Professed and Practiced Services of Tourism in India and Singapore: A Comparative Study

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Abstract: Tourism has emerged as an important socio-economic activity of the people which directly generates services, products, foreign currency, employment and investments. People today travel to international destinations to break the regular monotony of life. They are mainly attracted by either the scenic beauty of its nature or by fascinating leisure, sports and adventure activities offered by the destination. The aim of this article is to comprehensively outline the comparison of perception of global tourist regarding by and large appraisal of India as well as Singapore tourism and analysis of the gap between perceived and experienced services of foreign tourists. Primary data has been congregated through questionnaires containing 5 point Likert scale and secondary data gathered from web resources, seminars, conferences and books. The findings demonstrate that Singapore is found to be more preferred, pleasing and gratifying place compared to India. Though the gap between the perceived and experienced services of both destinations is positive, yet the analysis establishes a significant difference between the perceptions of global tourists as experienced services are better than perceived services in Singapore in contrast to India. Furthermore, it was learnt that there is no significant difference on this context while investigated against gender and age group. Majority of the respondents covet to visiting both of the destinations and would even counsel both the destinations to their family and friends.

Keywords: Indian Tourism, socio-economic, tourism services, foreign tourists, Singapore tourism.

I. INTRODUCTION

From the very inception of life, travel has fascinated man. Travel and tourism have been important social activities of human beings from time immemorial. The urge to explore new places within one's own country or outside and seek a change of environment has been experienced from ancient times. Travel has existed since the beginning of time when primitive man set out great distances, in search of food and clothing necessary for his survival. Throughout the course of history, people have traveled for purposes of trade, religious conviction, economic gain, war, migration and other equally compelling motivators.

Tourism as we know it today is distinctly a twentieth century phenomena. Historians suggest that the advent of mass tourism began in England during the industrial revolution with the rise of the middle class and relatively inexpensive transportation. The creation of the commercial airline industry following World War II and the subsequent development of the jet aircraft in the 1950s signaled the rapid growth and expansion of international travel. The growth led to the development of a major new industry: Tourism. In turn, international tourism became the concern of a number of world governments because it not only provided new employment opportunities, but it also produced a means of earning foreign exchange. Tourism is one of the world's most rapidly growing industries. Much of its growth is due to higher disposable incomes, increased leisure time and falling costs of travel. As airports become more enjoyable places to pass through, as travel agency services become increasingly automated, and as tourists find it easier to get information on places they want to visit, tourism grows.

The internet has fuelled the growth of the travel industry by providing online booking facilities. It has also provided people with the power to explore destinations and cultures from their home with personal computers and explore choices before finalizing travel plans. With its immense information resources, the internet allows tourists to scrutinize hotels, check weather forecasts, read up on local food and even talk to other tourists around the world about their travel experiences for a chosen destination. Thus to attract a foreign tourist every international destination must have something special in it to portray to the world.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Academic literature on the tourism industry in India has spanned across several disciplines from the regional as well as the national perspective. As the largest country in terms of size and population in the South Asian region, India has a large influence on the regional tourism industry. India featured prominently in the work of various scholars Reorienting HRD strategies for tourists' satisfaction- a study by Nageshwar Rao and R.P. Das (2002)[1] sought to highlight how the Indian Tourism Industry can reorient its HRD strategies in order to satisfy and delight its customers to survive in the global competition. With a better qualified younger workforce occupying the positions in the future and with tremendous opportunities opening for them elsewhere, the key task before the policy makers in organizations is to keep the tourist contact employees satisfied.

Joaquin Alegra Marin and JaumeGaranTaberner's study "satisfaction and dissatisfaction with destination attributes, influence on overall satisfaction and the intention to return" [2] point to the need to reconsider the usual structure of tourist satisfaction surveys. The results of this study illustrate that tourists evaluate the attributes of a destination differently depending on whether the survey elicits an opinion relating to a dimension of dissatisfaction.

"International Tourist satisfaction and destination Loyalty : Bangkok, Thailand"(2010)[3]- a study conducted by Siriporn McDowall tried to compare the demographic characteristics between first time and repeat international tourists in Bangkok and found that overall, international tourists were satisfied with their visit to Bangkok. First time tourists were more satisfied with the visit repeaters as their mean score was higher but there is no statistical difference between these two groups.

"Travelers' Perception of Malaysia as their next holiday destination"[4]- a study by Anon Abdul basah Kamil (2010) sought to have information and data on knowledge and perceptions of potential tourists about Malaysia to formulate appropriate and effective marketing and promotional strategies. This study found that knowledge is the most significant factor in determining tourists' decision to visit Malaysia except for African, West Asian and South/ Central American tourists.

"Tourist satisfaction with Mauritius as a holiday destination"(2008)[5]- a research work by Perunjodi Ladsawut used the expectancy – disconfirmation model to study the tourist satisfaction across 18 destination attributes as well as overall satisfaction with the destination. Tourists' satisfaction with individual destination attributes revealed that 13 attributes were positively disconfirmed whereas 5 attributes were negatively disconfirmed.

"Tourist satisfaction in Singapore- a perspective from Indonesian tourists"[6]- a study by Theresia A. Pawitra and Kay C. Tan (2001); analyzed the Indonesian tourists' satisfaction scores about Singapore and showed that from the 'Indonesian tourists' point of view , Singapore Tourism Board was successful in promoting and maintaining the performance of the local tourism industry.

"Factors influencing choice of tourist destinations: A study of North India" (2009) [7] is a research paper by Neeraj Kaushik, Jyoti Kaushik, Priyanka Sharma and Savita Rani. This paper attempted to determine the factors responsible for determining the attractiveness of a tourist destination in North India and found that there are seven factors which are considered important by the tourists while selecting their destinations. These factors are- communication, objectivity, basic facilities, attraction, support services, distinctive local features and psychological and physical environment.

David Foster's paper "The customer's perception of Tourism Accreditation "[8] sought to know the level of awareness among consumers of the tourism accreditation system in Australia and found that a lot of work needs to be done before we can be confident that consumers are aware of the existence of the tourism accreditation system. It has also demonstrated that even when tourists are aware of accreditation, there is confusion about what it actually means.

"Foreign Visitor's evaluation on tourism environment"(2010)[9]- a study by Takeshi Kurihara, and Naohisa Okamoto sought to understand the relative importance of the items that define the tourism environment and how foreign visitors evaluate Japan's tourism environment. It discussed the tourism environment evaluation from the viewpoint of the qualitative approach given by the foreign visitor's evaluation & the quantitative approach which is calculated by the principal component analysis based on the objective.

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Every tourist perceives the services of the destination before actually visiting it and sets a standard in his mind. When the tourist visits the destination he compares that set standard notion with what he experiences actually at the destination. This might result in some gap which can be either positive or negative. If the tourist is more satisfied with his experiences than what he perceived regarding the destination then this gap is positive but the gap becomes negative if his expectations were higher and what he actually experienced was not satisfying. The tourism industry of India is compared with that of Singapore as it is the most visited destination in the Asia Pacific region (as per the TTCI Index 2011).

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the perception of foreign tourists regarding the overall assessment of Indian and Singapore tourism industry.

2. To carry out a comparative analysis of perception of foreign tourists regarding the overall assessment of Indian and Singapore tourism industry.

3. To analyze the gap between perceived and experienced services in India and Singapore.

4. To analyze the perception of foreign tourists regarding revisiting and recommending India and Singapore.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive and exploratory. Both primary and secondary sources of data are used in this research study. Primary data have been collected through questionnaire designed to get first hand information from foreign tourists who have visited both India and Singapore. The foreign tourists were approached at various popular tourist spots of Delhi like Qutub Minar, Dilli Haat, Red Fort and Iskcon Temple and of Singapore like Sentosa, Marina Bay, Jurong bird park and Night Safari. Moreover some of the respondents were also contacted at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi and Changi Airport, Singapore. In total 500 questionnaires were got filled up from respondents selected by random judgement sampling out of which 250 were from India and 250 were from Singapore. The respondents were asked to rate overall experience and on a scale of 1-5 (1 –extremely poor and 5- excellent). Secondary data has been collected from various books, articles, print media and internet.

5.1 Sample Design

In our sample of 500 respondents 286 (57.20%) are males and 214(42.8%) are females.   Out of the total respondents, 76 (15.2%) respondents belong to the age category of less than 25 years, 303(60.6%) respondents belong to the age category of 25 to 40 years and the remaining 121(24.2%) respondents belong to the age category of above 40 years.

5.2 Hypotheses Formulation:

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

5.21H_{o1}: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding the overall assessment of India and Singapore

5.22 H_{o2}: There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female foreign tourists regarding the overall assessment of India and Singapore

5.23H_{o3}: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists belonging to different age groups regarding the overall assessment of India and Singapore

5.24H_{04}: There is no significant difference in the gap between perceived and experienced services as considered by foreign tourists in India and Singapore

5.25H_{05}: There is no significant difference between perception of male and female foreign tourists regarding level of gap between perceived and experienced services

5.26H_{06}: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding level of gap between perceived and experienced services

5.3 Tools of Data Analysis

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

5.4 Analysis of Overall Assessment of India and Singapore

To judge significance of difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding the overall assessment of India and Singapore the following null hypothesis has been framed:-

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding the overall assessment of India and Singapore

To test this null hypothesis the independent sample T - test has been applied the results of which are tabulated as per Table-1.

Table-1
Independent Sample T-test on Overall Assessment

Overall Assessment	Country	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	T Statistic (P Value)	Remark
Overall Experience	India	4.07	.648	2.195 (0.030)	Significant Difference
	Singapore	4.25	.600		

Table 1 reveals that p value of t statistics is less than 5 percent level of significance. Hence at 95 percent level of confidence the above mentioned null hypothesis H_{o1} is rejected. It means there is significant difference in the perception of respondents regarding overall assessment of India and Singapore. The mean score of Singapore is higher in comparison to India which indicates that the respondents perceive Singapore a better place than India. It is also shown in the figure 1

Figure 1: **Mean Scores of Attribute of Overall Assessment**

To check the significance of difference in perception of male and female respondents the following null hypothesis has been formulated:-
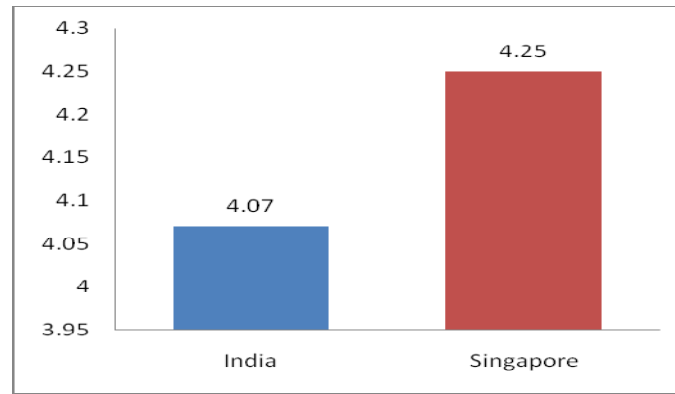
H$_{o2}$:- There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female foreign tourists regarding the overall assessment of India and Singapore

Independent sample t- test has been applied to test this null hypothesis which reveals the following outcome:

Table 2
Analysis of Overall Assessment on Gender Basis

		India		Singapore	
Overall Assessment	Gender	Mean Score (S.D)	T Statistic (P Value)	Mean Score (S.D)	T Statistic (P Value)
Overall Experience	Male	4.14 (.566)	1.095 (.276)	4.10 (.608)	2.606 (.010)
	Female	4.00 (.714)		4.39 (.562)	

Table 2 shows that in case of India the p value of t statistics is more than 5 percent level of significance. Hence, at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis is accepted in India. It means that there is no significant difference in the perception of male & female respondents in India. However, in case of Singapore the p value of t statistics is less than 5 percent level of significance. Hence, at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that there is a significant difference in the perception of male & female respondents in Singapore. In addition to this, the mean scores of females are more in Singapore than males which imply that in comparison to males, females consider Singapore a better place.

Further in order to know the significance of difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups the following null hypothesis has been framed:

H$_{0j}$:-There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding overall assessment of India and Singapore

To test this null hypothesis one way ANOVA has been applied which depicts the following results

Table 3
Analysis of the Overall Assessment on the Basis of Age

		India		Singapore	
Overall Assessment	Age Group	Mean Score (S.D)	F Statistic (P Value)	Mean Score (S.D)	F Statistic (P Value)
Overall Experience	Less Than 25 Years	4.00 (.858)	.989 (.375)	4.35 (.671)	1.520 (.224)
	25 To 40 Years	4.00 (.577)		4.14 (.577)	
	Above 40 Year	4.18 (.609)		4.34 (.582)	

Table 3 shows that in case of India as well as Singapore the p values of F statistics are more than 5 percent level of significance. Hence, at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H_{o3} is accepted for both India and Singapore. It implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of respondents of different age groups in India and Singapore. The mean scores of overall assessment for all respondents of different age groups are higher in Singapore than India which shows that respondents of all age groups consider Singapore a better place than India.

5.5 Analysis of Gap between Perceived and Experienced Services

In order to analyze the gap between perceived and experienced services in India and Singapore the following null hypothesis has been formed:

H_{o4}: There is no significant difference in the gap between perceived and experienced services as considered by foreign tourists in India and Singapore

To test this null hypothesis independent sample t-test has been applied the results of which are as disclosed in the following table-4:

Table 4
Independent Sample T-test on Perceived and Experienced Services

Level of Gap	Country	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	T Statistic (P Value)	Remark
Perceived & Experienced Services	India	3.50	.935	3.031 (0.003)	Significant Difference
	Singapore	3.88	.918		

Table 4 shows that p value of t statistics is less than 5 percent level of significance. Hence, at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis is rejected indicating that there is a significant difference in the gap (between perceived and experienced services) as considered by foreign tourists in India and Singapore.

The mean scores of this gap is higher in Singapore in comparison to India and both the values are more than three (3=no gap more than 3=positive gap, less than 3=negative gap) which reveals that in both the countries there is a positive gap between perceived and experienced services. However, this positive gap is higher in case of Singapore. It means the foreign tourists experience better services than perceived by them prior to visit in both the countries but they get better experience in Singapore. It is also shown by figure 2.

Figure 2
Mean Scores of Gap between Perceived and Experienced Services
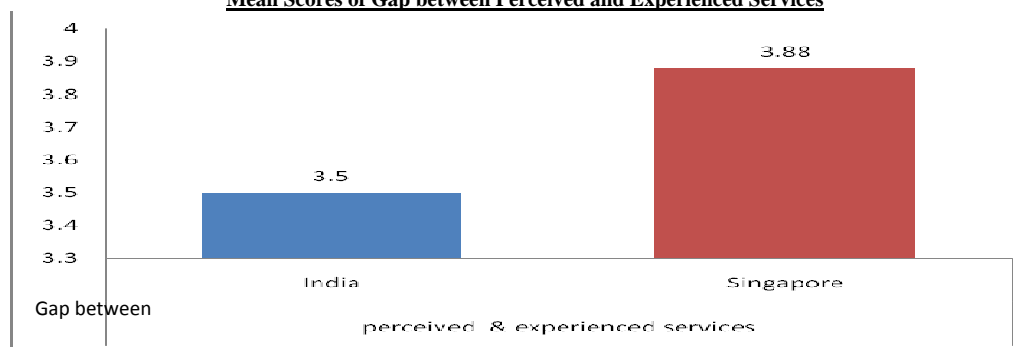
To know the significance of difference between perception of males and females regarding gap between perceived and experienced services the following null hypothesis has been formulated:-

H_{o5}: There is no significant difference between perception of male and female foreign tourists regarding level of gap between perceived and experienced services

To test this null hypothesis the independent sample T-test has been applied the outcome of which is tabulated in table-5.

Table 5
Independent Sample Test on Perceived and Experienced Services on Gender Basis

Level of Gap	Gender	India		Singapore	
		Mean Score (S.D)	T Statistic (P Value)	Mean Score (S.D)	T Statistic (P Value)
Perceived & Experienced Services	Male	3.43 (1.063)	.673 (.502)	3.80 (.939)	.800 (.425)
	Female	3.55 (.807)		3.95 (.903)	

Table 5 reveals the p values of t statistics in both India and Singapore are more than 5 percent level of significance. Hence at 95 percent level of confidence the null hypothesis H_{o2k} is accepted. It means there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female foreign tourists regarding level of gap between perceived and experienced services. The mean score of this gap in case of both male and female respondents shows that this gap is positive in case of both males and females and in both the countries i.e. India and Singapore but the mean scores of Singapore are comparatively better showing a comparatively higher positive gap in Singapore than India.

Further, this level of gap has also been analyzed on the basis of age of respondents. For this purpose the following null hypothesis has been framed:

H_{06}:-There is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding level of gap between perceived and experienced services

To test this null hypothesis one way ANOVA has been applied which depicts the following results:

Table 6
One way ANOVA on Gap Between Perceived and Experience Services on Age Basis

Level of Gap	Age Group	India		Singapore	
		Mean Score (S.D)	F Statistic (P Value)	Mean Score (S.D)	F Statistic (P Value)
Perceived & Experienced Services	Less Than 25 Years	3.40 (1.095)	.702 (.498)	3.80 (1.105)	.205 (.815)
	25 To 40 Years	3.61 (.837)		3.94 (.775)	
	Above 40 Year	3.39 (.974)		3.84 (1.001)	

It is revealed by table 6 that the p value of F statistics in case of both India and Singapore is more than 5 percent level of significance. Hence, at 95 percent level of confidence the above mentioned null hypothesis for India as well as Singapore is accepted .It means that there is no significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists of different age groups regarding level of gap between perceived and experienced services. The mean scores of the level of gap for all the age groups are less in India in comparison to Singapore. It implies that the foreign tourists of all age groups believe that their experienced services in Singapore are much better than the one perceived by them.
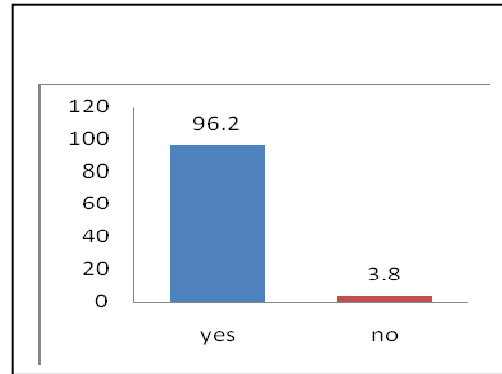
5.6 Analysis of perception of foreign tourists regarding revisiting and recommending India and Singapore

Table 7
Responses for Revisiting India

Revisit India	Frequency	Percent
Yes	481	96.2
No	19	3.8
Total	500	100.0

Figure 3
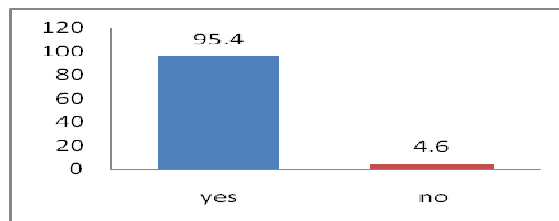**Responses for Revisiting India**

The table 7 and figure 3 show that out of the total sample of 500 respondents 481(96.2%) are of the opinion that they want to revisit India whereas only 19(3.8%) of the respondents do not want to revisit India.

Table 8
Responses for Revisiting Singapore

| Revisit Singapore	Frequency	Percent
Yes	477	95.4
No	23	4.6
Total	500	100.0

Figure 4
Responses for Revisiting Singapore

The table 8 and figure 4 show that out of the total sample of 500 respondents 466(95.4%) are of the opinion that they want to revisit Singapore whereas only 23(4.6%) of the respondents do not want to revisit Singapore.

Table 9
Responses for Recommending India

Recommend India	Frequency	Percent
Yes	481	96.2
No	19	3.8
Total	500	100.0

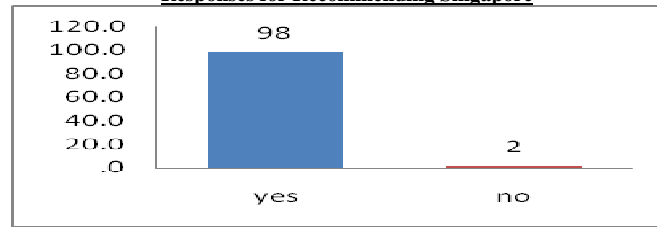**Figure 5**
Responses for Recommending India
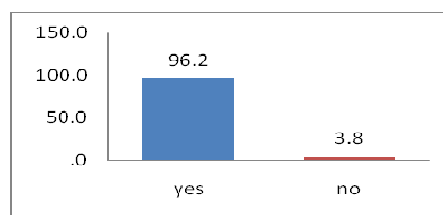
The table 9 and figure 5 show that in the sample of 500 respondents 481(96.2%) respondents are of the opinion that they would recommend India as a holiday destination to their family and friends whereas only 19(3.8%) of the respondents do not want to recommend India to their family and friends.

Table 10
Responses for Recommending Singapore

Recommend Singapore	Frequency	Percent
Yes	490	98
No	10	2
Total	500	100.0

Figure 6
Responses for Recommending Singapore

The table 10 and figure 6 show that in the sample of 500 respondents 490(98%) respondents are of the opinion that they would recommend Singapore as a holiday destination to their family and friends whereas only 10 (2%) of the respondents do not want to recommend Singapore to their family and friends.

VI. CONCLUSION

There is significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists regarding the overall experience of both the destinations. Singapore is found to be more enjoyable and satisfying. Although the gap between the perceived and experienced services of both destinations is positive yet the analysis reveals that there is a significant difference in the perception of foreign tourists as experienced services are better than perceived services in Singapore in comparison to India. However there was no significant difference in the level of gap between the perceived and experienced services of foreign tourists for both the destinations when analyzed on gender and age group basis. Majority of the respondents want to revisit both the destinations and would even recommend both the destinations to their family and friends.

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