

Tourism Competitiveness: A Comparative Study of Domestic & Foreign Tourists Perception Regarding the Selected Tourist Region

Abstract

The combination of a competitive supply of tourism services that meet the expectations of tourists and a positive impact on the development of regions and cities makes tourism a significant component of regional development. a significant factor in the economic development and competitiveness of regions or countries. There are two broad categories of factors that affect a country's ability to compete internationally: macroeconomic conditions and microeconomic strategies. The macroeconomic circumstances structure a setting that sets out open doors for seriousness at public, provincial and group levels and makes conditions for intensity at an organisational level. Tourism competitiveness is directly affected by microeconomic strategies, which include things like how well-developed the tourist spot is and what are tourist services available. This research paper tried to help undergo a Comparative Study of Domestic and foreign Tourists in selected Regions to assess tourism competitiveness and to identify the destination's regional potential for tourism development and competitiveness on the basis of responses received.

Keywords: Tourism Competitiveness, Perception, Domestic and foreign Tourists, Tourism Competitiveness Index

Introduction

Every nation recognizes tourism as a major source of income, employment, and wealth creation as well as one of the most important development sectors. In addition, it influences complementary domestic policies and enhances a nation's external image and international perception. Measuring tourism competitiveness is difficult due to the wide range of influence and importance. When it comes to providing evidence to support decisions, professionals face a significant obstacle in comprehending a nation's tourism competitiveness. Over the years, various organizations have developed a variety of indicators to address specific aspects of competitiveness; however, governments have not yet been able to use a comprehensive framework for measuring tourism competitiveness. The ongoing work by part and accomplice nations looks to address this hole and make a positive commitment to the down-to-earth estimation of seriousness.

In the modern era, tourism has emerged as a very important industry. It is thought of as perhaps one of the most different and most extravagant worldwide industries in the twenty-first 100 years and is supposed to be at the highest point of the world's major league salary ventures. It has a significant positive economic impact on both the host nations and the home nations of tourists. The anticipated economic growth of a region is one of the

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primary reasons that it promotes itself as a tourist destination in developing nations. The travel industry sets out work open doors, carries unfamiliar trade to the host country, decreases neediness and works on the way of life. In addition, it contributes to the improvement of infrastructure, promotes the preservation of traditional festivals, handicrafts, and customs, and encourages the conservation of wild animals. Accommodation, hotel and train reservations, restaurant services, hospitality, guide services, recreational services, communication, and transportation are all businesses that benefit from tourism.

The ability of a destination to maximize its attractiveness to both residents and non-residents, to provide consumers with high-quality, innovative, and attractive tourism services (such as good value for money), and to gain market shares in domestic and global markets are all aspects of a destination's tourism competitiveness. It is also important to ensure that the resources supporting tourism are utilized effectively and sustainably.

Tourism competitiveness is defined as the ability of a tourist destination to attract and satisfy potential tourists (Enright and Newton, 2004; Zhang et al., 2011).

The development of productive forces led to the rise of modern tourism during the industrial revolution of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the 20th century, tourism began to be the subject of systematic research and proved to be interdisciplinary. The various academic fields always investigate tourism from their respective points of view and using their respective methodological approaches; however, one field's knowledge influences others (Senková et al., 2017). For the tourism sector to continue expanding and thriving, it is essential to have a global perspective in order to comprehend the primary factors that influence market competitiveness. The tourism markets of today cannot be described as homogeneous. The tourism industry is significantly impacted by trends in consumer traveller demand, particularly in a global market that is overly segmented. The way destinations develop their appeal and maintain their competitive positions has changed as a result of the transnational emergence of niche and speciality tourism segments (Hassan, 2000). Free

rides are at the heart of tourism, and the industry's performance is heavily influenced by that of other sectors (Kubickova, 2016). As a result, understanding the region's competitive position is essential, particularly in the tourism industry.

Competitiveness

The economic literature does not provide a uniform definition of the term "competitiveness," as stated by Vida, Kadár, and Kadárová (2017). At the fundamental levels of competitiveness, specifically the region, state, industry, enterprise, and product, distinct characteristics of competitiveness can be distinguished. These characteristics result from a number of dimensions of the term.

Djogo and Stanisic (2016), compare the OECD's definition of macro-competitiveness, which states that macro-competitiveness is a nation's capacity to produce goods and services under fair market conditions that have the potential to raise the real income of its citizens. In addition, they provide a definition of the European Commission that is very similar to theirs which defines macro-competitiveness as the capacity of an economy to sustainably maintain a high employment rate and a high standard of living for its inhabitants.

Michael Porter demonstrates through numerous country and sectoral studies that competitiveness is now influenced by both macroeconomic and microeconomic changes. He discovered that marketing strategies, innovation, and relationships with the supply and user industries are becoming competitive, despite the fact that resource value did not influence industry competitiveness (Ajitabh, 2008).

Competitiveness of Tourism

Tourism's competitiveness One of the most important and fastest-growing sectors of the economy, tourism faces the challenges and opportunities of globalization. According to Karahuta et al., the growth of tourism is critical to the expansion of national economies. (2017). Since the 1970s, there has been a lot of empirical research on the connection between tourism activity and economic growth. According to Luticky&Musil (2016), the travel and tourism industry is widely recognized as a contributing factor to regional development and the growth of national and

regional economies. This is a sector that reaps significant economic benefits, as shown by UNWTO statistics (Hvizdová, 2017).

The intensity of vacationer locations turns out to be progressively vital to the nations that expect to control a huge portion of quickly developing the travel industry market. This is especially significant for nations that are heavily dependent on tourism and the travel industry. The identification and assessment of the travel industry's seriousness factors is a typical examination issue of many exploration studies and articles on the travel industry's financial matters (Navickas and Malakauskaite, 2009).

The visitors' feelings and perceptions of the destination's perceived capacity to meet their needs are what determine its attractiveness. According to Vengesai (2013), it is more likely that a destination will be chosen if it is able to meet the requirements of tourists to the fullest.

When it comes to providing evidence to support decisions, professionals face a significant obstacle in comprehending a nation's tourism competitiveness. Different markers have been created by various associations over the course of the years to address specific parts of intensity (Dupeyras and MacCallum, 2013).

According to Buhalis (2001), competitiveness and attractiveness view destinations from two distinct perspectives. one from the point of view of tourists, namely its attractiveness and the other one, looking at competitiveness from the destination's point of view. A comprehensive view of the dynamics of tourist destination competitiveness and attractiveness (TDCA) is provided by dual analyses of these two concepts. According to Vengesai (2013), TDCA is the capacity of a destination to offer a tourist a satisfying experience as well as social, physical, and economic benefits.

Competitiveness influences can change quickly, which creates additional challenges and necessitates ongoing indicator research and development.

According to Dupeyras & MacCallum (2013), global economic and tourism trends, such as shifting travel habits and market trends, the role of social media, and new sources of demand and

growth, raise the topic's importance and countries' ability to compete in the shifting global marketplace. The key indicators have been developed to address common challenges in the analysis of competitiveness in tourism in member and partner countries. According to the authors, the ability of the place to optimize its attractiveness for residents and non-residents, to deliver quality, innovative, and attractive tourism services to consumers, and to gain market shares on the domestic and global marketplaces are all aspects of tourism competitiveness. According to Dupeyras & MacCallum (2013), there are four categories in which the indicators are arranged:

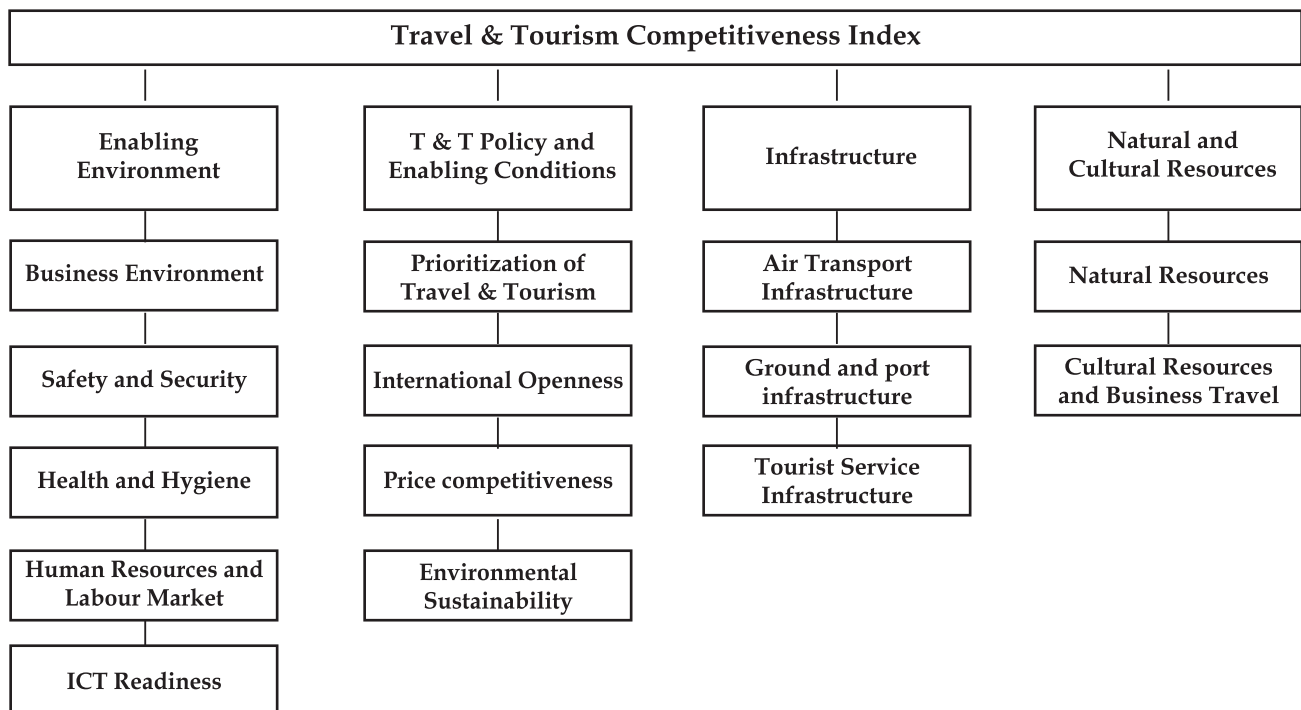
- Indicators that measure the impact and performance of tourism;
- Pointers checking the capacity of an objective to convey quality and seriousness to the travel industry administrations;
- Markers observing the engaging quality of an objective;
- Indicators of economic opportunities and policy responses.

Tourism Competitiveness Index

The first Travel and the travel industry Seriousness File (TTCI), created in 2007, measures a bunch of elements and strategies that empower a practical improvement of the Movement and the travel industry area, which, thus, adds to the turn of events and seriousness of a country. In close collaboration with our other partners, the index was created as part of the World Economic Forum's Industry Program for Aviation, Travel, and Tourism. It enables cross-country comparison, benchmarking of countries' progress in policy, and investment decisions related to the growth of businesses and industries.

The resulting Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report serves as a forum for a discussion involving a variety of stakeholders with the goal of developing a robust and long-lasting T&T industry that can effectively contribute to international economic growth (World Economic Forum, 2017). The four main aspects of competitiveness are measured by the T&T Competitiveness Index. Figure 1 shows how these factors are arranged into 14 pillars and sub-indexes.

Figure 1 : Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index



Source: World Economic Forum (2017)

Review of Literature

Agustin, Martini & Setiyono (2022) have stated that the purpose of this study is to determine the gap between rural tourism in four provinces, measure the competitiveness of each rural tourism sector, and examine the factors that determine Indonesia's competitiveness in rural tourism. According to the findings of this study, GiriEmas is the rural tourism industry with the highest competitiveness index score among all others.

Cao et.al (2022) has mentioned that an important tool for analyzing the potential of tourism in a particular setting is the evaluation of tourism competitiveness. As a case study, Enshi Autonomous Prefecture (EAP) in China is chosen to investigate mountain tourism's potential and competitiveness in the tourism industry. The mountain tourism competitiveness model developed by EAP is based on three criteria in this study: mountain tourism's core competitiveness, the economy's competitiveness, and infrastructure's competitiveness.

Liu et.al. (2022) has identified that the level of regional tourism development can be measured using an evaluation of tourism competitiveness.

An evaluation index system covering tourism development competitiveness, tourism resource competitiveness, and tourism-support competitiveness was developed for 14 cities and prefectures in Xinjiang, China, in order to investigate tourism competitiveness

Manglaw, Kaushik & Khayalia (2022) opined that one of the world's fastest-growing industries is tourism, especially in developing nations. It has a number of socio-cultural and economic advantages, including the creation of jobs, the exchange of foreign capital, the improvement of infrastructure, the investment of capital, the preservation of heritage sites, and other benefits. The desert tourism circuit has a lot of potential to draw a lot of domestic and international tourists. This study's primary objective is to investigate the pattern and trend of tourist arrivals in the desert tourist circuit.

Kim, Liu & Williams (2021) has found in their research article that in many different fields and disciplines, competitiveness is a well-discussed topic for research. One prominent research area is competitiveness in the visitor economy. Destinations, regions, industries, and businesses have had to adapt to internal and external changes

with varying degrees of success as the visitor economy has changed rapidly, significantly affecting their competitiveness.

Stecyk, Sidorkiewicz&Tomaszewska (2021) has stated that on the basis of 21 counties in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, the article aims to develop a comprehensive, objective model that takes into account a variety of factors that influence regional tourism competitiveness. An in-depth examination of several dozen distinct factors that influence regional tourism competitiveness is a significant scientific contribution to the issue. The study's main finding is that a destination's natural and anthropological tourist attractions, accommodation, recreational infrastructure, and catering bases are the most important determinants of its level of tourist competitiveness.

Pérez León et.al. (2020) has propounded that the goal of this study is to come up with an index that can be used to measure how competitive Caribbean tourism destinations are. The goal of the application is to add Caribbean destinations to international rankings. The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index's four sub-indices were used to evaluate 33 destinations and 27 indicators. The outcomes demonstrate the explanatory power of the proposal and methodological advancements in the development of composite indicators to measure destinations' competitiveness.

Singh, Tyagi& Sharma (2020) Opined that the perception of tourists is a crucial aspect of the tourism industry. There are studies that support the significance of tourist perceived value and its application. The goal of the study is to create a scale for evaluating how tourists perceive a place. An extensive literature review serves as the basis for the creation of the initial constructs and survey instrument. The purpose of this paper is twofold: first, to identify the various variables and factors that are associated with tourist perception, and second, to develop a reliable, validated, and consistent tourist perception scale.

Research Objective

To compare the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists about the tourism competitiveness in theselected tourist region The respondent's perceptions about various parameters were recorded d on a scale of excellent, good, satisfactory and poor. The parameters undertaken were five and the perception of domestic and international tourists is recorded for individual parameters in the tables below

- Quality of Local Transportation
- Quality of Accommodation
- Availability of food and cuisine
- Availability of fun and Entertainment
- Price of tourist services
- Tourist spots and places

Table 1 : Perception for Quality of Local Transportation

Perceptions	Quality of Local Transportation	
	Domestic	International
Excellent	52	48
Good	108	29
Satisfactory	31	68
Poor	59	105
Total	250	250

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation : The respondent's perception about Quality of local Transportation in the study area was recorded on a scale of excellent, good,satisfactory and poor.52 domestic tourists and 48 international tourists have given excellent rating for the quality of local transportation system in the area of Rajasthan. Numbers of domestic tourists who have given good and satisfactory rating are 108 and 31 respectively, whereas numbers of international tourists who have given good and satisfactory ratings are 29 and 68 respectively. 105 foreign and 59 domestic tourists have given poor rating to local transportation system.

Table 2 : Perception for Quality Accommodation

Perceptions	Quality of Accommodation	
	Domestic	International
Excellent	110	154
Good	58	54
Satisfactory	45	27
Poor	37	15
Total	250	250

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation : The respondent's perception about Quality of accommodation in the study area was recorded on a scale of excellent, good, satisfactory and poor. 110 domestic tourists and 154 international tourists have given excellent rating for the quality of accommodation. 15 foreign and 37 domestic tourists have given poor rating to Quality of accommodation.

Table 3 : Perceptions for Availability of Food and Cuisine

Perceptions	Availability of Food and Cuisine	
	Domestic	International
Excellent	112	89
Good	77	105
Satisfactory	49	25
Poor	12	31
Total	250	250

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation: The respondent's perception about Availability of food and cuisine in the study area was recorded and it was found that 112 domestic tourists and 89 international tourists have given excellent rating for the Availability of food and cuisine in the research area. Only 31 foreign and 12 domestic tourists have given poor rating to this parameter.

Table 4 : Perceptions for Availability of Fun & Entertainment

Perceptions	Availability of Fun & Entertainment	
	Domestic	International
Excellent	94	78
Good	108	126
Satisfactory	33	03
Poor	15	43
Total	250	250

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation : The respondent's perception about the Availability of fun and Entertainment was recorded and 94 domestic tourists and 78 international tourists have given excellent ratings for Availability of fun and Entertainment

Table 5 : Perceptions for Price of Tourist Services

Perceptions	Price of Tourist Services	
	Domestic	International
Excellent	62	148
Good	85	49
Satisfactory	65	38
Poor	38	15
Total	250	250

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation : Price of tourist services was also considered as an important variable and the respondent's perception was recorded on a scale of excellent, good, satisfactory and poor. 62 domestic tourists and 148 international tourists have given excellent rating for Price of tourist services whereas only 15 international tourists have given poor rating to this variable.

Table 6 : Perception for Tourist Spots and Places

Perceptions	Tourist Spots and Places	
	Domestic	International
Excellent	157	104
Good	52	76
Satisfactory	31	35
Poor	10	35
Total	250	250

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation : The respondent's perception about Tourist spots and places was recorded on a scale of excellent, good, satisfactory and poor. Maximum 157 domestic tourists and 104 international tourists have given excellent rating for the Tourist spots and places in the research area.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists towards the quality of Transportation in the selected area of research

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists towards the quality of Accommodation in the selected area of research

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists towards the availability of food and cuisine in the selected area of research

H₀₄: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists towards the availability of fun and Entertainment options in the selected area of research

H₀₅: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists towards the price of tourism product in the selected area of research.

H₀₆: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists towards the tourist spots and places in the selected area of research.

Hypothesis Testing:

Table 7 : Hypothesis Testing

Parameters	Calculated Value	Tabular Value	Hypothesis Decision
Quality of local Transportation	3.35	7.815	Accepted
Quality of Accommodation	13.54	7.815	Rejected
Availability of food and cuisine	11.6	7.815	Rejected
Availability of fun and Entertainment	12.56	7.815	Rejected
Price of tourist services	8.56	7.815	Rejected
Tourist spots and places	5.64	7.815	Accepted

Source : Test Output (Significance level: 0.05)

Statistical Inference

The null hypothesis for quality of local transportation and tourist spots and places is accepted but for all the other parameters it is rejected because the calculated value of chi-square is greater than the original tabular value at 95% level of significance. The calculated values are shown above and so it can be statistically proven that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists towards the quality of local transportation and tourist spots and places in the selected area of research while for the other parameters it is rejected and there is a significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists towards the Quality of Accommodation, Availability of food and cuisine, fun and Entertainment and Price of tourist services in the research area.

Conclusion

Tourism competitiveness helps in the branding of a place and gives a competitive advantage to differentiate a region's tourism offering, especially to induce a positive perception in the minds of domestic as well as international tourists. A significant amount is spent to promote a tourist destination and the various parameters like Quality of local Transportation, Accommodation, Availability of food and cuisine, fun and Entertainment, Price of tourist services and Tourist spots and places are the assets of attractiveness. Quality of local Transportation and Tourist spots and places have no significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists but all other parameters under study have a significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and international tourists. The evaluation of the perception of tourists is often driven by customer metrics and analyzing the return on investment done by him. The perception of tourists influences competitive performance and is challenging to measure it.

The competitiveness index is developed which can be used by the countries and it can be adapted to individual approaches. This would rightly recognize competitiveness as a powerful part of the marketing mix of a country to promote distinctiveness and attract more domestic as well

as international tourists in line with improved tourism competitiveness. The perception of domestic and international tourists may differ but ultimately if the emphasis is on the aforesaid parameters, undoubtedly the regional competitiveness of a tourist place can be enhanced.

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