

The Impact of Destination Image on Marketing and Branding Tourist Destination in Developing Country

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Abstract

This research critically investigates marketing and branding being affected by the destination image at Swat, Pakistan. The research investigates the concepts of destination image and destination marketing at Swat. For this purpose, previous empirical research (theories and models) related to the aforementioned concepts were critically examined. Moreover, the functional relationship between destination branding and destination marketing is examined. In addition to that, one-size fit approach is considered to measure its validity in case of Swat tourism. The research design used in this study is cross-sectional and mix method research methodology has been used to investigate the correlation between research variables. Close-ended survey questionnaire and open-ended interviews were used as key research instruments by researcher. The findings revealed that there is strong functional relationship between destination branding, destination marketing, and destination image. Furthermore, it is evident that strategic management approach and marketing is essential for the success of tourism destination. There is also strong evidence that individual and marketer's contribution in close collaboration is significant for the growth and expansion of Swat as tourism destination. In addition to that, this research investigation revealed that one-size fit approach cannot be used at Swat. The recommendations are given at the end based on the present findings and suggestions are made to the future researchers to include in their respective studies to have more concrete and precise results.

Keywords: tourism, marketing, destination branding, strategic management

JEL Classification L8, L83, Z3, Z32

1. Introduction

The critical aim of any destination is to inspire the potential tourist, decision-making and selection related to tourism with the help of marketing actions. In the matters of selection 'Images' play a crucial role. According to Mackay & Fesenmaier (1997), the image can develop an artificially generated diversity through promotion as it highly motivates and build opinions regarding the presented products of tourism (p.540). Furthermore, destination image plays a significant role in establishing the brand of destination and its achievement as well. Chi & Qu (2008) explained that tourism marketers require well establishing, emphasizing and if needed, change their destination image, but not all components that are participating in the development of image can be measured (p.634).

For effective marketing strategy, the basic knowledge and familiarity of the tourist' images of the destination and image studies are highly necessary as this is the initial stage and retain the strong image of brand. Therefore, it is obvious that image plays an important role for effective and successful touristic destination, and it is highly linked with the issues of tourism marketing (Gartner & Tasci, 2007, p.413).

Some destination marketing and management agencies (DMOs) do not have complete understandings of significance of image that what it contributes for them, although there is

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compromise on the point that continuous monitoring of destination image is highly critical for effective marketing setting. Through branding actions and activities, they need to understand the high meaning of strategic image management, which may between others be obtained by these.

Aim

"To investigate branding and marketing influenced by destination image in developing country, case study of Swat- Pakistan".

Objectives:

The research objectives are mentioned below:

1. To examine the destination marketing and destination image's concept in relation to Swat tourism.
2. To critically investigate tourist destination's impact through marketing branding and image destination in Swat.
3. To critically identify and investigate the relationship between destination branding and destination marketing at Swat.
4. To critically examine the "one-size fit" marketing approach for Swat as tourism destination.
5. To suggest steps for improving destination image of Swat to concern authorities.

Rational and Significance

The rationale to selecting this calculated project is to discover different correlated aspects and variables that lead to success of a specific destination as brand. In addition to that, due to the role of DMO's differ in developing countries with developed one therefore it is significant to establish the correlation between selected research variables in developing country like Pakistan that offers high tourism market. Moreover, the tourism industry is active high contributor to the economy of Pakistan thus it is essential to understand the variables that leads to create strong brand image in tourism sector and how these variables are linked to each other. To get broad knowledge of considered approaches that will significantly contribute in establishing and retaining the strong image of brand in the industry of tourism, this project will be highly valuable for the tourism sector of Pakistan. Moreover, the tourism industry is enabled by the effective marketing strategies that use for developing other destination within the different parts of the land.

The effective methods of evolving strong image of brand and improve the performance of the complete tourism sector of the hospitality industry gradually are learnt by the help of this strategic and essential project. The outcome of this study will be improved reputation of the destination that will more improve by implementing strategies of marketing. The research provides support in gaining proper knowledge and understandings related to the topic. Due to its direct influence on the tourism industry of a country, the topic of the research has achieved fame amongst business research and management. Hence, it is extremely significant to establish a complete understanding within the tourism and hospitality sector regarding destination image, destination marketing and their effects directly on the performance of whole hospitality industry in the developing country.

2. Literature Review

The universal acknowledgement of the significance of the destination image has given way to the considerable amount of research on this particular topic. Echtner and Ritchie (1991) state "along with the area of tourism, various other disciplines including, including marketing, environmental planning, geography, and psychology has experience vital

research conduction" (P. 3). Moreover, "make reference that research of destination image can be viewed as subdivision of a broader area of imagery research, which predominantly fit in to the psychology's field" (cited from Echtner and Ritchie 1991, p. 4). Nevertheless, through the multidisciplinary, the research line had been characterised, which states that various distinctive approaches can be used to study destination image (Gallarza, et al., 2002).

Crompton (1979) explains destination image as, "the individual's sum of ideas, beliefs, and impressions of a destination" (P. 33). In the similar framework, the expression image is used to symbolize simplification of extensive associations and informational pieces associated with the place (Day, et al., 2002). This particular definition is associated to individuals however, in terms of marketing's point of view, which is highly curtail for thesis, one must have an awareness the fact that images can be collectively shared groups and people.

Primary versus secondary image

A clear differentiation should be constructed between primary and secondary image. The Primary image is individual's personally attained information visitation or experience of the specific destination. Though, it may be distinctive of the secondary image, which, in comparison is primarily perceived prior to experiencing a destination. The formation of secondary image takes place, when consumer is expose to the information sources through organic, persuades and independent information source. This is obvious, as the impact of the external information's considerable dependency on the number and types of the sources. In the current chapter various information sources, relevant to destination image formation will be define and discussed in-depth. The individuals perceived image after the visit to the destination becomes highly complex and realistic in contrast to the one formed by secondary information. Therefore, it is recommended that though various individuals have image of the destination they yet have to visit, the highly authentic, personal and detailed destination image is formed through the actual visit to the destination (cited from Molina, et al., 2010).

Pre-visit versus post-visit image

Another common direction often considered by various researcher's of destination image is the distinction amid pre- and post-visitors' image perceptions. This part particular approach believe that tourists' perception of the image alter over time, describing it in somewhat in similar regard as stated in above analysed segmentation of the primary and secondary destination image. Gallarza, et al., (2002) examine the concept's dynamic characteristics, claiming lack of static in the image that image however, the change in the image depends on the two variables, time and space. As per researchers, image often communicate to perception's interiorisation of perceptions and every individual's perception varies accordingly. Researchers put forward an argument that destination image makes reference to tourists' perception of a destination, consequently to the supposed contribution of several amenities and services found at destination, for instance, food, accommodation, transport. In comparison, some researchers argue that image perception utilization is in fact theoretically unsuitable in a scenario of potential tourists who yet have to visit unable to experience through visitations and pictures.

Cognitive versus affective image

In regards to image perception altering with time, it was discovered that affective image is highly unpredictable than the cognitive image. This demonstrates that due to emotional condition the affective image perception is probably to experience changes. Cognitive images, in contrast are primarily depended on previously acquired knowledge and information and thus is additionally stable and linger for longer (cited from Seongseop, et al., 2009).

Attribute-based versus holistic image

Reynolds and Guttman (1984) suggested that an image of any given service or product can be viewed as constructed of multiple objects (cited from Gallarza, et al., 2002). Additionally, in tourism's framework, there has been a wide recognition of the existence of a diverse variable forming destination image's identity. In such scenario, the destination will be regarded as product and various variables are the mechanisms of the entire image. As per, MacKay and Fesenmaier (1997) assert that "in the total impression of the destination image, woven together are the combination of various products (attraction) and attributes" (P. 538). Gallarza, et al., (2002) provides empirical TDI review, where studies evaluate the attribute-based images in relation to the two decades of the timeframe. The below figure provides the summary of highly universal characteristic applied in the image research.



Figure 1: Common attributes in TDI research (Source: Gallarza, et al., 2002, p. 63)

Nonetheless, at this stage it is still not apparent point it is still unclear whether a destination image can be itself an output or dependent of the underlying attributes (Gallarza, et al., 2002).

The dimensions of destination image

Numerous researchers consent through their research work "The destination image's measurement and meaning", Echtner and Ritchie (1991) have made great contribution in the destination image structure's development, which specify that destination image comprises of functional features, associating to destination's additional tangible feature and psychological attributes, regarding the supplementary intangible features. Echtner and Ritchie findings were based observations of research of product image (McInnis & Price, 1987).

Founded on these given notion, Echtner and Ritchie (1991) suggest that in destination image concept of the tourist, the attributes/ holistic axes along with functional psychological aspect are similarly applicable. However, as it can observed in the below given figure, Echtner and Ritchie's theoretical framework consists of an additional dimension, arraying from common to unique.

Consequently, the model must be visualized in three dimensions. It is proposed that destination image have to be evaluated and defined in presence of these three dimensions:

- attributes - holistic
- mon - unique
- functional - psychological

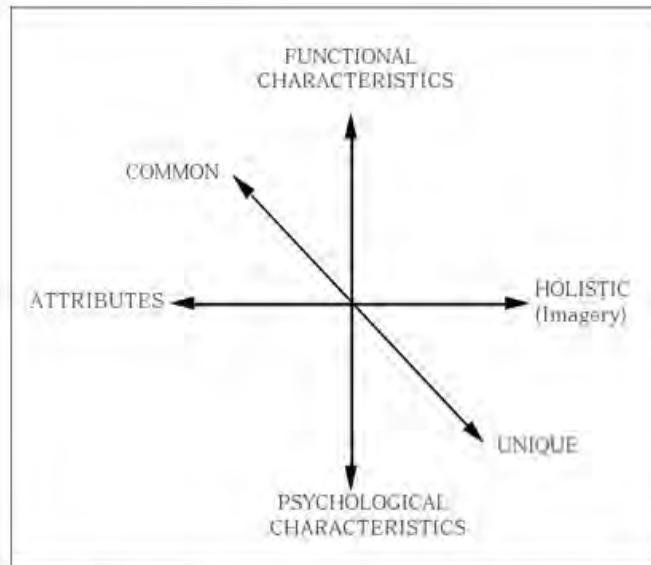


Figure 2. The components of destination image Source: Echtner & Ritchie, 1991, p. 8

Destination image formation

The formation of the destination image ordinarily integrates two extremes of information transmission, receiver and destination. MacKay and Fesenmaier (1997) explain the formation of destination image as "a combination of individual contribution and marketer contributions". Therefore, the image formation mutually has a supply-side (the destination, through marketing performance) and a demand plan (the receiver) constituent (ibid., p. 539). The outcome emerges as greater awareness of a building image of the destination and people, without the need of conducting of authentic tourism promotion (Tasci and Gartner, 2007).

Image formation agents

Beerli and Martín (2004) acknowledge of the subsistence of a position of elements which have significant influence on the image formation. These precisely engage both information from diverse sources and individual attributes of the individual establishing a fan image of a particular tourist destination. The external formation attained from sources will be embraced by the supply factors such as media, marketing and education. Baloglu and McCleary (1999) developed a highly comprehensible model of the agents active in image formation and illustrated precise interrelationship and differentiation among the personal elements and the stimulus elements, as they are referred to Figure 4 given below demonstrates this graphic.

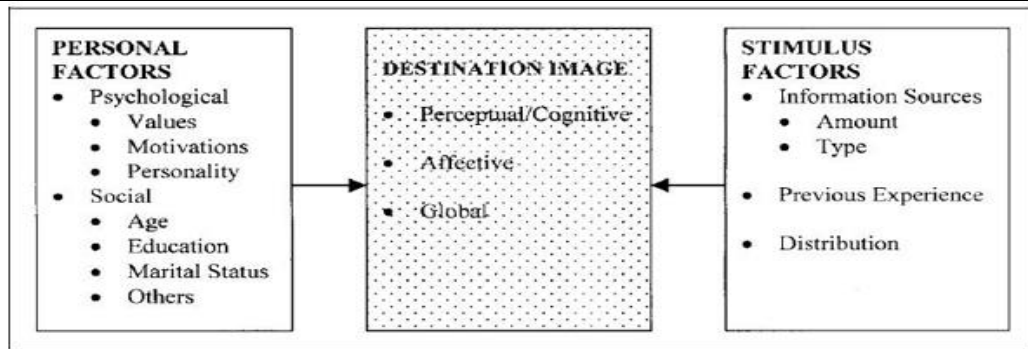


Figure 3: Image formation agents Source: Baloglu & McCleary, 1999, p. 870

Destination image measurement

Due to the beforehand described multidimensionality of tourism destination image, its measurement and assessment is quite complicated. Generally, when it comes to image measurement, the researcher has a considerable responsibility, because the scenarios are always dissimilar. There is an expressed need for choosing the appropriate measurement methods and instruments which should be adaptable to the complex nature of the image and able to capture the many components of a TDI. O'Leary and Deegan (2003) analysed both qualitative and quantitative types of the measurement methods. In similar regards, the conclusion of Prebensen's (2007) study demonstrates that various techniques trace distinctive types of images that is vital to employing several technique when a diverse range of destination image's identities are required to be explored.

Country- and culture-related influences

As per MacKay and Fesenmaier (2000), within the tourism framework, the development and evaluation of image has not been examined traditionally through the prospective of the cross-cultural. Nevertheless, there is a reference to the study of Hofstede (1991) and Triandis (1972), whereby within a specific culture people share familiar beliefs, values, meanings, norms and attitudes. The influence of these value configuration is articulated through consumers' lifestyle and behaviour patterns, it then become expected that individual's cultural background arbitrate the way an individual observe the tourist destination's image.

However, MacKay and Fesenmaier, are convinced that attributes which contributes in image perception differ across regions and countries. Thus, research conducted on multinational tourism consist of recognizing, comprehending the chosen and most importantly include tourists' origins along with the associated dimensions for image assessment (MacKay & Fesenmaier, 2000).

The two area of research, tourist destination image (TDI) and Product country image (PCI) evolves individually. One of the reasons is the association between the particular country's destination image and its national image. Therefore, there is an incorporation, by a destination image, of information from non-commercial sources concerning several social, historical, and economical aspects regarding the destination and country in question (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991).

For any destination the ultimate objective is to influence the potential tourists' decision and choices related to travel through marketing activities and subsequently attract them towards the destination. Thus, regardless how the matter is approached, both researchers and the destination managers are in agreement in terms of the significance of the image in the success of tourist destination (Tasci and Gartner, 2007). Researchers have demonstrated the most valuable concept in understanding and indentifying the tourist's selection of destination is the destination's image. Consequently, there is an evident relationship between tourist intention to visit and destination image. The preliminary phase of image formation, prior to the actual visit is recognized as vital stage during the selection process (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Due to the intangible nature of the tourism products, thus the future has restricted or no knowledge of it. Image is assumed to symbolize the destination and consequently has the command to influence the destination choice (Tasci and Gartner, 2007).

The functional relationships of destination image

With the aim to explain the complex process of image formation along with the consequence of image, a number of studies explore the association between variables. The below given model adds up what previously has been explained in the chapter of hitherto in terms of destination image. With current illustration, Tasci and Gartner (2007) give precise and logical overview of the complex associations among functional aspects and their influence of destination image. In addition, the model is a common and dynamically interactive arrangement, in which all the variables are included each variable can be either an effect or cause of a change factor in the association to each other. There has been a beforehand discussion of the variables.

The presented model's evident implication is that everyone has a highly unique image of the destination. Few of the reason for such uniqueness are primarily due to the fulfilment of the personal needs, past experiences and cultural motives. Though, there is limited research on the cultural influences, it is extensively accepted that destination image should related to the culture. The similar environmental contribution aspect might, for instance, completely interpreted differently by varying cultures. Although, destination images are entirely dissimilar, there is sufficient cohesion among them to establish meaningful market subdivisions. Therefore, this model demonstrates a multifaceted atmosphere in which the formation activities of destination image, preferably as per the predefined market subdivision, have to be conducted. This can be accomplished through implementation of programmes that assess image and if essential, modify (Tasci & Gartner, 2007).

As proposed through the implications of the above presented model of the destination image along with its functional relationships, there is a need for proper management of the destination's image. In similar regards, Day, Skidmore and Koller (2002) recommended a strategic approach for image management. The process of effectual and efficient management of destination image has been conducted on ongoing basis. Whereas it is evident that destination's images play a crucial role influencing the prospective tourists' decision making actions. Several authors suggest that the image's simple existence in the mind of individuals is additionally significant in comparison to if the image provides true presentation of the destination's or vice versa (cited from Jenkins, 2001). In comparison, Beerli and Martín (2004) for instance, proceed with the critical view that corresponds to the market reality of destination through transmission of image development messages and correspond with what in reality the destination has to offer. Therefore, the image development of the destination should be founded completely on the reality. If the given is not the case, the destination may fail to meet the tourist satisfaction and leave a negative image which may pass through word of mouth.

Destination Marketing

The globalization has made significant contribution to such development. With the increasingly augmenting number of the international transactions, which evidently have an influence on the place competitiveness (Baker and Cameron, 2007). After the preceding chapter on the destination image, this segment of the chapter is to provide an insight on the area of the destination marketing, consisting on the focal point on branding.

First, there should be a precise differentiation among place and destination marketing. In contrast destination marketing, the extended area of the place marketing is not restricted to the inclining number of the tourist arrivals. It has rather an impact on highly expansive areas such as urban and regional development, international associations, country placement, along with the economic growth. Respectively, Kotler (1993), a leader and pioneer in the research issue related to marketing, a book publication on the place marketing, where he evaluates the causes of how industry, investment, and tourism can be drawn to cities, nations and states. Therefore, place marketing fundamentally accepts four core actions. Furthermore, it designs to engage the suitable combination of community services and features. In this manner, tourism is habitually utilised as a mean conclude instead of ending it itself. Nevertheless, the information relevant to marketing has authority to have positive influence on the development of the destination is highly acknowledged.

Following the literature review in an extensive manner on the topic, Baker and Cameron (2008) were capable to recognize various critical factors that contribute to the success that are completely related to the development of the destination's marketing strategy. These aspects are combined into four diverse stages, as per the brand destination development, which will be analysed once more in the dedicated sub-chapter of branding.

The most challenging type of marketing talent is Destination marketing. Tourism product's general complexity and handling of various classes of stakeholders involvements are the most the most common challenges of it. Generally, the complete marketing mix involves framing of destination product, estimating the destination and allocating of products of destination over the correct networks, supporting and sponsoring of destination. Usually, the main reason of generating DMO's is to yield high concern of promoting tourism by attracting visitors in order to fulfilling the needs of all these stakeholders.

As per Buhalis (2000), "there is blend interest of personal & professional of all the public who are living and working in the region such as native persons, traders and investors, visitors, visit regulators and mediators and other concern group" (P. 99). In the process the investors are involved in a mixture of public agencies, charitable associations and organisations of various sizes. Generally, the manufacturer has not possessed entire control over the products of tourism. The mixture of tourism products and services, resources and regions together create the entire understandings and practice of tourism. Nevertheless, the decision of DMO's is the major cause of little control on the product of tourism by putting their concentration and efforts especially on the marketing mix are advertising aspect (Cited from Baker & Cameron, 2007; Axelsson, Elbe and Hallen, 2009). However, there is an emphasis by the Gretzel and her research partner (2006) on the fact that in the present circumstances there is high expectation from leadership.

Destination branding

Trademark is a legal term for brand. A brand can be identified as a term, name, mark, design and any other characteristic that can differentiate good or service of one vendor from other vendors. According to American Marketing Association (2011), generally, a brand contains an obvious symbol, shades patterns, font sizes, codes, sound which might be established to denote concepts, standards, morals and personality as well. In a perspective of tourism destination the concept of

'9e branding' is still considered as a comparatively contemporary practice, however this concept has extensively been used for product s and services as it is well defined the brand. A brand can be defined as one element, a cluster of elements or all elements of that vendor. The ideal term is name of trade, if used for the organisation as a total. A brand perhaps the experience & familiarity of consumer that are signified by the collection of ideas and images, most commonly, it mentions to a character like, logo, title, name, slogan and pattern. By gathering experiences with the particular product or service for both directly concerning to its utilization and through the impact of media note, design and advertising, the brand recognition and other reactions are established.

Geographical locations can also be branded just like product and services. The main objective of this branding is to create awareness among the people regarding that location. The place or location do not necessary require legal owner; however any organisation can own it to exploit the image of the location, that is basically the key dissimilarity between location branding and commercial branding. There is also a possibility that formation of name for the brand is restricted and usually it would be linked with the country or destination name. However, the common meaning of a brand fulfils destination management's target that's why it is related to both perspectives. The main reason of image and branding popularity to destinations is struggle and issues regarding the substitutability. Ritchie, et al., (2005) explained that "For the choices of tourist the 'destination image' is one of the significant factors and also enlightened the idea of destination image, they argued that image is not just specific characteristic of destination but also the all-inclusive impression of the location". In the process of brand building of destination, five sequential stages are recognized by the Pritchard and Morgan (2004).

- Stage 1: Market analysis, exploration and strategic suggestions
- Stage 2: Development of Brand uniqueness
- Stage 3: Brand introduction and promotion, and correspondence.
- Stage 4: Brand execution
- Stage 5: Checking, estimation and assessment

Destination marketers are facing many challenges in branding that are generally related to environmental, financial and political factors. For instant, the limited fund of DMO's is one of the major issues that destination marketing commonly has to face. This issue could be resolved by the execution of advanced and state-of the-art approaches of branding with the support of 'outsmarting' method rather than outspending, however these tactics are very difficult to implement. The role of native peoples in the process of branding is another issue. The stability of image between brand and truth can be secured by the active participation of native peoples in branding and exactly aware the brand. Additionally, as per Baker & Cameron (2008), the previously discussed tourism products' complications with opposing needs of the various investors inside the destination are pressures for effective destination branding.

Incorporating destination image and marketing

Clearly and Baloglu (1999) associates the appropriate image development of destination and its effects with the variables of marketing specifically, however some of the researchers argue that the total success of destination depends on the significance of suitable image development of destination.

It is the obvious fact that destination image is involved in the decision-making and subsequently to profitable deals of tourism products and services thus, usually marketers have very strong concern in the notion of destination image. The images believed by prospect tourist are usually examined by the offices of national tourist and brand development, market segmentation and consequent movement of promotion are supported by the utilization of its results. As per Buhalis (2000), "sometimes, prospect tourist have purchased tourism product but have never been at the

destination later, in that cases of intangibility the 'pricing element' of marketing mix especially, shows significant role for image of destination" (p.110).

According to Jenkins (1999), "the ratio of past tourist can be increased with the support of images as it evoked gratification with the location, the purpose in such cases is to inspire repeat tourist and acquisition" (p.2). Hence, it is vital to have clear understanding regarding the effects of images on the consumer's selection of a specific destination instead of another location (Sirakaya, et al., 2011). In actual, peoples understand the destinations' multitudes and therefore they grasp a unique image regarding each of them. According to Gomez, et al., (2010) "image one of the rare tools that support the destination to differentiate it from its numerous competitors in the present growing competitive market; they focus the vast impact of image for marketers" (p.722). Effective marketing and branding is necessary for tough competition as there is high number of available destination available and it can differentiate from each other.

In the correspondence of marketing, the most substantial motivators can be incorporated by careful examination. To form and improve a positive image usually destinations expend large amount of money and time. According to McCleary & Baloglu (1999), the cost-effective marketing and branding and aim of attracting more visitors towards the destination can be achieved by focusing more on the results of highly vital destination attributes and tourists' motivators.

Marketing is proficient to strengthen the image of destination even in the scenario when target group have already developed an image of a place. Echter & Ritchie (1991) suggested, for marketing determinations, it is more suitable to separate the images of those who have visited and those who have not been at the destination yet in demand. Baker & Cameron (2008) clarify the distinction between image and destination identity. Image is basically the sum of beliefs and impressions that individuals possess for a destination, while destination identity is concern about how a specific place desires to be professed and a collection of particular brand features that marketers believe would separate their destination from its competitors appropriately. The aim of marketing correspondence at this stage is to establish an association between image and destination identity.

The role of DMO in conveying image

To some extent, the DMOs have power to affect the messages that are conversed to target audience, as mentioned earlier. On the other hand, they have limited role in the development of product or delivery of related services, which is generally controlled by several small free tourism regulators inside the destination. This indicated that most significant challenges of DMOs in the development of destination brand involve achievement of perfect and stable image. As per Kelly & Hanlan (2005), "the destination marketers and managers focus their all efforts on the proper marketing mix's correspondence in order to get some inspiration on the image of destination they wish to express" (p.164).

The image and branding relationship

Levy, et al., (2005) conducted research to identify the practices of destination branding and how do managers of tourism destination understand the definition of branding. They pronounce that destination has to create and define the brand identity (the specific image) in the process of destination branding they need to represent and express that image to the target markets later. Remarkably, the professionals of tourism proposed the theme regarding the idea of image and generally to the image those tourists believe themselves for the destination. However, Tasci and Kozak (2006) presented another concept on the relationship between branding and image, they believe that reliability of brand denotes to the efficiency of a destination in proving familiarities and understandings that relate to the needs of tourists and matches the image of destination they believe. The destination brand is created and become successful with the support of destination

image. The brand will be popular and hold a solid position as long as the tourists and prospect tourist have positive image of destination in their mindsets. Moreover, branding encompasses two types of images as mentioned in figure 8, namely Projected i.e. 'Supply side' and the received i.e. 'demand side' image.

The target markets must have a focused and obvious concept of brand purposes in order to have solid position of brand as it has discussed earlier. Consequently, the DMO chooses to form on the basis of attributes that have to be identified by the fewer positive and significant image. Green lifestyles have a significant positive effect on pro-environmental behaviour (Foster et al. 2022). There is the mediating role of psychological empowerment in the relationship between inclusive leadership and voice behavior (Younas, Wang, Javed & Haque, 2022). Industry 4.0 has a significant role in promoting and improving the performance of the services industry (Rahman, Kamal, Aydin & Haque, 2022). Service quality mediated the relationship between the CRM performance dimensions (key customer focus, CRM knowledge management, CRM organization, and CRM-based technology) and the marketing performance (Al-Gasawneh, AlZubi, Anuar, Padlee, Haque & Saputra, 2022).

Practical transformation is essential as it offers insights into complex situations and practical solutions (Haque, 2022). The embedded themes explored from the primary investigation revealed that there are major differences between camping and glamping, and this includes cost, privacy, convenience, duration, and ease of set up (Adamovich et al. 2021). Stringent rules and regulations, monitoring, training programmes, and monetary incentives might be efficient solutions to apply ecological behaviour at workplaces (Farooq et al. 2021).

One of the most vulnerable sections of the society is the 'aging population' (Nair, Rao & Haque, 2021). Haque (2021) argued that aging population contributions are significant and termed in this study as 'knowledge-gem' (GK). It would be interesting to see if tourism branding has anything to do with it. Business

networking is enhancing the effectiveness of total quality management (Urbański et al. 2021). Haque, Yamoah & Sroka (2020), discussed about the reduction in choices of consumers. On the other hand, Haque et al. (2020) found that external CSR has an impact to sustain the capital and positioning in the dynamic.

According to Prebensen (2007) "the fundamental understanding of destination image to the visitor is a primary point for increasing and retaining the strong image of brand" (p.748). The detailed discussion regarding the image and destination branding can be concluded by the help of published suggestions of Kim, et al., (2011), probably it summarises the complicated relationship in a best way. According to them, "Brand image plays a important role in establishing brand identity, while brand image is also a consideration of brand identity. That is, customers form a destination image in their mindsets based on the brand identity proposed by the destination marketers. Then, destination marketers create and develop brand identity based on their knowledge about consumer's brand image on the specific destination".

3. Research Methodology

Research Design

To determine and resolve the current research problem, the cross-sectional method is used in the present research. The main reason for considering the cross-sectional approach is that it's very time-effective if we compare it with the longitudinal research approach that is why the longitudinal research method was not selected for the present study as it would have been a highly time consuming method to conduct research because time is the great factor of constrain in this research study. In case, longitudinal approach has given valuable assistance by its favourable nature of detailed analysis. However, the employment of cross sectional design will still give its advantages

by providing specific and reliable results. According to Saunders et al (2009), the research onion assists researchers in the selection of suitable method established in the research philosophy and belief. In the present study, the similar strategic method has been utilized by applying research onion in order to provide detailed facts and figures of philosophy of research in a relationship with selected method's effectiveness.

Research Philosophy & Approach

In the beginning, Patton (1990) suggested that application of Inductive approach is valuable to recognize and analyse key factors in a more comprehensive way. Additionally, according to Hannabus (1993), the practice of direct and open approach enables in-depth investigation of data in a feasible way. However, as per Sekaran (2002), the implementation of 'Qualitative' approach allows in-depth interviews with the selected respondents which enables researcher to obtain comprehensive data in less time effectively, nevertheless the technique's purpose is vital.

For close observance the model is valuable for sampling observance. As per Hannabuss (1993), the detailed investigation of the information, in a more probable manner, is possible with the use of direct and open approach. The utilization of the inductive approach in the beginning is defined as per Patton (1990), he suggested that the major factors can be recognized and analyzed through such approach in a detailed manner. In depth interviews with the respondents are attained with the use of qualitative approach which allows to acquire detailed information in a time effective manner, however the determination of the technique is vital (Sekaran, 2002). The major purpose of implementing this approach is to make certain suitable combination of available tools and its modification as per needs of present research. Reorganized questionnaire as a tool includes in the qualitative approach which is consist of close-ended questions. Moreover, undertaken research procedure is aligned with the work of Christie et al., (2003) that leads to find results that are reliable and valid.

The cost and effect relationship is adequately understood by the support of descriptive research (cited from Saunders et al., 2009; P.35). In the present research the examination of relationship amongst destination branding, destination image and marketing in United Kingdom's tourism industry is done by using the descriptive research in a similar way with the support of steps of Saunders.

The thorough analysis is conducted to explore the relationship between existing variables and present research comprehensively which is allowed by having a philosophy. Qualitative and Quantitative approach are two significant features of the research method. This model is useful for sampling compliance for close execution.

Sampling Technique

The techniques of sampling is vital for the present research study because it enables the researcher to commence and select from two types of sampling patterns a) probability and b) non-probability sampling. The researcher has selected the non-probability sampling technique due to its time-effective feature with the support of thoughtful analysis for the present study. Moreover, the 'Convenience Sampling' technique is also used by the researcher for the present study. While the factor of generalization factor of this method is well-known, however the wide-ranging Convenience sampling method provides benefits to the researcher by providing generalized result as it supports the researcher to conduct research in a extensive socio-economic environment. Conversely, the wide-ranging demographic distribution in the tourism sector of Pakistan could be considered by employing 'Stratified sampling technique' as it would have allowed adequate and abundant outcome, but researcher has considered the 'Convenience sampling technique' due to limited time. Hence, the high demand for generalization and time-constraint in the present research urged the researcher to select convenience sampling method for the present study. The technique

has shown valuable as it provide the detailed outline of potential of managers related to operational actions. The interviews with the managers and related professionals are conducted that were considered as research tools. To eradicate the risk of respondent manipulation or vague outcomes, the researcher circulated the questionnaire personally among the participant of research. Furthermore, the 'Value survey model' established questionnaire of research was employed in the present study.

Population and sample set

The appropriate size of sample decided in the research proposal was 150 from the population of 300 tourists on average bases in the region of tourism, but in actual research the sample set of 80 for survey questionnaire and detailed interviews of 5 participants (two tourist experts, two marketing managers of destination and one expert of branding destination) were considered by the researcher due to limited time and less convenience. For this present study, four tourism regions of Pakistan are considered and 20 respondents from each region have selected for survey questionnaire, which creates 25% of all four tourism regions.

Research Instrument

The most vital tool for the present study is the separately designed "survey questionnaire" which is divided into two sections; named as section 1 and section 2 equally. The section 1 basically comprised of environmental explanation, containing 5 questions related to upbringing information of respondents, whereas section 2 entail 10 questions which supports the researcher to establish an association among the variables of research in the tourism industry of Pakistan.

Quantitative analysis as well as qualitative analysis are used in different social science studies often to gain in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Faizan & Haque, 2015; Faizan & Haque, 2016; Faizan & Haque, 2019; Faizan et al. 2018; Faizan et al. 2019; Gusakov et al. 2020; Haque, 2012; Haque & Aston, 2016; Haque et al. 2016; Haque et al. 2018; Haque et al. 2020; Haque, Aydin & Uysal, 2017; Haque et al. 2017; Haque et al. 2015; Haque, Kot & Imran, 2019; Haque, Nair & Kucukaltan, 2019; Haque & Oino, 2019; Haque, Sher & Urbanski, 2020; Haque & Yamoah, 2014; Imran et al. 2018; Imran, Hameed & Haque, 2018; Imran, Haque & Rebilas, 2018; Javed et al. 2018a; Javed et al. 2018b; Kot et al. 2019a; Kot et al. 2019b; Kot et al. 2020; Ślusarczyk et al. 2019; Ślusarczyk et al. 2020; U-Hameed et al. 2018; Urbański & Haque 2020; Urbański, Haque & Oino, 2018).

Moreover, the respondents are encouraged to get familiar with research topic and subject's theme by designing close-ended questions. The relationship amongst research variables is established with the help of close-ended questions, which is another reason to use it. Likert scale is used for the ranking of outcome results. Matrix degree supported to achieve this. This is established on the bases of questionnaire scale. Here, 1 is most significant on the scale but 5 has not significance of any kind, such as 1= highly significant, 2= Significant, 3= adequate, 4= least significant, 5= Not Significant. This scale is started from 1, which is an extreme end and continues to 5. The chance to ask open-ended questions from respondents was achieved with the help of unstructured interview survey by using 'Snowballing technique' in the present research. For present research, the research selected the same tools and tackles that Christie et al., had employed in their research studies. The basic purpose of these tools & tackles is to provide intense attention towards environmental characteristics, where relationships are developing between independent variables and their effects; however adequate variables are appropriately computable.

Data Collection Process

The collection of data both primary as well as secondary sources was the next significant phase of the research process after setting up the target audience. For reliable data collection method, the personal contribution of the research is obvious and the process of data must be completed without

abandon. The age requirement for this research study was in the age group of 18 to 55 because large number of tourists is from the similar age group.

Data Analysis and Statistical Tool

The statistical tool helps to define objectives of research in more specific way. The combination of both primary and secondary data is used to develop qualitative-quantitative research improvement. Interviews provide qualitative features whereas questionnaires provide quantitative features by giving numeric outcomes. The researcher used **Z-test** as significant statistical tool in order to assess the findings and outcomes that were achieved by survey questionnaire. Furthermore, Saliowsky (2005), also explained that “the **z-test** is of higher significance in establishing the relationship among dependent and independent variables of research”. The sample size which is greater than 30 is one more essential reason for the practice of z-test.

Pilot Study

As we know all know that the process of research is highly essential for the growth and development of both micro and macro field due its private, wide-ranging and expensive nature. The selected respondents must have clear understanding of research ideas and its objectives by the researcher so that they can contribute beneficially in the research process. Therefore, researcher needs to make certain that reliable and trustworthy respondents are selected for the study. The researcher has used pilot study to ensure validity and credibility. Moreover, the credibility factor is also supported by ‘Rechecking’ of the responses through proper criteria in order to make certain that selected respondents had obvious understanding of research questions and research problem and they were capable enough to response in an appropriate way to those questions. The ‘Self-administered’ question was also developed under the boundaries of ethics of the research criteria.

Validity

Validity is the most vital factor to reduce the personal biasness of respondents and research question’s manipulation. The outcomes of research can be obtained effectively by conducting appropriate checks on each and every phase of the research process. So, a valid conclusion of research is supported by this essential aspect. The combination of qualitative and quantitative approach was utilized to maintain complete validity of the respondents because it is highly critical component for finding the results. The researcher distributed the survey questionnaire by its own. The suitable statistics tools were employed properly in order to attain related data evaluate and conclude the outcome.

Reliability

The factor of ‘Reliability’ is highly critical for conduction of research study as it plays a significant role by ensuring that suitable respondents are selected for the research. In the present research ‘Pilot Study’ had conducted as a reliability test at London Eye. The key purpose of pilot study is to ensure that selected respondents understand the researcher’s directions and eliminate any persistent uncertainties regarding to it. The reading material was given to the respondents for gaining knowledge and they were allowed to ask questions later if they found any confusion in it. The confidence and dependence of researcher was simplified by providing research objectives to the respondents in a well-established and organized way and obtaining their responses individually and collectively as well in order to ensure factor of reliability in the present research.

Ethics

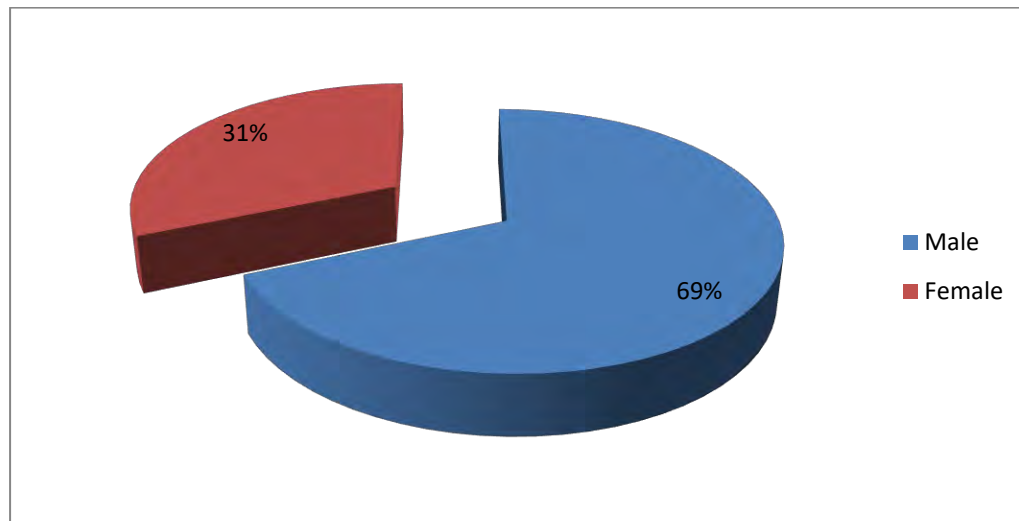
Ethics is also very critical phase of research that can never be neglected at any cost. This is the universal concept that has followed by researchers. The basic purpose of ethics is to ensure and maintain confidentiality of information and viewpoints provided by the respondents in the research process. The selected respondents of the present research were guided and guaranteed that their

responses and info were obtained exclusively for the purpose of the research. In addition to, their personal viewpoints and perspective will be kept confidential and will never be used against any participant. The exclusive purpose of listed evidence and info in the appendix is just to maintain records and researcher will not use them in any other matter. Furthermore, the opinions and standpoints of respondent regarding their profession will never be suppressed.

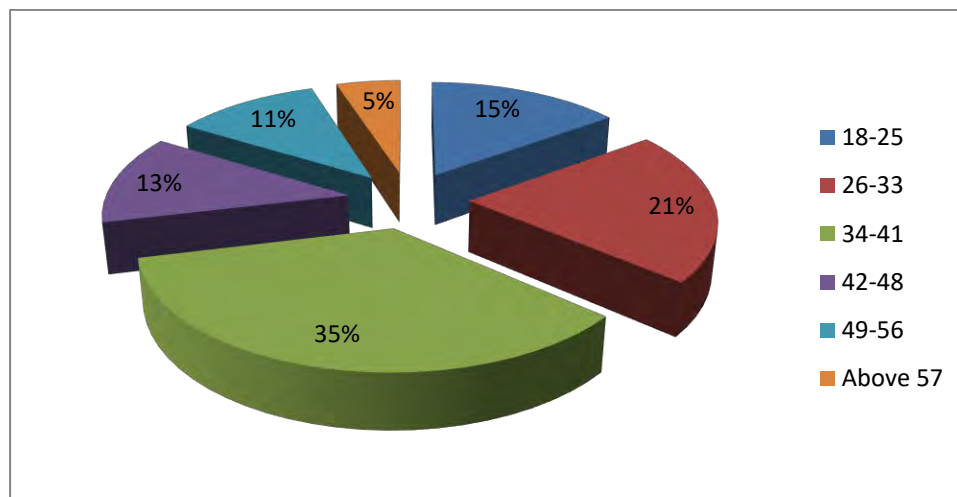
4. Data Finding and Discussion

Survey Questionnaire

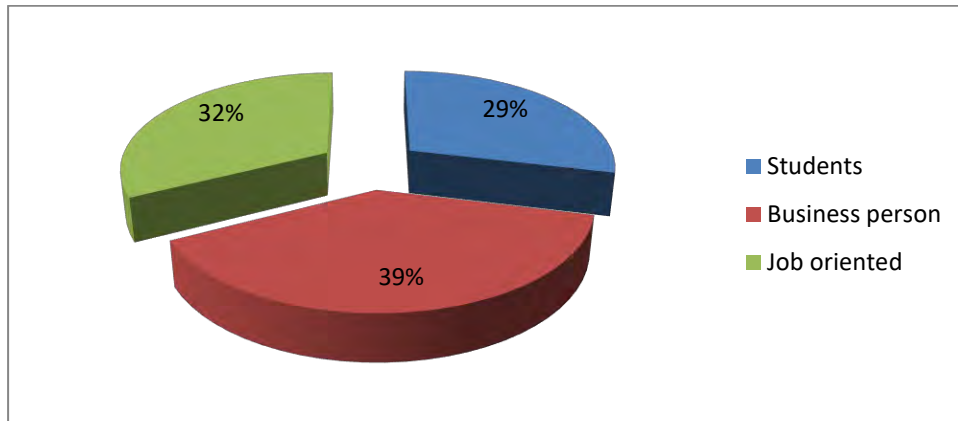
Part A: Demographic Description



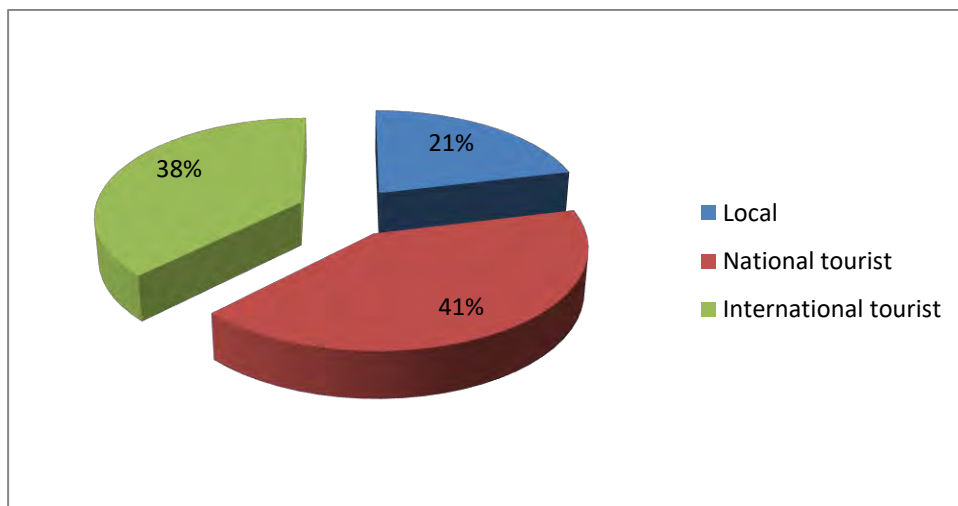
Gender	
Male	Female
48	22



Age	
18-25	12
26-33	17
34-41	28
42-48	10
49-56	9
Above 57	4



Occupation	
Students	23
Business person	31
Job oriented	26



Type of Tourist	
Local	17
National tourist	33
International tourist	30

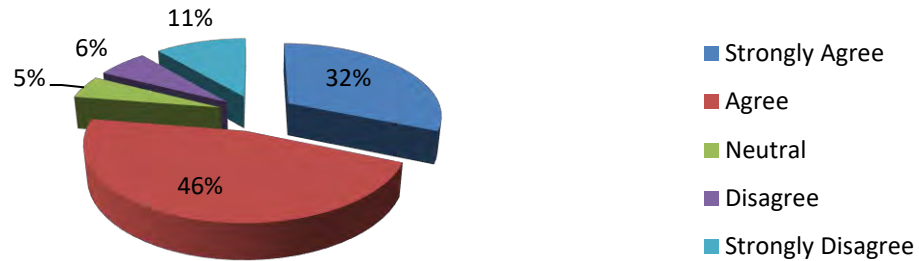
Interpretation:

From demographic description, it is revealed that males are majority of participants as it formed 69% and female only 31%. Furthermore, (34-41) age bracket has large number of participants as it contains 35% of sample, followed by (26-33) with 21% and 15% (18-25). Moreover, businessperson is large part of target audience with 39%, followed by 32% (job oriented) and 29% (students). In addition to that, sample size has 41% national tourists, 38% international tourists, and remaining 21% locals.

Part B:

Do you think that destination image and marketing both play vital role in the success of Swat as tourist destination?

Destination image and marketing both play vital role in the success of Goa as tourist destination



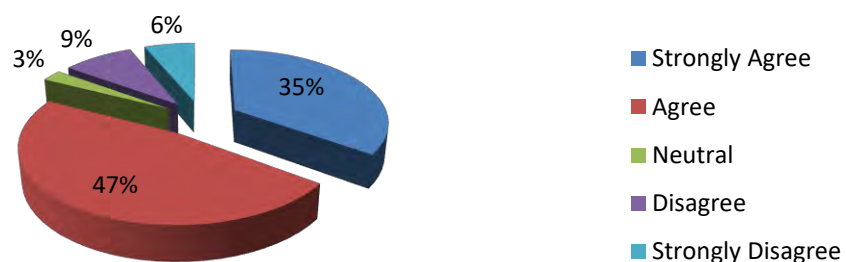
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25	37	4	5	9

Interpretation:

It is found that 32% strongly agreed while 24% agreed that marketing as well destination image plays significant role in attracting tourist at Swat. This means that almost 77% agreed to it whereas 17% disagreed to it. Those who remain undecided counted only 5%.

For the formation of strong destination brand image, individual as well marketer's contribution are important?

The contribution of both Marketers as well individuals for strong destination image



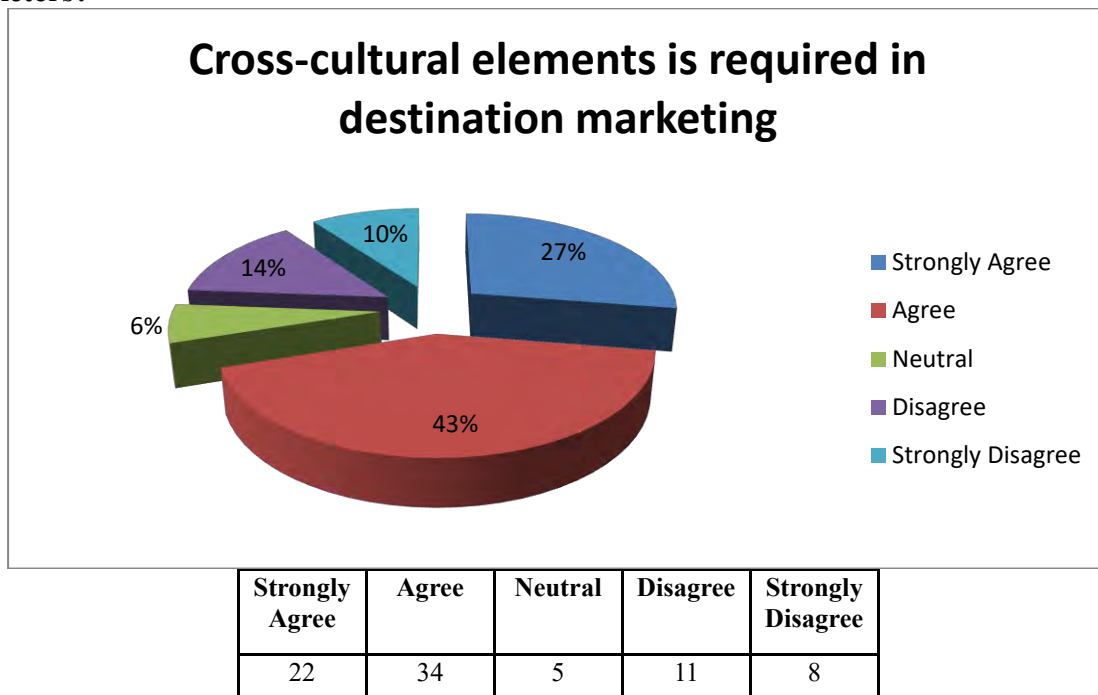
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28	38	2	7	5

Interpretation:

The above analysis showed that in response to question 2, 47% agreed whereas 35% strongly agreed. Thus this constitute 82% of the participants agreeing to some extent that both individual

and marketer's contribution is essential in the formation of destination image in case of Swat. Furthermore, 3% were neutral while only 15% respondents disagreed to it.

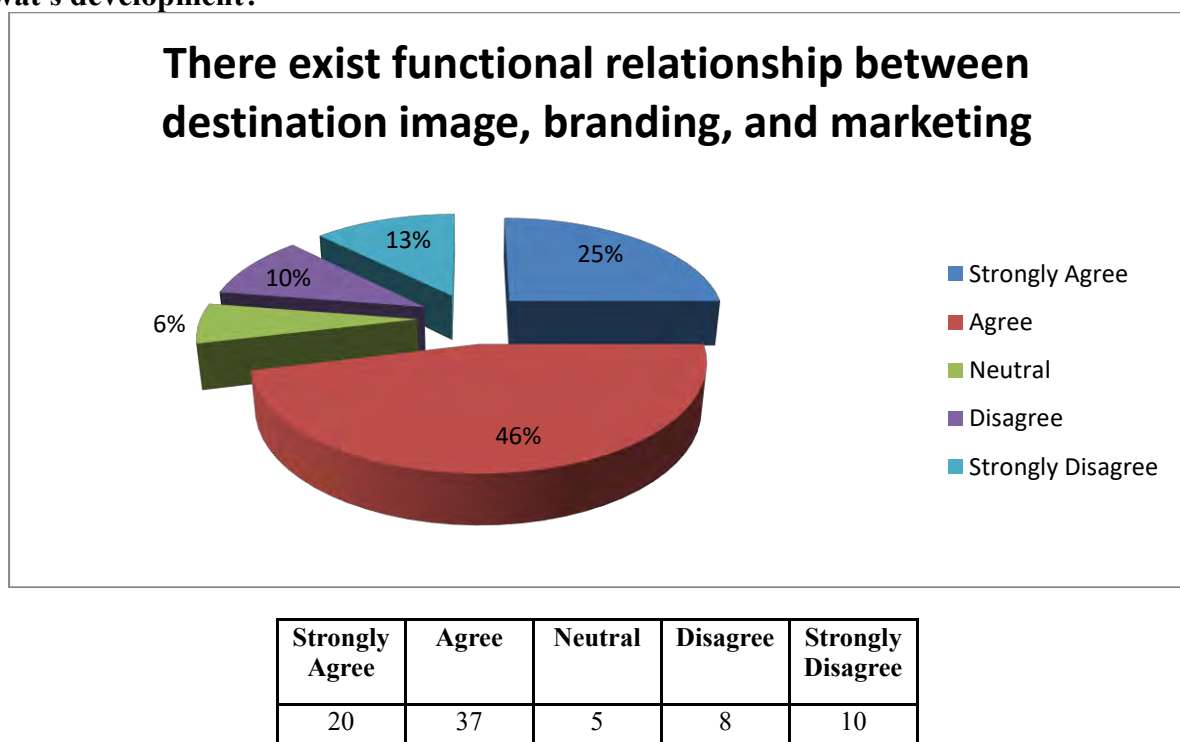
Do you agree that for destination marketing, cross-cultural elements need to be involved by marketers?



Interpretation:

In regard to investigate the cross-cultural element's essentiality in destination marketing, it is found that almost 70% participants agreed to it to certain extent. Respondents disagreed to its significance constituted 24% whereas only 6% remain undecided.

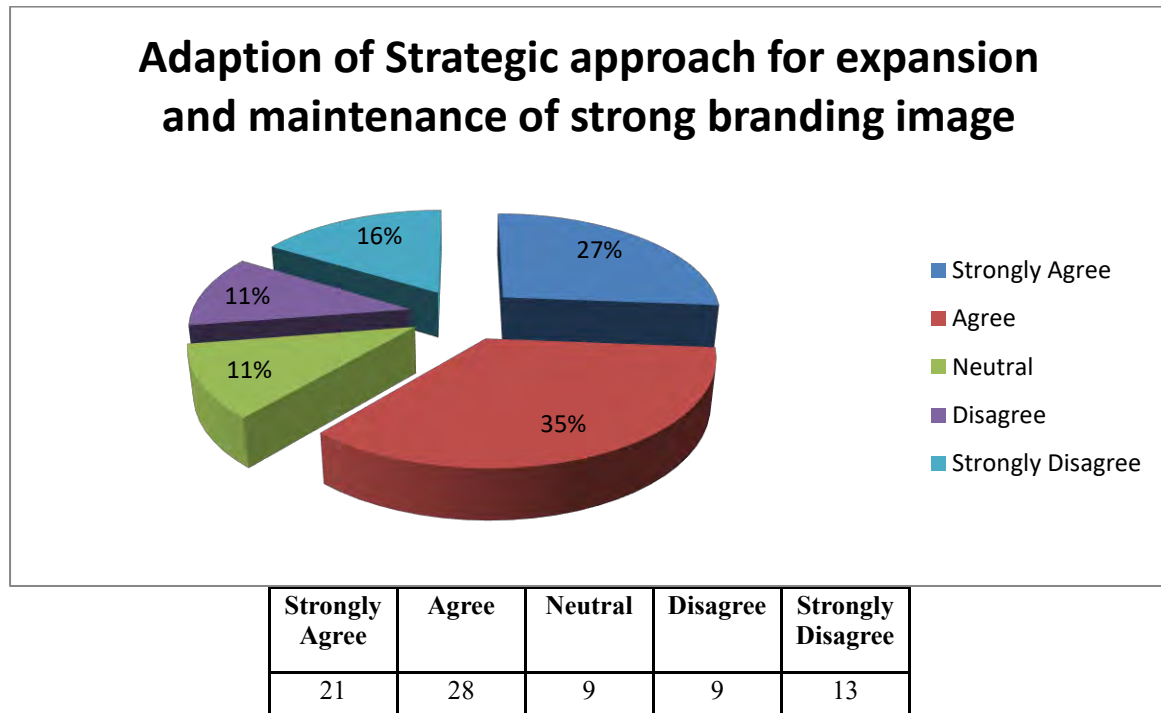
Is there exist functional relationship between destination image, branding, marketing, and Swat's development?



Interpretation:

From the sample size, it is found that in case of Swat, there is functional relationship between image destination, marketing, and branding with tourist destination as more than 70% agreed to it. Only 6% remain undecided while 23% disagreed to it.

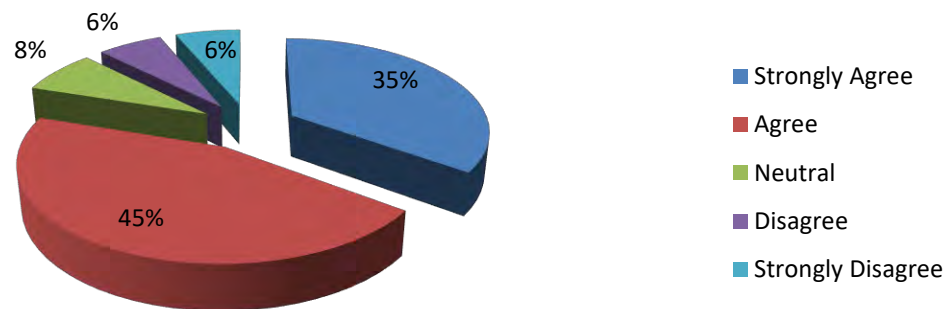
Do you think that in Swat, there is need of adaption of strategic approach for the expansion and maintenance of its strong branding image?

**Interpretation:**

In order to establish the significance of strategic management approach at Swat for further enhancement of its strong branding image and maintaining its strong reputation, participants were asked regarding their views. It is found that 27% strongly agreed and 35% agreed so together it formed 62%. On the other hand, 16% strongly disagreed while 11% simply disagreed which means 27% disagreed to some extent. Furthermore, 11% participants were unsure about it.

Do you think that Marketing has played integral part in the success of Swat as tourist destination?

Marketing plays essential role in the success of Goa as tourist destination



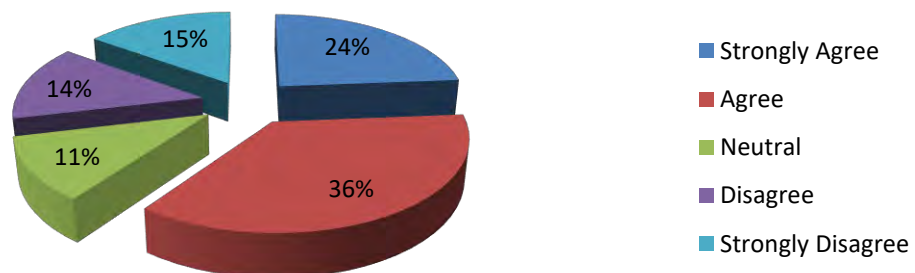
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28	36	6	5	5

Interpretation:

It is found that in case of Swat, marketing has played a pivotal role as 80% of the participants agreed to it. Out of this 80%, 35% strongly agree while 45% partially agreed. On the other hand, 12% responded in negative while 6% remain neutral.

Do you think that destination marketing help in creating competitive advantage?

Destination marketing creates competitive advantage



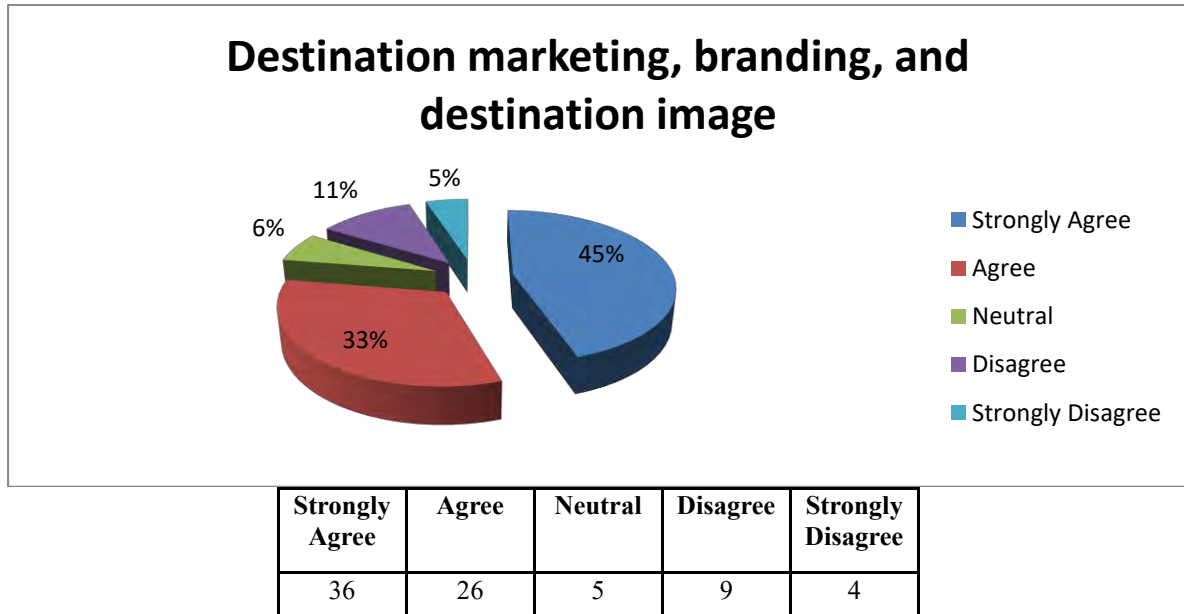
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19	29	9	11	12

Interpretation:

From sample study, it is revealed that 60% destination marketing helps tourist destination in

gaining competitive edge. 24% strongly agreed and 36% agreed to it thus it forms 60% of the sample size that agrees to notion that marketing plays pivotal role in competitive edge. Furthermore, 29% disagreed to it and 11% remain neutral.

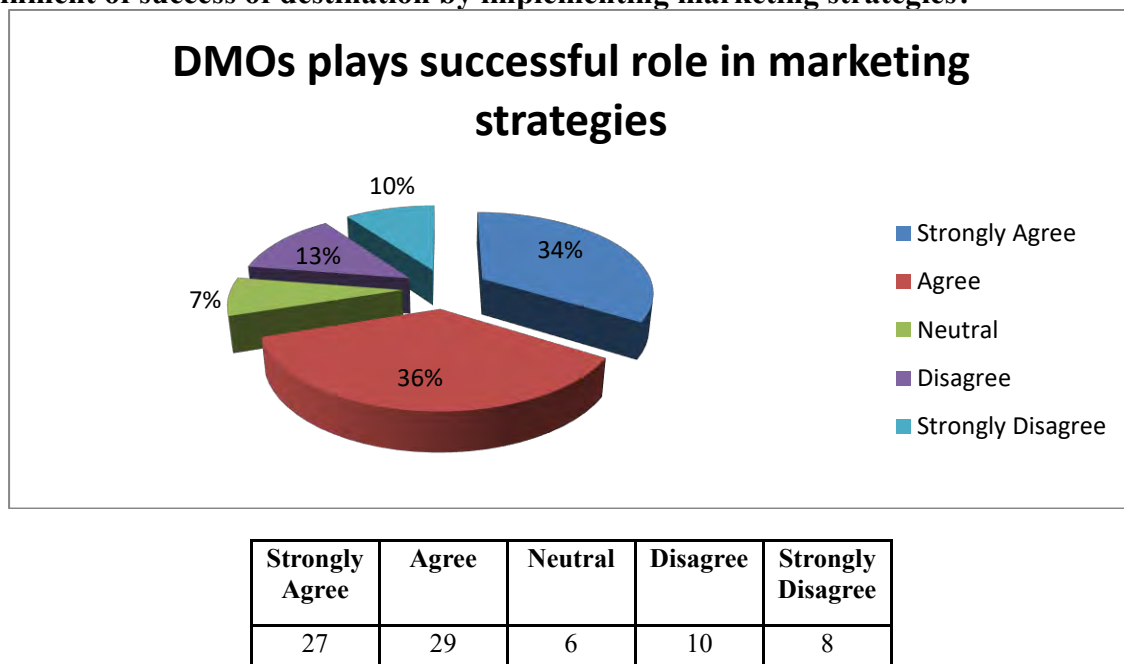
Do you agree that destination marketing, destination branding, and destination image are linked with each other?



Interpretation:

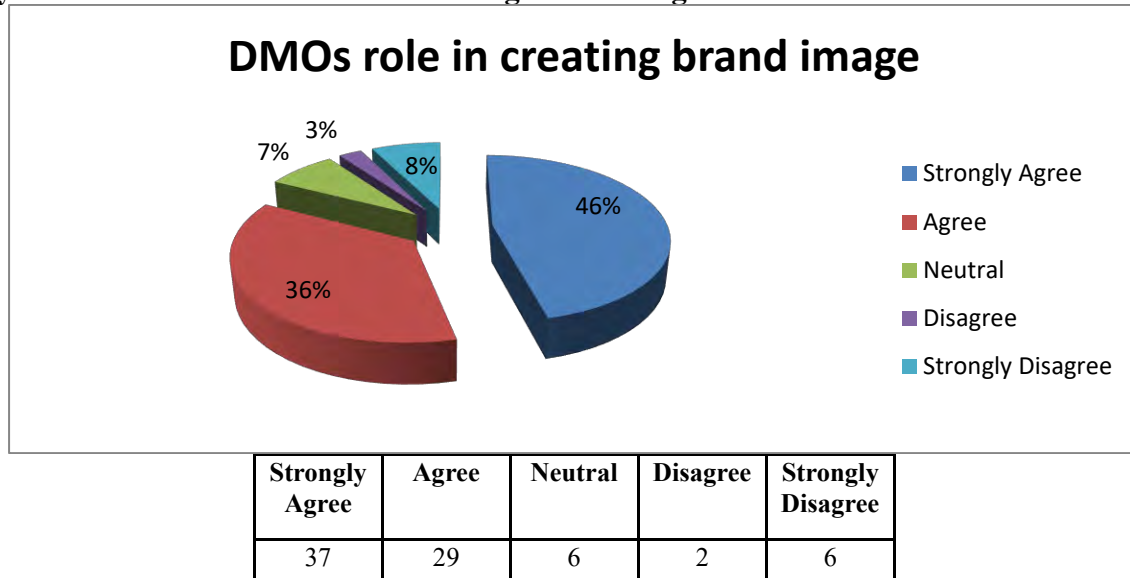
In order to investigate the linkage between destination branding, destination image, and destination marketing researcher asked participants about their views and results revealed that 33% strongly agreed while 35% agreed. Together it formed 78% of the sample size. Moreover, only 6% of respondents were unsure while 16% disagreed.

Do you think DMOs (Destination Marketing Organisation) play essential role in the attainment of success of destination by implementing marketing strategies?



Interpretation:

In regards to role of DMOs in Swat tourism development and implementation of strategies, it is found that their role is positive and constructive as 34% strongly agree and 36% agreed so this means 70% of targeted audience agreed to it. 23% oppose to it while 7% remain undecided.

Do you think DMOs has a role in creating brand image of Swat as tourism destination?**Interpretation:**

The study showed that in case of Swat tourism destination, the role of DMOs is significant as results revealed that 80% of the sample set agreed to notion that brand image is created through positive role of DMOs. Those participants who opposed this notion formed 11% while 7% remain neutral.

Interviews with Marketers, Management, and Experts

In interview with the management, it is revealed that 3 out of 5 (60%) agreed that the image of Swat as tourist destination has been strongly built by marketing (Appendix A). Furthermore, one of the manager stated that overall image of Swat has shaped in late early 80's when foreign tourists flew in high number to visit Swat in summer time (Appendix A). There were special marketing agencies that attracted customers and developed Swat's image as tourist destination. Based on these findings, it is established that destination image and marketing are closely linked together and plays essential part in the creation of strong brand image for destination.

Furthermore, the respondents largely (4 out of 5) agreed that marketers involvement is vital but individual involvement cannot be denied at any cost as both has a part to offer in the success of strong destination image of Swat (Appendix A). Moreover, the interviews showed that cross-cultural elements cannot be ignored in the development of marketing strategies linked with destination marketing (Appendix A). All five respondents agreed that marketing branding and destination image has a constructive role in influencing the overall image of tourist destination (Appendix A). Thus, these findings reflect that there is close relationship between these variables. In addition to that, the majority of participants strongly agreed that strategic management is vital for keeping a strong brand image in the market. In this regards, 4 out 5 respondents agreed. Thus, this notion is confirmed that strategic management approach is significant (Appendix A). Furthermore, 3 out of 5 (60%) respondents agreed that competitive advantage can be gained by tourist destination through destination marketing (Appendix A). However, only 2 out 5 (40%) of participants agreed that one-size-fit marketing approach can be used in Swat to attract all types of

tourists (Appendix A). This means that there is no strong evidence that this approach is suitable for Swat.

Result Evaluation and Discussion based on Interviews and survey questionnaire

The results of this investigation showed that in case of Swat tourism, majority of the sample size strongly believe that marketing along with destination image is essential as both together develop the psychological and emotional attachment of tourist with the destination. Furthermore, this also reflects that tourists are more often attracted by the marketing strategies and destination image to visit the place. Thus, this study confirmed the past work of Ritchie & Echtner (1991). Moreover, the study results revealed that an adequate marketing mix and contribution of marketers along with other authorities and individuals offer a strong and constructive part. Therefore, this study also confirms the work of MacKay and Fesenmaier (1997). The results of this study in this aspect differs with the work of Tasci and Gartner which strongly suggested that destination marketing has no linkage with the image building because present finding has established the correlation between these two variables.

Interestingly, further results revealed that present research finding does not support overall with work of McKay and Fesenmaier (1997) not completely differs with the work of Tasci and Gartner (2007) as cross-cultural element that was opposed in the work of McKay and Fesenmaier (1997) is established and evident in this study. In addition to that, work of Tasci and Gartner (2007) suggested that marketing branding and destination image has a correlation. This is found in present study which means that along with Tasci and Gartner (2007), this piece of research supports the work of Baloglu and McCleary (1999).

Since researcher opted for Swat as case study to measure research variables thus this results are based on the notion of developing country's tourist destination. Results showed a strong need of strategic management approach at Swat. This will enhance the chances for expansion and growth. Furthermore, the strong brand image can be maintained by Swat through adaption of strategic management. This strategic management include marketing and branding strategies so that the image of destination is positive and attractive for visitors. Thus, this study support the idea of Day et al., (2002) that strategic management approach is essential in present day development and growth of tourism. Therefore, it can be evaluated from results that in modern day, not only structure of market has changed but the approach of marketers have changed to large extent as now one dimensional approach cannot be used in the "*era of survival of the fittest*". This means that this study is aligned with the work of Beerli and Martin (2004) that for the success of tourist destination, marketing has a significant role to offer. These results also mean that research investigation is not aligned with the work of Jenkins (2001) that discards role of marketing in the success of tourist destination.

Based on the present results, this is clearly visible now that DMOs role cannot be ignored at any cost. DMOs have a very pivotal role in the improvement of destination image, destination marketing, and branding marketing. Furthermore, the collaboration between authorities and locals is essential for the growth and development of Swat as a tourist destination with strong brand image. Therefore, it can be evaluated from the results that DMOs help the tourist destination largely to enhance tourism activities in the region. In addition to that, researcher found that marketers in the region need to design creative means in order to attract visitors by providing excellent services in the region.

By now, from results researcher has established a very interesting notion that in order to attain competitive edge in the tourism market, concerning bodies use destination marketing. Therefore, this study is aligned with the previous empirical research of Baker and Cameron (2007). Though, this study has found that there is functional relationship between branding marketing, destination image, and destination marketing respectively but study also showed that the approach of 'one-

size-fit' cannot be used by the authorities and marketing experts for Swat as there is large disagreement in this regard. Majority of participants believe that destination offers different aspects to different types of visitors so one dimensional approach will not be effective to maintain strong destination image in the market.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations:

As per Ritchie & Echtner (1991), the tourist's concept, features/universal axes beside with emotional and psychological characteristics are equally appropriate in the destination image. This study support above findings as 77% participants agreed that in Swat destination image and marketing both play essential role. In addition to, Mackay & Fesenmaier (1997) enlightened the destination image development as a mixture person's contribution and marketer involvement. Present study supports this notion as 82% participants have agreed to it. On the other hand, this study opposes work of Tasci and Gartner (2007) that image building is not necessarily linked with destination marketing. In addition to that, this study differs with the work of MacKay and Fesenmaier (2000) that cross-cultural element of investigating the destination marketing and destination image is not significant to large extent as more than 70% believe it is essential element.

The findings of present study revealed that in Swat, image destination and marketing branding has a significant influence on creating it a tourist destination as approximately 72% participants agreed to it. Thus this study is aligned with the work of Baloglu and McCleary 1999; and Tasci and Gartner, 2007. This means there is functional relationship between selected variables that is again supporting the notion of Tasci and Gartner (2007).

Present study supports the proposed notion of Day et al., (2002) that strategic management approach is required for the expansion and maintenance of strong branding image of Swat as 62% of respondents agreed to it. Moreover, the work of Beerli and Martin (2004) is supported that marketing plays important role in tourist destination's success as 80% agreed. Thus, this study differs with work of Jenkins (2001). In addition to that, the work of Baker and Cameron (2007) to some extent is supported as 60% agreed that destination marketing helps in creating competitive advantage.

The primary focus of the present research was the examining one-size fit approach for selected case study. The interviews with the management and survey questionnaire revealed that in case of Swat, "one-size-fit" approach cannot be used to market it as a tourist destination. All of the participants that were interviewed stated that different types of tourist comes to see different things as per their liking thus it is not possible to use one-size-fit approach to market Swat. Moreover, the brand image can be created by it but it will lack versatility of attracting large number. This means that this study support work of Berlie and Martin (2004) in this regard and oppose the findings of Tasci and Gartner (2007). In addition to that, the survey results also revealed that participants largely agreed that one-fit-size approach will not be effective for Swat to expand its tourism activities and develop strong branding image. Thus, both research instruments used by researcher confirm that this approach is not effective for Swat.

The Scope of present investigation is confined and limited due to different limitations. This part discusses limitations faced by the researcher. High generalizability is not possible due to only three interviews with managers as high generalization require more number of participants in interview. In other words, it can be stated that only three participants were interviewed by means of semi-structured questions which reflects low generalization. In addition to that, time constraint did not permit researcher to commence interviews with experts from the hospitality and tourism sector. Moreover, Focus group interviews were not considered as there was sufficient time difference between researcher (London, UK) and participants (Swat, Pakistan)

The collection of data in the present investigation was in the form of ‘quality’ as the semi-structured interviews utilized by the researcher and hence it is shown as a challenge to ‘quantify’ the research result in more qualitative sides. The literature review was composed by appropriate quantity of data based on ‘inductive approach’ though the complete data was not become at of the research. Moreover, only key features are emphasized. Nevertheless, the comprehensive description would have been successful. Moreover, the sample size was small, comparing to the actual size of tourism sector.

Both for the chosen organisation and future researchers the suitable suggestions are stated. The primary suggestion is proposed for the authorities related to Swat tourism while reviewing the current case study however, suggestions for future researcher are provided in the other part of the recommendation. The overview of a fresh and creative platform ‘Local tourism package’ should be considered by Swat Tourism, in which visitors would be having a distinctive involvement of travelling the region while living with locals. This step will be effective for the improvement of brand image by promoting local cultural activities.

In addition, the Swat tourism sector should introduce “*free distribution of local ornaments to visitors*” as it will be effective way to market local culture and develop an image of a brand that is not only for leisure but a place with value and culture.

The feedback should be taken from visitors time to time so that strategies are developed according to the taste, preferences, and needs of the targeted audience.

The inclination towards the sample size of selected participants both for “open-ended questionnaire’ and ‘focus group interviews’ should be considered in order to get higher rate of generalizability related to future researchers and research findings. The universal findings within the sector of hospitality will be achieved by the wide-ranging size of sample.

The future researcher should opt for comparative analysis by considering tourism destinations in developed and developing country to measure the research variables in more depth.

The “Self-administered” survey questionnaire was distributed in the current study, while researchers can go beyond this approach in the future by using internet based “Monkey Survey” questionnaire that will support the rational and unbiased comparison among internet source and source of primary finding in an appropriate manner.

The interview with the “Focus group” will enable comprehensive analysis and exploration of research questions. It will also allow strong debate between the potential members and cross questions of interviewee. Hence, it must be considered in the present study.

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