

COMPARING DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN TOURISTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TOURISM AMENITIES OF DESERT TRIANGLE OF RAJASTHAN

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Abstract-Desert triangle of Rajasthan plays a crucial role among state tourism centres. To know a region is perceived is especially important to be able to attract visitors to the region. The paper seeks to contribute to the literature on tourists' perception by evaluating to the comparison of domestic and foreign tourists' perceptions about tourism amenities of Desert Triangle of Rajasthan. Using a sample of 300 tourists, Chi-Square test was employed to test the hypotheses. Result revealed the rejection of hypothesis for Accommodation, Food quality and entertainment sector and acceptance of hypothesis for transportation sector.

Key Words: Desert triangle, tourists' perceptions, tourism amenities, Chi-Square test

I. INTRODUCTION

Desert triangle of Rajasthan which plays a key role among state tourism centres, hasn't reach its desired tourism potential, yet although it has unique and historic tourism resources.

To know how a region is perceived is especially important to be able to attract visitors to that region. Image perception is not only a result of media tools since it develops out of a combination of several personal experiences, and may be quite different depending to visitors' demographic situation and personal experiences.

In this study, the perceptions about tourism amenities of Desert Triangle of Rajasthan have been compared between domestic and foreign tourists. The study will also help to reveal which measures should be taken to increase the number of tourists by taking these perceptions into account.

Main Objectives of the study

- To compare the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists about the available tourism amenities in the study area.
- To recommend measures to improve the available tourism amenities so as to enhance the tourism satisfaction.

Study Area

Owing to its unique topography, history and culture, customs and relatively peaceful environment, Rajasthan has been able to attract a large number of tourists. Desert triangle of Rajasthan has been chosen as the study area. The "Desert Triangle" is the set of three districts – Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Bikaner, located in the desert belt of Rajasthan.

Hypotheses:

H: 1” There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Transportation (within the city) in the Desert Triangle of Rajasthan.”

H: 2” There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Accommodation in the Desert Triangle of Rajasthan.”

H: 3” There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Food in the Desert Triangle of Rajasthan.”

H: 4” There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Entertainment in the Desert Triangle of Rajasthan.”

Research Methodology:

In this study with the aim of revealing and comparing domestic and foreign tourists' perceptions about tourism amenities of Desert Triangle of Rajasthan as a tourist destination, visitor survey has been done at the visitor places of three districts of Rajasthan: Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Bikaner. On the basis of this structured questionnaire, qualitative and quantitative aspects of the survey have been presented in the study, based on the data collected. Random sampling method was used for the primary data collection. The total number of sample was 300, including both domestic and foreign tourists. Both domestic and foreign tourists were equal in numbers (150: 150). Chi-Square test has been applied to test the hypotheses. The data has been analyzed with the help of MS EXCEL.

Analysis of facts:-

This analysis reveals the findings of the research work undertaken based on the objectives and hypothesis framed. Various tourism amenities as perceived by the domestic as well as foreign tourists have been analyzed as follows:

1. Transportation:

Table 1: Perception of tourists about quality of transportation:

Perceptions	Frequency Distribution	
	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists
Excellent	32	41
Good	97	84
Satisfactory	19	20
Poor	2	5
All	150	150

- 97 domestic tourists and 84 foreign tourists have given good rating for the quality of local transportation system of desert triangle of Rajasthan. Numbers of domestic tourists who have given excellent and satisfactory rating are 32 and 19 respectively, where as numbers of foreign tourists who have given excellent and satisfactory ratings are 41 and 20 respectively. 5 domestic tourists and 2 of foreign tourists have given poor rating to local transportation system.

2. Accommodation:

Table 2: Perception of tourists about quality of Accommodation:

Perceptions	Frequency Distribution	
	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists
Excellent	55	56
Good	86	67
Satisfactory	9	20
Poor	0	7
All	150	150

- The highest percentage of rating was of good. 86 domestic tourists and 67 foreign tourists have given good rating for the quality of accommodation. 9 domestic tourists and 20 foreign tourists are satisfied with the quality of accommodation service. Not any domestic tourist has given "poor" rating to accommodation services, where as 7 foreign tourists found it "poor".

3. Food Quality:

Table 3: Perception of tourists about quality of food:

Perceptions	Frequency Distribution	
	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists
Excellent	51	49
Good	77	72
Satisfactory	22	18
Poor	0	11
All	150	150

- 77 domestic tourists and 72 foreign tourists rated good for quality of food. 51 domestic tourists and 49 foreign tourists rated excellent for food. 22 domestic and 18 foreign tourists found it "satisfactory". 11 foreign tourists were not satisfied with the food quality.

4. Entertainment:

Table 4: Perception of tourists about quality of entertainment:

Perceptions	Frequency Distribution	
	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists
Excellent	57	40
Good	67	76
Satisfactory	26	25
Poor	0	9
All	150	150

- 67 domestic tourists and 76 foreign tourists said that the entertainment facilities were good. 57 domestic and 40 foreign tourists found it excellent. Only 9 foreign tourists have given it "poor" ratings.

Hypothesis Test:

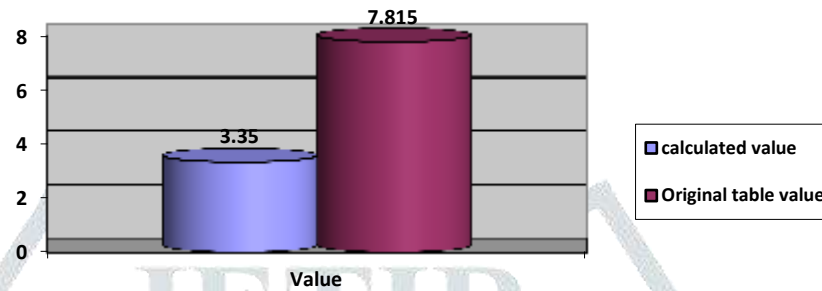
Hypothesis: 1” There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Transportation (within the city) in the Desert Triangle of Rajasthan.”

Table 5: Chi-square value of comparison of perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Transportation (within the city):

Chi-Square value	
Calculated value	Original table value
3.35	7.815

Significance level: 0.05

Graph 1: Chi-square value of comparison of perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Transportation (within the city):



❖ The hypothesis is accepted for the Transportation (within the city) because the calculated value of chi-square (3.35) is lesser than the original table value (7.815).

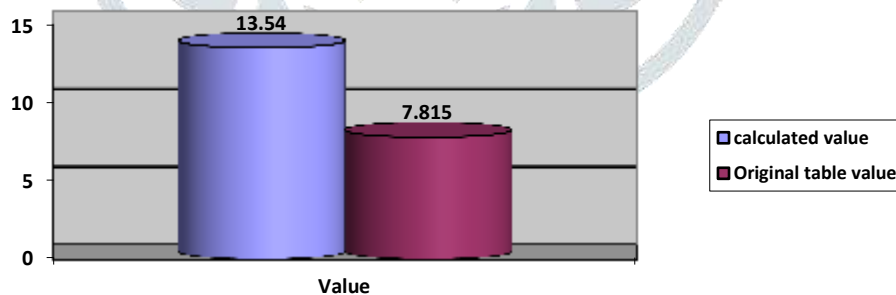
Hypothesis: 2” There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Accommodation in the Desert Triangle of Rajasthan.”

Table 6: Chi-square value of comparison of perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Accommodation:

Chi-Square value	
Calculated value	Original table value
13.54	7.815

Significance level: 0.05

Graph 2: Chi-square value of comparison of perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Accommodation:



❖ The hypothesis is rejected for the Accommodation because the calculated value of chi-square (13.54) is greater than the original table value (7.815).

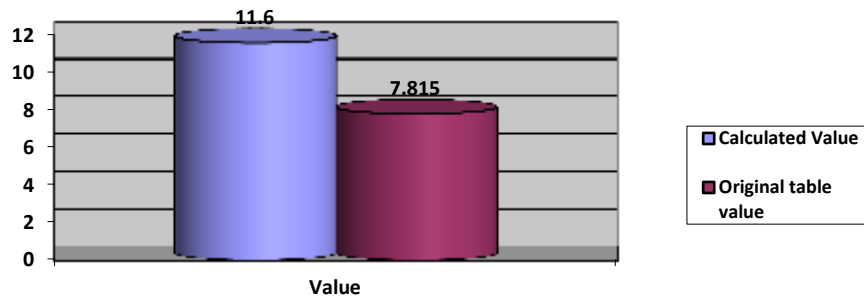
Hypothesis: 3” There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Food in the Desert Triangle of Rajasthan.”

Table 7: Chi-square value of comparison of perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Food:

Chi-Square value	
Calculated value	Original table value
11.6	7.815

Significance level: 0.05

Graph 3: Chi-square value of comparison of perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Food:



❖ The hypothesis is rejected for the Food quality because the calculated value of chi-square (11.6) is greater than the original table value (7.815).

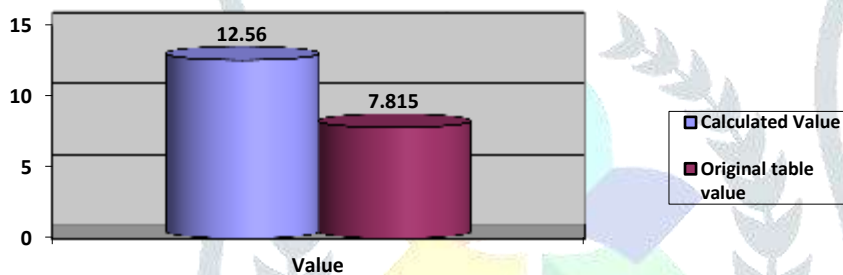
Hypothesis: 4” There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Entertainment in the Desert Triangle of Rajasthan.”

Table 8: Chi-square value of comparison of perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Entertainment:

Chi-Square value	
Calculated value	Original table value
12.56	7.815

Significance level: 0.05

Graph 4: Chi-square value of comparison of perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Entertainment:



❖ The hypothesis is rejected for the Entertainment because the calculated value of chi-square (12.56) is greater than the original table value (7.815).

Results:-

The hypothesis of the research work has been accepted for Transportation sector and rejected for Accommodation, Food quality and Entertainment sector at 0.05 significance level.

So statistically significant difference has been found between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Accommodation, Food quality and Entertainment sector, but there is not any statistically significant difference between the perceptions of domestic and foreign tourists towards the quality of Transportation(within the city).

Discussions:-

To find out the possible reason for the above results, discussions are mentioned below:

The lifestyle and the preferences of the foreign tourists are totally different from domestic tourists. Most of the foreign tourists preferred on high rated starred hotels rather than a budget hotel or a home stay. And also they preferred to spend in luxury restaurants that offer great local cuisine. Most of the hotels and restaurants were not as the expectations of foreign tourists. The reason for the difference between the perceptions of both the tourists about entertainment have been identified as poor conditions of recreational and entertainment facilities.

Factors affecting the transportation sector was that foreign tourists likely to use local transportation and preferred to walk around the city because of their curiosity for local culture and heritage. So the perceptions were not significant different.

Suggestions:-

- Government should encourage the private sector including foreign investors to invest heavily on tourism infrastructure like hotels, restaurants, entertainment facilities, transport services etc.
- Tourism economists have the opportunity to play a much more important role in providing information that destination manager can use in policy formulation.
- The appearance of the entrance of the city either by train or road must be pleasant.
- A task force must be constituted to conduct a situational analysis of the tourism industry across the state.
- The objective should be to achieve integrate development of selected centres with varied attractions so as to establish brand names in the international market.
- Government should provide a financial support to the underdeveloped tourist areas for the development of infrastructural facilities.

- Bilingual informative as well as directional signage to various tourist places should be setup.
- There is a need to improve the quality of local transport at various tourist destinations. Car, taxis for tourist transportation should be encouraged.
- Three-wheelers like auto-rickshaws should be metered and point fixed fare with prepaid taxi services should be introduced to reduce over-charging and harassment to tourists.
- In order to provide quality accommodation and the save precious heritage sites, heritage hotels should be promoted.
- With widely varying needs, cultural background and budgets, hotel organizations have to serve a large number of varieties.
- Drinking water facility for the tourists should be the main agenda of the authorities for every destination.
- Number of wayside amenities should be enlarged by government.
- More innovative and interesting entertainment and recreational facilities should be introduced. e.g. theme parties, portraying the luxurious lifestyle of the *Rajput* king with *kalbaliya* dancers are often more stimulating to the visitors.
- Government should give financial assistance to those restaurants who are innovative in their fields and creating a new pathway.
- Assuring safety and security of tourists during fairs and festivals can also promote tourism to entertainment sector.
- Theme based resorts should be explored.

Conclusion:-

Tourists' observations, criticism and recommendations are a respected source of ideas for service quality improvements and innovations in any destination.

In recent years, tourists have become more demanding and discriminating. To keep pace with the changing tourists' needs and wants, marketers have to identify ways to improve their products in order to satisfy the customers who are the king of the market. Tourists' satisfaction is not only an essential element for maintaining long-term relationship with tourists but also effects intentions to return, reputation and trust. So to improvise the perceptions of foreign tourists, government should emphasize more on the development of the basic infrastructural facilities instead of stressing more and more tourists in the destination.

Though it is true that government of Rajasthan has made many efforts to increase tourism services in the region and tried to improve tourist facilities, but still the government need to take more initiative to develop the industry in terms of the needs and nationality of the tourists.

A desirable feature of domestic tourism is its ability to session the industry during lean period of foreign tourism by providing an alternative for demand substitution. So the promoting domestic tourism is also a development option but it should not be regarded as antagonistic or alternative to foreign tourism. These two types or forms of tourism are different to be sure, but they complement each other closely and one should not be neglected in favour of the other.

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