Factors Influencing Tourist Experience: A Case Study of Adinath Temple, Maheshkhali

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Abstract

The study aims to explore the influencing factors (5A) for creating memorable tourist experience visiting Adinath Temple in Maheshkhali, Bangladesh. The study also focuses to measure the subjectivity of the tourists considering the demographic and travel stimulators. Here, regression analysis is followed to define the level of significance of 5A for creating memorable tourist experience. The study result reveals that Adinath temple has the popularity to young tourists (both male and female) due to its adventurous location. It is also found that the temple is genuinely visited by Muslims for its historical and archaeological significance. On the contrary, attraction and amenity are found the most significant factors for providing memorable tourist experience while accessibility and activity are found moderately significant factors. Diversified cultural events, flexible accessibility for aged tourists and/or worshippers, and eco-friendly amenities are suggested to motivate memorable tourist experience.

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Introduction:
Archaeological enchantment and cultural heritage are considered significant for the recycle of wonder, transformation, community empathy and beneficiaries (Perry, 2019). It is pointed out that cultural-heritage development and eco-cultural tourism can be enhanced by the contribution of the front stage and backstage supports (Tiberghien, 2019). Intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of a tourist attraction are given utmost importance to provide unforgettable experience (Sheng & Chen, 2012). Tourist experience depends on the choice to visit and the interaction with the tourism products (Suanmali, 2014). It is pointed out that tourist experience and destination image are interlinked (Lu et al., 2015). It is found that memorable tourism experience can be ensured and heritage preservation can be managed in four stages; such as: (i) the presentation of historical facts, (ii) contested heritage, (iii) integration of historical facts and contested heritage, and (iv) alternate scenario (Bec et al., 2019). It was highlighted that authentic tourism experience can be generated by the interaction of local community and stakeholders for the creative exchange of tourists expectations (Tiberghien, 2019). Here, threefold beneficiaries are mentioned resulted from archaeological tourism development, such as, governments, residents and archaeological research financing (Odum & Oguamanam, 2020). The combination of conveyance, security, accuracy and ease are mentioned for the proximity of tourists' authentic engagement and the generation of outstanding experiences (Zatori et al., 2018). Travel cost is found as the most influential factor for the creation of memorable experience (Adhikari & Bhattacharya, 2016) and the measurement of tourist satisfaction (Suanmali, 2014). Five types of tourists are identified related to the destination (i.e. centrality) and the depth of experience; such as, (i) Purposeful heritage tourist (high centrality/deep learning), (ii) Sightseeing heritage tourist (high centrality/shallow experience), (iii) Casual heritage tourist (modest centrality/shallow experience), (iv) Incidental heritage tourist (low centrality/shallow experience), (v) Serendipitous heritage tourist (low centrality/deep experience) (Alazaizeh et al., 2015). The study area is Adinath temple located in Maheshkhali (renowned as the only *Mountainous Island* in Bangladesh). The temple has the significance in its history and architectural design as the unique features of archaeological sites in Bangladesh. Followed by the types of tourists stated above, purposeful, sightseeing and serendipitous heritage tourists are considered for the study. The purpose of the study is to identify the significant factor for creating a memorable experience visiting Adinath temple.

Literature Review:
Tourist experience is defined as real-life memories referring "*witness that life (of the locations explored) as this is actually lived*" (MacCannell, 1973). The cycle of tourist experience is drawn as the beginning of the subjective assessment (*Affective, Cognitive and Behavioral*) of an event by a tourist's activities arranged prior (*Planning and Preparation*) and continued throughout the journey of a destination (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). A number of seven categories (*Hedonism, Refreshment, Novelty, Meaningfulness, Knowledge, Participation and Local culture*) are discovered contributing to great tourist experience (Kim et al., 2012). Besides, a number of 9 critical success factors (Accommodation facilities and luxuries, Hospitality facilities, Wildlife experience, Green management, Leisure, Interpretation, and General management) are pointed out related to the unforgettable travel experience based on a nature based tourist destination (Engelbrecht et al., 2014). Nonetheless, it might be uncertain to generate a memorable tourist experience if "one-size-fits-all" strategy is being followed (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Factor affecting memorable tourism experiences (MTE) are described in variations, such as: *ambiances*, *socialization*, and *emotions and reflections* (Coelho et al., 2018). However, three dimensions of MTE (*Local culture*, *Knowledge* and *Involvement*) are found which highlight positive results in hedonism and novelty, and influence revisit and positive word-of-mouth

(Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021). A study result reveals that four types of experiences (e.g. Entertainment, Educational, Escape and Esthetic) can be offered through a temple. Here, functional and emotional values can driven by the Entertainment and Escape experience; Emotional values can be triggered by Esthetic experience and functional values can be influenced by Educational experience (Song et al., 2015). Archaeological tourism can offer material (historic legacy) and non-material (culture) asset to tourists (Filimonova et al., 2021). Other indicators are the presence of local culture and customs, constructed elements, commoditization and atmosphere (Nguyen & Cheung, 2015). It was proposed that the views and activities (transport and food), perceptual excitation (attractions), and the visitor's psychological expressions (dull or intriguing) describe tourist experiences (Sheng & Chen, 2012). A tourist's experience and perception of the location's value is heavily influenced by factors such as facilities, pricing, food and beverage, service of customers, hospitality as well as accessibility to the site (Ozturk & Qu, 2008; Suanmali, 2014). A range of factors naming activity facilities, infrastructural features, as well as service components: accommodation, food and beverage, general service, specific activities and transportation etc (Roy et al., 2016). Culture and history of an archaeological site, number of tourists, availability of refreshments, and convenient mode of transportation and accommodation are considered as the prerequisites to provide better experiences to tourists. However, it is mentioned that guesthouse and hostel might dissatisfy tourists who are comfortable to stay in resorts or hotels (Green et al., 2017). Nonetheless, creative tourism is proposed to provide unique experiences by the promotion of on-site offerings (Richards, 2014). However, co-creative archaeological tourism is given the priorities to enhance tourist experience because of the significance of the invisible archaeological components (Ross et al., 2017). It is stated that the balance between the consumption and conservation can be probed as a challenge in order to maintain the satisfaction and competitive market (Buonincontri et al., 2017). Archaeological heritage tourism experiences can be personalized by the collaborations of visitor and tourists (Ababneh, 2017b). It is found that tourist subjective wellbeing can be influenced by the perceived authenticity by dint of the place attachment and tourist satisfaction (Wu et al., 2019). It is found that the perception of authentic cultural heritage can be influenced by the experiences of disorientations from the tourism suppliers (Tiberghien et al., 2020). It is found that cross-cultural awareness can be utilized for the creation of the authentic tourist experience and the tourist satisfaction. It is also highlighted that higher tourist satisfaction can promote cultural integration and assimilation and prevent cultural separation and marginalization (Zhang et al., 2018). It is found that social and consumer-generated media have ample influence for creating authentic tourism experience (Ganzaroli et al., 2020). It is also stated that travel narratives posted on social media can change the travel patterns and assist to preserve historical sites (Payntar et al., 2021). It is found that perceived value intervenes between tourist experience and satisfaction; whereas satisfaction leads to loyalty intentions (Lin & Kuo, 2016).

General, tourism and conservation management are the three sorts of management for a tourist destination (Saayman & Saayman, 2009). Different types of presentation and interpretation such as exhibitions, interactive media, panels and display board are stated as a part of memorable experiences (Biran et al., 2006; Cunnell & Prentice, 2000). It is found that interpretive signage (e.g. on-site signage, card notes, photos and observations) can enrich tourist experience if *Appropriateness of spatial distribution (placement)*, *Attractiveness of the aesthetic features (design)*, and *Effectiveness of the content and message (theme)* are maintained responsibly (Ababneh, 2017a). Besides, availability of restrooms, toilets as well as parking areas are prioritized to gain special attention of tourists; however, the maintenance of public restroom, sites, and visitors safety and security must be ensured by the destination management (Qaddhat et al., 2019). In addition, it is stated that tourists experience can be

surmounted if they are offered electricity, running water, flushing toilets, air-conditioned accommodation for kids, physically challenged and aged tourists (Karr et al., 2015). It was strongly referred that the quality of a tourist destination depends on the destination image (e.g. culture, activities, etc.) and destination management (e.g. environment, infrastructure, accessibility, superstructure and quality of services (Kim, 2018). Unique and distinctive travel experience is stated as the key to long term appreciation of a destination (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Zolfani et al., 2015).The involvement of a wide range of activities is found effective to generate pleasant experience and higher level of satisfaction (Prebensen & Foss, 2011). Experience involvement is featured impactful by the interaction of personalized services. For instance, Trip for sightseeing can be encountered by the visitors in cultural tourism (Smith & Richards, 2013); Performance of artists in the archaeological site can be offered to diversify tourist experience (Saidin & Shahidan, 2019). The information of an archaeological site represents the strength of the history of the site and heritage of local people (Li, 2003). In addition, business scopes are created by the initiation of archaeological tourism for the stakeholders (e.g. Tour operator, local people and Government) to generate revenues (Srivastava, 2015).

Methodology of the Study:
Study Area:
Maheshkhali Island is off the coast of Cox's Bazar in the southern part of Bangladesh. It enriched with cultural uniqueness, religious events, cuisine and social habits. It has remarkable archaeological and heritage sites including mosques, temples and pagodas. The Adinath temple is located on the peak of Mainak hill at Maheshkhali (288 feet above from the sea level). According to the Hindu treatise, the foundation of the temple was started thousand years ago, however, according to the historians; the temple was built in 16th century. On the contrary, according to the residents of Maheshkhali, the foundation of the temple was done by a Muslim resident who lived in Maheshkhali. The temple has the historical, archaeological, religious and spiritual significance. Such as: (i) An ancient temple for Hindu worshipers; (ii) The outstanding architectural foundation of the temple; (iii) Dedicated to the Hindu God "Shiva"; (iv) Availability of exceptional resources (e.g. Amaranth flower, Twin pond). The twin pond is situated 288 feet above from the sea level, however, the water never dried out. The temple is renowned for the prolonged (13 days) annual fair in the month of February. It is the place for thousands of Hindu worshipers from different countries. Recently, the temple has become a place for the gathering of Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and Rakhain (ethnic community).

Method and Material:
The study is quantitative in nature. Purposive sampling method was followed to conduct the study. A number of 159 respondents (Male 96 and Female 63) participated in the study. The survey was conducted from January-March, 2021. Close ended questionnaire was designed and 5 points Likert scale was used. Microsoft Excel was used to conduct regression analysis based on the tourist perception (Dependent Variable) and 5As' (Independent Variables-Accommodation, Accessibility, Attraction, Amenities and Activity) in Adinath temple, Maheshkhali.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:
A number of components are selected to understand the travel stimulation and trip experience visiting the Adinath temple in Maheshkhali. Demographic information, Travel intuition and Participation in tourist activities are focused to understand the travel stimulators. Later on, Accommodation, Accessibility, Amenity, Attraction and Activity are analyzed to define the experience level of the tourists. The demographic background of the respondents is shown in **Table 1**. It shows that the 60% of total respondents are male and rest is female. Besides, 51%

respondents aged in between 15-24 have visited the temple. Similarly, 30% respondents aged in between 25-34 has the interest to visit the temple. However, it is a concern that only 3% respondents are found aged in between 45-54 and no % in the age range of 55-above. It can be inferred that the temple is attractive to young tourists; however, temple location is not suitable for the aged tourists.

Table 1 also shows that 71% Muslims have visited the temple while the percentage is comparatively low for Hindus and Buddhists. So, it can be said that the temple has the archaeological significance as well as religious importance. The table shows that 54% students, 28% job holders and 18% businessmen have visited the temple. It can be said that the temple has the archaeological significance to students and the cultural, natural and adventurous importance to both students and job holders. It can be assumed that local products (e.g. traditional handicrafts, dried fish) might attract businessmen for potential opportunities.

Table 1: Demographic information

Components	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
15-24	81	51%
25-34	48	30%
35-44	25	16%
45-54	5	3%
55-Above		
Gender		
Male	96	60%
Female	63	40%
Religion		
Muslim	113	71%
Hindu	21	13%
Buddhist	16	10%
Christian		
Profession		
Student	86	54%
Job holder	44	28%
Business	29	18%

Components for memorable trip to Adinath temple is shown in **Table 2**. 36% respondents mentioned that the reason to visit the temple is to explore traditional lifestyle of Maheshkhali while 31% respondents said that unique attraction of Adinath temple and Maheshkhali is the reason to visit. Besides, interest to explore the temple and Maheshkhali is the core reason to 25% respondents. So, it can be said that the trip motivations to the temple are not only confined to archaeological significance but also exploration to nature and culture.

Table 2 shows that 64% respondents have visited 1-2 times. 31% respondents have visited more than 2 times while only 6% respondents have visited the temple more than 5 times. It can be said that the temple can be visited for archaeological significance while the culture and nature can be explored if a tourist visits more than 2 times. The table shows that most of the respondents have visited the temple either with friends/colleagues (53%) or family (33%). It can be said that group traveling is popular to Adinath temple. The table also shows the satisfaction level on the basis of tour cost. 74% respondents are satisfied for the trip and related cost while 13% respondents shared either neutral or dissatisfied due to the tour cost.

Table 2: Travel Scenario of the respondents

Component	Frequency	Percentage
Reason of Visit		
Suitable Transport	14	9%
Traditional Lifestyle	57	36%
Unique Attraction	49	31%
Interested to explore	39	25%
No of visit		
1-2 times	101	64%
More than 2 times	49	31%
More than 5 times	9	6%
Travel Plan		
Individual	22	14%
Friends/ Colleagues	84	53%
Family	52	33%
Tour Cost		
Satisfied	118	74%
Neutral	21	13%
Dissatisfied	20	13%

Table 3 represents the respondents' participation in tourist activities while visiting Adinath temple, Maheshkhali. It shows that 79% respondents participated in cultural events while 78% respondents participated in the religious event. It can be said that residents of Maheshkhali are cordially accepting tourists not only to visit bit also to share their tradition and culture. On the other hand, 79% respondents shared that they recommend Adinath Temple to visit in future. So, it can be said that both tourist and host are optimistic for future trip to Adianth temple in Maheshkhali.

Table 3: Respondents participation in tourist activities

Component	Frequency	Percentage
Cultural Event		
Yes	125	79%
No	34	21%
Religious Event		
Yes	124	78%
No	35	22%
Want to Recommend in future		
Yes	126	79%
No	33	21%

Table 4 represents the correlation between tourist experience and 5As'. It shows that there is positive relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables. The highest correlation with tourist experience is attraction and the lowest correlation with experience is accommodation. It hints that respondents may have poor experience due to opportunity to stay or availability of affordable residence.

Table 4: Correlation of Variables

	Experience	*Accommodation*	*Accessibility*	*Amenity*	*Attractions*	*Activities*
Experience	1					
Accommodation	0.238	1				
Accessibility	0.311	0.176	1			
Amenity	0.309	0.148	0.018	1		
Attraction	0.461	0.155	0.405	0.164	1	
Activities	0.418	0.282	0.171	0.305	0.407	1

Table 5 refers the significance of 5As' to tourist experience. Here, attraction has the highest (0.151) while accommodation has the lowest (0.037) coefficients. It hints that attraction affect the tourist experience rather than residency while travelling to Adinath temple. P-value shown in the table refers that attraction, amenity and activity are significant enough for the development; however, accessibility development is comparative less significant for the development.

Table 5: Level of Significance

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*
Intercept	0.218	0.147	1.484	0.140
Accommodation	0.037	0.030	1.221	0.224
Accessibility	0.081	0.040	2.009	*0.046*
Amenity	0.079	0.029	2.690	*0.008*
Attractions	0.151	0.043	3.549	*0.001*
Activities	0.090	0.035	2.591	*0.011*

Table 6 shows that the reliability of the relation between tourists experience and 5As'. It shows that the level of significance is lower than 0.001. So, it can be said that the 5As have the immense contribution to provide better services and better experience in future.

Table 6: ANOVA

	df	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*Significance F*
Regression	5	11.913	2.383	15.351	*3.21144E-12*
Residual	153	23.747	0.155		
Total	158	35.660			

Discussion:
Tourist experience can be offered to the target market by understanding significant determinants. For instance, it is found that respondents from age range 18-30 (38%) and 31-45 (47%) have greater empathy for the historical significance (Ozturk & Qu, 2008). However, this study result shows that age range 15-24 has the highest response (51%) and 25-34 has the second highest response (30%). Besides, 39% respondents responded that the purpose of the trip was pleasure/ vacation. In addition, cultural heritage and art/cultural exhibitions are found more significant than traditional Chinese festival (Li, 2003). Most of the respondents (83.9%) responded that the purpose of the trip is the temple's attraction; while respondents (56%) shared that the culture is the reason to visit the temple. However, this study result reveals that the purpose of temple either the traditional lifestyle (36%) or the unique attraction of the temple (31%). It is also found that the mode of travel has the variety such as independently (15.3%), couple traveler (18.5%), and travel with friends (9.7%). However, this study shows that travel plan has the magnitude either with the friends/ colleagues (53%) or family (33%).Accommodation, transportation and activities are found crucial factors for better tourist experience (Ozturk & Qu, 2008). However, this study result shows that accessibility, amenity, attraction and activities are more significant factor than accommodation. Improvement of the local transport system to reduce cost, Involvement of tourism stakeholders to recreate the number of choices and broaden the scope of services, and Availability of alternative tour packages are strongly suggested to grow archaeological tourism market (Sardar et al., 2020). In this context, Adianth temple can be promoted as an "Eco-cultural archaeological site" due to the availability of unique geographic location, cultural diversity and archaeological significance. It is proposed that the integration of local economy and resource conservation can be neutralized by the participation of indigenous people and local stakeholders according to the *Community Based Resource Management model (CBRM)* (Walle & Asgary, 2015). This can be followed in order to integrate the participation of the local

stakeholders and residents. The visitor management of archaeological site is classified in two categories. Such as: (i) Hard strategies (Physical, regulatory and economic) and (ii) Soft strategies (signage, code of conduct and educational interpretive information) (Enseñat-Soberanis et al., 2019). These two strategies can be adopted to develop as tourism-friendly destination. Besides, three strategies are proposed for the maintenance and conservation of the archaeological site, such as: (i) Restrictive strategy (carrying capacity), (ii) Redistributive strategies (adaptation to infrastructure development/expansion) and (iii) Interpretive strategy (communication and motivation to trip) (Enseñat-Soberanis et al., 2019). Here, the redistributive and the interpretive strategies can be followed to provide better experience visiting Adinath temple. A comprehensive place making approach is suggested to utilize and develop an unpopular destination (Archaeological/ heritage temple). A few strategies are drawn to use this approach such as: (i) Destination bubble (link a popular destination with an unpopular/new one), (ii) "Tourist trap" (Design with additional activities), (iii) Infrastructure development, and (iv) Creative tourism space allotment (tourism centers) (Priatmoko et al., 2021). As Adinath temple is an unpopular destination to mass tourists, it can be developed by destination bubble (e.g. attracting tourists from Cox's Bazaar), tourist trap (e.g. religious event, cultural event and ethnic festivals) and infrastructure development (e.g. eco-friendly infrastructure using ethnic/local materials).

Conclusion:
The study concludes that Adinath temple is enriched with both archaeological history and religious importance. Archaeological heritage tourism can be the perfect combination for the preservation of the site and its glorious history. The segmentation of the tourist can be redefined on the basis of the study outcome. Such as: (i) The multi-dimensional appreciation (e.g. young tourists, mid-aged, job holder, businessmen); (ii) Cross-cultural participation (e.g. religious sentiments). The study outcome infers that the local and regional stakeholder may provide intense concern for the promotion according to the tourist segmentation. The study also refers that the preservation of the archaeological site can be ensured by the blend of effective strategy, such as: (i) Eco-friendly infrastructure development, (ii) Responsible destination promotion, (iii) Construction and maintenance of amenities and (iv) Cross-cultural community resilience. Last but not the least, the conservation and maintenance of archaeology and heritage sites can be accelerated by the respective governing bodies considering the depth of influential factors. The study has significant limitations. *First*, the sample size is relatively small in number as it is less popular destination to mass tourists. *Second*, the choice of significant factors is considered according to the appeal of the temple (e.g. travel experience was chosen instead of travel cost). As an unexplored tourist destination along with archaeological significance, future research opportunities are strongly encouraged for the sustainable solutions in tourism development and site preservation.

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