a mediating role between destination image and loyalty. Puh, (2014) has identified a number of factors that influence the destination image and also explores the relationship between destination image, and tourist satisfaction in a study carried out in Dubrovnik, Croatia. The factors which affect destination image are natural resources and natural environment, economic factor & social environment, and tourists' leisure and atmosphere in the place. The study has also given the confirmation of the positive effect of destination image on tourists' satisfaction. The efforts have been made in the study conducted by Mohamad et al., (2011) to develop the model to examine the

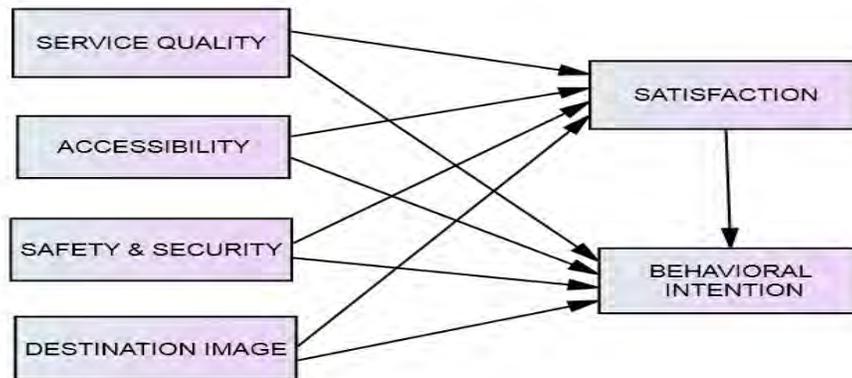
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relationship between destination image, tourists' satisfaction, and destination loyalty in Malaysia. Factorial validity was tested using factor analysis and the hypothesis is tested using SEM. Mohamad et al., (2012) have examined the relationship between destination image and future behavioral intentions of foreign tourists in Malaysia. To establish the relationship among the variables regression analysis is employed and has concluded that the natural attractions, accessibility, and available package, cultural heritage are the significant predictors of foreign tourists' intention to revisit and willingness to recommend the destination. The study conducted by Imbeah (2018) in Ghana highlighted the conflicting issue of land use between tourism supporters and agriculture supporters', especially the predominant cash crop oil palm. The study has tried to examine the perception of safety before finding the oil palm. The study of Ling et al., (2010) has also established the relationship among image, satisfaction and behavioral intention in Malaysia especially referring to the food culture of Malaysians. It is reported that Malaysians have the potential for food tourism and considered a melting point of cultural food variety at a reasonable price. The findings also reported that the image has a direct effect on tourists' satisfaction and satisfaction with behavioral intention.

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Figure 3.1

Antecedents of tourists' satisfaction and behavioral intention: A conceptual model

**3.5 Research hypothesis based on the model**

H_{a1}: A higher level of service quality leads to a higher level of satisfaction

H_{a2}: Service quality has a positive impact on behavioral intention

H_{a3}: Higher the accessibility level would lead to a higher level of satisfaction

H_{a4}: Higher the level of accessibility would lead to positive behavioral intention

H_{a5}: There is a positive association between safety & security and satisfaction

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H_{a6}: There is a positive association between safety & security to behavioral intention

H_{a7}: Higher destination image would lead to a higher level of satisfaction

H_{a8}: Higher destination image would lead to positive behavioral intention

H_{a9}: Higher satisfaction will lead to positive behavioral intention.

3.6 Conclusion

On the basis of the discussion that has been presented in detail in this chapter, a theoretical framework has been suggested taking into account the important constructs that may affect the overall satisfaction and behavioral intention. It has to be pointed out here that the relationships that are been depicted above are primarily based on the past literature reviewed in the context of tourists' satisfaction and behavioral intention. Not many studies have been conducted in the field of homestay tourism and in particular, homestay tourism in India. The endeavor is to relate these perceptual variables in the level of satisfaction of tourists' after collecting their responses regarding their views on various constructs considered in the study. In the subsequent chapters, the SEM is supposed to unveil whether the theoretical framework developed can be substantiated by incorporating the responses that have been obtained after administering the questionnaire.

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