

**THE ROLE OF USER-GENERATED CONTENT IN THE TOURIST AREA LIFE  
CYCLE MODEL: DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH NEGATIVE  
DESTINATION IMAGES**

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the  
University of Nottingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2023

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## **List of Abbreviations**

Destination image	DI
User-generated content	UGC
Tourist area life cycle	TALC
Destination Marketing Organization	DMO

## ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to examine how user-generated content (UGC) contributes to the destination image (DI) formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the tourism area life cycle (TALC). Tourism is one of the world's top export categories and most developing countries heavily depend on their tourism income (Konstantakis et al., 2017). This dependency demands their attention on proper destination management and planning. Meantime, many developing countries are suffering from prolonged negative DIs, which affects their ability to achieve tourism success (Avraham and Ketter, 2016).

TALC is a significant and useful destination management and planning model (McKercher and Wong, 2021). While there are many developing destinations in the early stages of the model, specifically exploration and involvement, these have not been adequately explored compared to its later stages. Further, the TALC literature calls for more research on understanding the impacts of different forces that bring change to destinations in order to manage tourism (Butler, 2011; Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022). Despite the availability of such research on triggers of destination change (e.g., Berry, 2006; Kubickova and Martin, 2020), the influence of DI as a trigger bringing positive change to destinations in facilitating movement through its stages is not yet explored. Favourable DI is a core determinant of tourism success that influences tourists' behaviour, including their engagement with word-of-mouth communication (Boo et al., 2009; McCartney 2008). With customer-to-customer communications becoming more trustworthy, UGC shared in social media as an organic information source has become more influential and trusted in tourism decision-making compared to marketer-controlled sources (Fotis et al., 2012; Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). Further, tourists have become DI co-creators with their UGC engagement (Mak, 2017). However, the potential role UGC plays in the early stages of TALC as a demand-side trigger or the UGC's role in overcoming negative DIs of developing countries is undetermined in the literature.

Against this background, the aim of this thesis was addressed by examining three research objectives: to examine the impact of negative DI on the early stages of the TALC; to explain the role of destination marketing organization (DMO) and UGC projections of DI on the DI of a destination in the early stages of the TALC; and, to conceptualise the influence of UGC in both the DMO's DI projections in the early stages of the TALC and also mitigating negative DI. Bangladesh was identified as a suitable destination on which to base this research because it is in its early stages of TALC and has a prolonged negative DI. The research questions were approached from a relativist ontological position with a social constructionism epistemology. The context-specific meanings constructed by the DMO, and tourists were studied using a qualitative critical visual methodology. Visual data were collected from images

shared on Instagram (UGC) and Bangladesh's DMO online promotional platforms. Further, in-depth interviews were conducted with a DMO official and international tourists. The data were analysed using qualitative visual content analysis, cultural analytics, and thematic analysis.

The findings of this thesis suggest that prolonged negative DI, the extent of congruity between both projected and perceived DI, and UGC are three forces affecting the transition of TALC in its early stages. UGC is found to act as a demand-side trigger that makes the destination more appealing to other travellers, fills the information gap that arises due to limited DI projections from the DMO and, hence, potentially contributes to attracting travellers to the destination during its early stages. Furthermore, UGC contributes to challenging and changing negative stereotypes and, thus, contributes to countering the prolonged negative DIs of a destination. In addition, results reveal interaction between the TALC and circle of representation (CoR), showing CoR is a valid model for understanding traveller behaviour in the early stages of TALC.

Theoretically, this thesis contributes to the TALC and DI literature by conceptualising UGC as the key contributor in DI projections in the early stages of the TALC, which provides destination appeal for the potential traveller and potentially contributes to increasing traveller numbers to destinations in the early stages of the TALC. Further, this thesis improves the understanding of how the interrelating components of DI, i.e., cognitive, and affective DI, act in increasing the congruity between projected and perceived DI. Further, this thesis has practical implications for the DMOs, policymakers, and tourism supplies at destinations in the early stages of their TALC. DMOs are recommended to focus on overcoming the destination's prolonged negative DI and perceived DI in their promotional objectives. They are further advised to improve their promotions by incorporating UGC into them and by capturing important insights by systematically analysing UGC shared online.

**The following Peer-Reviewed conference presentations resulted from this thesis**

- Examining user generated content and destination marketing organization's projected destination image (DI): Implications for developing countries with negative DIs. Nottingham University Business School Tri-Campus Conference 2022, online on 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
- The role of user generated content in the destination image formation: an example of Bangladesh, Midlands Doctoral Conference (Online) hosted by the University of Nottingham on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021.

## Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisors, Professor Caroline Tynan, and Professor Jillian Rickly for their immense support, guidance, invaluable patience, and feedback given throughout my PhD journey. No words would suffice to express how grateful I am to my supervisors. From holding my hand during difficult times to showing me the correct path, from pushing me through numerous challenges to broadening my perspective, my supervisors have rendered their unwavering support and guidance to make me the researcher I am today. Secondly, I am grateful to Professor Scott McCabe, Dr Teresa Heath, Professor Heidi Winklhofer, and Dr Carol Zhang for providing their expertise and insightful comments during the annual reviews. Thank you, Dr Jasper Donelan, digital research specialist at the UoN for the support given in handling the technical aspects. I am grateful to all the informants, including BTB officials for their valuable inputs.

Next, I am grateful to the Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development (AHEAD) project, a World Bank-funded project under the Ministry of Higher Education, Sri Lanka, for awarding a scholarship to pursue this PhD, without which enrolling for a PhD at a prestigious university like the University of Nottingham would not be possible. Further, I would like to thank the former and the present Vice-Chancellors of the University of Peradeniya; the former Deans of the Faculty of Management, Dr M. Alfred, and Professor Athula Ekanayake, heads of the Departments, and all the academic and non-academic-staff-members of the Faculty of Management, University of Peradeniya for their understanding and support. A special thanks goes to Dr Sunanda Premasiri, Dr V. Jayakumar, Dr K. M. Chandimaal, and Mr N. Agilan for being my sureties of the financial bond.

Thank you, Dr Samantha, for being a lovely friend and a sister while encouraging and motivating me throughout these years. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to Indrajee, who was reading my work and editing the language component as required. I am forever grateful to my husband and two children for their unwavering support and the sacrifices they made to support my studies and for keeping me sane. Amma and Thaththa, thank you for everything you did for me. I must thank all my friends in the UK and Sri Lanka for their immense support. There are too many names to mention but I cannot help mentioning Hansi, Harshani, Wathsala, Vijayajothi, Champi, Amila, Sandamalie, Somaiah, Heba, Kaushik, Gordon, Rabya, and Heeshani who were always there when I needed a friend. Last but not least, I would like to thank my sister, brother, in-laws, and all my extended family for their encouragement.



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## **CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The aim of this thesis is to examine how user-generated content (UGC) contributes to the destination image (DI) formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the tourism area life cycle (TALC). This chapter introduces the thesis by, first, providing the background of the research, and then the aims and objectives are presented together with research gaps and the significance of the findings. This is followed by a summary of the research methodology and an overview of the structure of the thesis.

### **1.2 Background of the Research**

Globally, tourism is the third-largest export, and it is a significant foreign revenue generator for advanced and emerging economies (UN, 2019). For many developing countries, tourism has become the top export category (UN, 2019) and most of them are more dependent on tourism income than developed economies (Konstantakis et al., 2017), thus, also making them vulnerable to changing market conditions in the industry (Konstantakis et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2022). Developing countries are the countries that are categorised in the low and middle per capita income categories by the World Bank (World Population Review, 2019). Tourism is recognised as a significant contributor to the economic development of a country (Martinez and Alavares, 2010). International and local organisations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the UNWTO, the UN Development Programme, and the European Union, as well as national ministries, regional bodies, and non-governmental organisations, recognise tourism as a potentially important tool for economic diversification and regeneration, poverty reduction, post-conflict stability, socio-economic recovery, multilateral integration, and the peace of developing countries (Novelli et al., 2012).

However, compared to developed countries, most of the developing countries are failing to enable their tourism industry to flourish. Negative DI is identified as a major

cause behind their tourism failures (Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Martinez and Alavares, 2010; Ryu, et al., 2013; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b). DI is a core determinant of tourists' behaviour, including setting expectations, destination choice, visitation, re-visit intention, and their engagement with word-of-mouth communication (Boo et al., 2009; Kastenholz, 2010; McCartney 2008; Leisen, 2001; Selby and Morgan, 1996) and so crucial in achieving tourism success for a destination. Furthermore, some developing countries are suffering from prolonged negative DIs that are the result of long-lasting issues accumulated over the years, coupled with the retained negative media reporting on such crises due to destination authorities taking inadequate steps to counter such DI (Avraham and Ketter, 2013; 2016; Ayikoru, 2015). Nevertheless, prolonged negative DI has received minimal research attention compared to the research on negative DI arising from standalone disasters (an issue further explained in chapter 2: Literature Review). At the same time, some of these developing countries are in the early stages of their TALC, irrespective of their efforts to develop their tourism industry. TALC is a well-established model in tourism that is widely recognised as a useful destination management and planning model (Berry, 2006; Gore et al., 2021; Haywood, 1986; Hovinen, 2002; McKercher 2005; McKercher and Wong, 2021; Rodriguez et al., 2008; Singh, 2011). Nevertheless, little research has focused on the early stages of the TALC when compared to its later stages.

Furthermore, literature recognises the importance of exploring and incorporating the wide variety of exogenous and endogenous forces that act as 'triggers of change' affecting transition through the stages of TALC (Agarwal, 2002; Butler, 2011; Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022; Lagiewski, 2006). While such examinations of triggers bringing change would provide an understanding of the 'whys' of destination development, such triggers have not been adequately explored (Butler, 2011; Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022). For example, Butler and Hart-Robertson (2022) emphasise that,

"Perhaps the most intriguing and possibly important aspect of the [TALC] model and tourism in general, and one not really explored in the published version is that of triggers. What events, agents, [and] forces, actually bring

about change? The identification of triggers of development is vital if tourism is to be managed. (...) There are many forces acting on destinations that can bring about change (...) some local endogenous ones, some exogenous, some intentional in terms of changing tourism, and some unintentional and unanticipated. There is a need for much more research on the causes of change and how they interact with each other and the destinations and their markets" (p.259).

Though such triggers are being explored in the literature, DI as a trigger affecting the transition of TALC stages has not been explored. Specifically, the impact that DI has on the transition of destinations from the early stages to the development stage of TALC is undetermined. (The impact of triggers is further discussed in the section below (1.3) as well as in chapter 2: Literature Review).

Filling these gaps in the literature, this thesis focuses on the impact of DI in the early stages of the TALC especially for destinations with negative DI. Bangladesh was selected as the suitable destination that fits the criteria of a destination with prolonged negative DI in the early stages of its TALC (discussed in chapter 3: Methodology). The DI of a destination can be positive, negative, mixed, weak, contradictory, or overly active (Kotler et al., 1993). For decades researchers have cited Bangladesh as a destination with a negative DI (e.g., Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Kotler et al., 1993; Kotler et al., 2002; Zahra, 2012). Unlike the weak DI that occurs when peripheral locations are not well-known (Kotler et al., 1993), negative DI occurs when the destination is known but associated with negative attributes in the minds of potential travellers. With weak DI, destination awareness is lacking, which leads to failure to feature in tourists' destination choice set (Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b). Awareness stimulates the curiosity to travel and so, awareness and positive DI are the main factors for a successful tourism destination (Milman and Pizam, 1995). While weak DI is also claimed as a DI problem causing tourism failures for developing destinations (Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b) this thesis focused on the destinations with negative DI, where the destination is well-known but potential travellers associate such destinations with negative attributes.

Such negative DI, which is mainly caused due to past negative occurrences that had received wide media coverage become a prevailing DI issue when the DMOs have not made adequate efforts to correct such negative perceptions for a long time (Avraham and Ketter, 2016).

Repairing negative DI requires managing public and media images, countering negative perceptions, and changing negative stereotypes (Avraham and Ketter, 2013; 2016). However, the potential role that can be played by user-generated content (UGC) shared through social media (SM) to overcome negative DI has been neglected in the literature. The DMOs are the responsible authorities that are established and funded by nations, states, and cities to compete and attract tourists to specific destinations (Pike and Page, 2014) and so the DMOs are expected to handle the marketing aspects of destination management (UNWTO, 2003). Though the DMO's role in countering negative images is examined (e.g., Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016), how influential the role of UGC is in countering negative images is less studied. Especially, examinations of the congruity between the DMO and UGC DI projections and tourists' perceptions in the context of destinations with negative DIs is lacking. Similarly, the potential role UGC can play in the TALC has not been explored in the literature. Tourists, today, have become the dominant party of tourism-related information creation and sharing through UGC on SM and, thus, they have become the co-creators of DI (Munar, 2011; Mak, 2017). Customer-to-customer communication is an effective and more influential source for tourists (Han et al., 2018; Narangajawana et al., 2017). So, UGC has the potential to act as a demand side trigger attracting more tourists to the destinations located at the TALC early stages. This thesis explores the potential role that UGC can play in the transition from the early stages to the development stage when, at present, destinations with a prolonged negative DI are spending longer periods delayed in the early stages and unable to move to the next stages.

Further, the possible impact of UGC on DMO promotions in the early stages of TALC may also affect the circle of representation (CoR). CoR is a helpful model to understand tourists' behaviour (Jenkins, 2003). It explains the interactions between projected and perceived DI by recognising the role of different information sources

contributing to DI formation. However, the CoR model has not been linked with the TALC model to further develop our understanding of traveller behaviour. Further, the role that UGC can play as a key source of information in the early stages of TALC, influencing potential travellers directly and indirectly through its impact on DMO promotions, provides a knowledge gap worthy of exploration.

Accordingly, the aim of this thesis is to explore how UGC contributes to the DI formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. Three research objectives are developed to achieve this aim. The theoretical contributions are made to the TALC and DI literature through addressing these objectives. The following section explains the research aim, objectives, and the significance of this thesis.

### **1.3 Research Aim, Objectives, and Significance**

This section presents the overall aim of this thesis, the research objectives with a justification of research gaps and the significance of the research.

#### **Overall Aim:**

**To explore how user-generated content (UGC) contributes to the destination image (DI) formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the tourism area life cycle (TALC)**

The overall aim guided the thesis to focus on the three research objectives given below.

- I. To examine the impact of negative DI on the early stages of the TALC
- II. To explain the role of the DMO and UGC DI projections on the DI of a destination in the early stages of the TALC
- III. To conceptualise the influence of UGC in the DMO's DI projections in the early stages of the TALC and also in mitigating negative DI

The TALC model proposed by Butler (1980) is recognised as a useful analytical framework with both a prescriptive and descriptive ability (Cooper and Jackson 1989). Hence, the TALC is widely studied and applied as a useful destination management model (Berry, 2006; Buhalis, 2000; Gore et al., 2021; Haywood, 1986; Hovinen, 2002; Lundtorp and Wanhill, 2001; McKercher 2005; McKercher and Wong, 2021; Rodriguez et al., 2008; Singh, 2011). Nevertheless, the use of the TALC as a management model by the destination located in the early stages - exploration and involvement - has attracted minimal research attention compared to the later stages. The majority of the TALC literature and supporting empirical evidence addresses mature destinations and the post-stagnation stages (e.g., Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021; Hovinen, 2002; Kozak and Martin, 2012; Pulina et al., 2006; Rodriguez et al., 2008; Zhong et al., 2008). With the TALC's recognition as a useful conceptual framework for analysing the historical progression of a destination (Buhalis, 2000) most previous studies have limited the examination of early stages of destinations to state what characterised these mature destinations when they were at their early stages (e.g., Berry, 2006; Gore et al., 2021; Hovinen, 2002). However, inadequate attention was given to understanding or explaining the early stages, by examining destinations while they were in those early stages. Addressing this knowledge gap, this thesis examines the early stages of the TALC.

Reviewing literature on the TALC, Butler (2011) and Butler and Hart-Robertson (2022) call for more research to examine the forces or triggers that provoke change in destinations to better understand the "whys" in destination development. "Identifying the likely pattern and process of destination development is useful, but how this process might be controlled, protected, maintained, and managed would be a considerable step forward and is well worthy of a continued research effort" (Butler, 2011:17). Moving from what to why calls for the identification of triggers affecting the transition process from one to another stage of the TALC (Butler, 2011). So, Butler and Hart-Robertson (2022) stress that while there are many forces including endogenous and exogenous, intentional, or unintentional and unanticipated forces that act as triggers bringing change to destinations, much research is still needed on such triggers as "the identification of triggers of

development is vital if tourism is to be managed” (p.259). Triggers are referred to as the forces that are internal or external to the destination, which influence the stages of destination development. Literature acknowledges the impact of internal and external factors on the TALC, and the difficulty of capturing such impacts limits the use of the TALC (e.g., Agarwal, 1997; Cooper and Jackson, 1989; Getz, 1992). TALC literature empirically examines the triggers bringing change to destination development stages, such as power and politics (Gale and Botterill, 2005), government involvement and destination competitiveness (Kubickova and Martin, 2020), lagged demand (Albaladejo et al., 2016), and changes in external constraints (Garay and Canoves, 2011).

Furthermore, tourism life cycle models routinely neglect the marketing manager's perspective, especially the influence of DI as a trigger bringing change to destinations. DI has become a working tool for DMOs because DI is the key to positioning, differentiating, and promoting a destination (Vaughan and Edwards, 1999). The three research objectives were developed to contribute to improving the understanding of the ‘whys’ in the early stages of TALC related to the impact of DI. So, theoretically, this thesis contributes mainly to the body of knowledge on the destination life cycle concept by incorporating the role of DI into the early stages of the TALC model, which has largely been overlooked. Specifically, knowledge is added on how prolonged negative DI and the level of congruity between projected and perceived DI influence the early stages of the TALC, and the role UGC plays as the key contributor to DI formation by enabling to attract travellers to the destinations in the early stages of the TALC. This contributes to improving both the descriptive and predictive abilities of TALC in its early stages. Related literature and the gaps identified are explained in Chapter 2: Literature Review in detail. Further, the thesis contributes to the body of knowledge of DI by contributing to the understanding of the use of UGC in the DI formation of destinations with prolonged negative DIs. Each of the three objectives are explained below with their respective significance.



### **1.3.1 Objective 1: To Examine the Impact of Negative DI on the Early Stages of the TALC**

Under this objective, the impact of negative images in the early stages of the TALC was examined in the context of Bangladesh as a developing country. Tourism life cycle models routinely neglect the influence of DI. The limited literature on the influence of DI on the tourism life cycle also mainly addresses the later stages of the TALC model (e.g., Butler, 1980; Berry, 2006; Dyk et al., 2019). For example, Butler (1980) and Berry (2006) argue, that irrespective of having a well-established image, a destination will be out of fashion at the stagnation stage. There are also general statements made such as that developing a distinctive DI is important to maintain a destination's competitiveness regardless of its life cycle stage (e.g., Lee et al., 2012). Apart from minor coverage found in few publications (e.g., Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Buhalis, 2000; Yilmaz, 2021), literature on the TALC has paid minimal attention to the impact of DI (e.g., negative, or positive DI) in the early stages of the TALC. Importantly, no research has explained the impact of negative DI when a destination has long passed initiating the tourists' consumption of it and spending a long time in the involvement stage of the TALC. This leaves a gap worthy to explore.

DI is the main element of a destination's success in tourism and favourable DI is essential to attract more tourists (Beerli and Martin, 2004). In the meantime, negative DI is one of the main factors hindering the tourism growth of developing countries (Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Selby and Morgan, 1996). However, the destination life cycle literature has not identified the impact of prolonged negative DI as a factor in destinations spending a longer period in the early stages of the TALC and hindering their transition into the development stage, especially while other factors required are fulfilled (e.g., developed infrastructure, available carrying capacity, etc.). To fill this knowledge gap, the first research objective of this thesis examines the impact of prolonged negative DI in the early stages of the TALC.

By addressing this first objective, this thesis contributes to TALC literature by evidencing that prolonged negative DI is a trigger bringing change to destinations in

the early stages of the TALC. Further, the descriptive and predictive ability of the TALC is enhanced by incorporating DI into the early stages of the TALC model. More specifically, this knowledge is useful to understand the reasons behind destinations spending a longer period in the involvement stage of the TALC, while having otherwise favourable conditions to attract more tourists to destinations.

### **1.3.2 Objective 2: To Explain the Role of DMO and UGC DI Projections on the DI of a Destination in the Early Stages of the TALC**

Firstly, life cycle models in a narrow sense state that increased advertising budget and efforts would aid the transition from the early to development stage of the TALC (e.g., Butler, 1980; Berry, 2006; Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021). The literature on life cycle models explores the marketers' role in promotions, through increased advertising efforts and expenditure related to its early stages. For example, increased advertising of the DMOs is considered an indicator of moving from exploration to the involvement stage and then onto the development stage of the TALC (Butler, 1980; Berry, 2006; Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021). These arguments ignore the broader remit of marketing management, such as the requirement to set different promotional objectives and priorities under different situations. For example, the promotional focus of a destination with negative DI first lies in identifying and correcting the negative DI alongside the infrastructure development and assuring a favourable environment (Avraham and Ketner, 2016). Secondly, DMOs are not the only party that projects the DIs and contributes to the perceived image of potential travellers. Travellers are also actively engaging in image co-creations and contribute to image projections through creating and sharing UGC (Munar, 2011; Mak, 2017). Travellers consider UGC to be more credible than other sources because it comes from other travellers and, hence, plays the dominant role in potential travellers' perceived images (Balomenu and Gerrad, 2019; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). The incongruities in DI arise when the travellers' perceived images do not closely align with the destination's image projected by the DMO (Mak, 2017; Selby and Morgan, 1996; Vaughan and Edwards, 1999; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). The congruity in DI increases tourists' satisfaction (Tasci and Kozak,

2006) and improves the trustworthiness of the DMO's image projections (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). DMO promotions that ignore these incongruities would weaken the DMO DI projections (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010).

Nevertheless, no previous research has examined the effect of congruity between projected and perceived DI as a trigger affecting the transition process from one to another TALC stage. So, this thesis examined the DMO and UGC DI projections of Bangladesh together to explain the impact of DI congruity on the destinations in the TALC early stages. Through this, also, this thesis contributes to improving the descriptive and predictive ability of the TALC by incorporating the degree of DI congruency as a trigger, bringing change into the destination in its early stages.

### **1.3.3 Objective 3: To Conceptualise the Influence of UGC in the DMO's DI Projections in the Early Stages of the TALC and also in mitigating negative DI.**

The DMO websites are less important for tourists' decision-making compared to UGC shared on social media (SM) (Jacobsen and Munar, 2012; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). Tourist's trust in UGC is well above what they invest in DMO projections (Han et al., 2018). UGC is treated as more realistic and trustworthy since it comes from travellers. However, this does not underrate the active role expected to be played by DMOs as the responsible tourism promotional bodies maintained by governments. The DMOs providing tourism information through SM platforms have a more positive impact on DI formation than DMO websites (Kim et al. 2017). So, DMOs can increase tourists' satisfaction and achieve a more congruent image by minimising the gap between projected and perceived images by integrating UGC into their official promotional materials (Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). Most promotional tools, including advertising campaigns, are not strong enough to correct the prolonged negative images and induce travellers to such destinations (Anholt, 2006 cited in Avraham and Ketter, 2013). However, the potential role of UGC in overcoming negative DI is overlooked in DI literature. For example, Avraham and Ketter (2016) recognised social media as an important alternative source strategy for

image repairing, but they limited the role of social networking sites (SNS) to a platform DMOs can use to communicate DMO messages.

Moreover, the role of UGC in the early stages of the TALC has not been adequately explored. For example, a recent publication recognises social media as an enabler of overtourism, creating issues that arise after the consolidation stage of the TALC (Dodds and Butler, 2019). But UGC's potential role in building DI for destinations in the early stages of their life cycle has not been examined or explained. UGC as an effort by travellers to co-create DI, potentially acts a demand side trigger bringing a positive change to destinations that causes a transition in the TALC stage. This conceptualisation of the role of UGC in the early stages of TALC not only addresses the call for more research on triggers affecting TALC but also fills a knowledge gap by examining a demand side force on TALC, while the majority of other research is on the impact of supply side forces. Overall, the fact that the UGC can be used by DMOs to enhance their projected images, increase the congruity, and overcome negative DI in the early stages of the TALC is not adequately studied in TALC or DI literature. To address this gap the use of UGC images by the DMO was examined. By addressing the third research objective, this thesis contributes to the literature on both the TALC and negative DI. Firstly, the knowledge of overcoming prolonged negative DI was improved by identifying the key role UGC plays in overcoming prolonged negative DI. Secondly, knowledge of the destination life cycle was improved by recognising UGC as the key contributor in DI projections in the early stages of the TALC and, hence, the potential enabler of increased traveller numbers to these destinations. In the next section, the methodology used to address these research objectives are summarised and then the thesis structure is presented.

#### **1.4 Methodology Used to Address Research Objectives**

The research objectives were approached from a relativist ontological position with a social constructionism epistemology. The context-specific meanings constructed by the tourism suppliers (e.g., the DMO) and consumers (e.g., tourists) were studied using a qualitative critical visual methodology. The data were collected using multiple methods to improve the accuracy of interpretation and in-depth understanding of

the phenomenon in its real-world context (e.g., Denzin, 2012; Jick, 1979). Firstly, visual data were collected from two sources: Images shared on Instagram (UGC) and Bangladesh's DMO online platforms. Secondly, in-depth interviews were conducted with a DMO official and with international tourists who visited Bangladesh. Importantly, the research design met a unique challenge when the Bangladesh DMO introduced a new online promotional infrastructure midway through the data collection process which, thus, offered insight into DI construction processes in real time. As a result, two DMO image samples representing the previous and newly introduced online promotions platforms were analysed. As such, the DMO image samples were distinguished as I and II in the analysis. The data were analysed using qualitative visual content analysis, cultural analytics and thematic analysis. The methodology and methods are further explained in Chapter 3: Methodology. The structure of this thesis is given below.

### **1.5 Thesis Structure**

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. **Chapter 1:** The introduction provides a background to the thesis and discusses the significance of the study. It includes the overall aim and the specific objectives addressed in the thesis. The structure of the thesis and a summary is presented at the end.

**Chapter 2** is the literature review. This chapter concerns the comprehensive literature review conducted to theoretically situate this thesis. The chapter is organised under four main topics. It first examines the literature on UGC and provides a detailed account of where social media (SM) and UGC fit into Web 2.0, classifications and definitions of SM, and the influences of UGC, eWOM and SM on marketing promotions generally and tourism specifically. Secondly, the chapter explores the tourism area life cycle as one of the two main tourism concepts to which this thesis makes a theoretical contribution. This section is approached by defining the destination and exploring the role of destination marketing and destination marketing organisations (DMOs). Thirdly, the literature on the second main concept of interest, DI is explained. This section begins by providing a conceptual definition of

DI and examining DI formation models. Then the interrelations between the projected and perceived DI and the theory of hermeneutic circle of representation used to understand this are presented. The significance of congruity between projected and perceived is explained before moving to the final section. Fourthly, the literature on negative DI and the impact of negative DI on developing countries as tourist destinations is explored.

**Chapter 3** addresses methodology and is summarised above. Chapters 4 and 5 present data analysis and findings. **Chapter 4** explains the impact of negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. By addressing its two-fold objectives, this chapter first validates Bangladesh as an appropriate research context for this thesis (a destination with a negative DI in the early stages of the TALC) and then addresses the first research objectives of this thesis.

The second findings chapter, **Chapter 5**, explains the role of UGC on DI formation. This chapter presents the results of qualitative content analysis and cultural analytics of UGC and DMO online image samples together with the results from thematic analysis of in-depth interviews to address the last two research objectives of the thesis.

Then, the thesis moves to **Chapter 6**, discussion of the findings. Here the key findings obtained from different analyses of this thesis are discussed in relation to the literature review. It is expected to deepen the understanding of the role of UGC in DI formation, particularly in the context of a destination with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. Five key findings are discussed, namely that prolonged negative DI and DI congruity are triggers affecting the transition of the development stages of the TALC; UGC is the key influencer in DI projections and, hence, a potential contributor to increased traveller numbers to destinations in the early stages of the TALC; affective DI reduces the negative effects of cognitive DI and increases the congruity between projected and perceived DI; and UGC contributes to shattering negative stereotypes.

The final chapter, **Chapter 7**, presents contributions and conclusions. Theoretical contributions made to the TALC and DI as well as methodological contributions and

practical implications of this thesis are explained here. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future studies are also presented. Finally, an overall conclusion and the researcher's personal reflection are given.

## **1.6 Summary**

This chapter introduces this thesis, which aims to explore how UGC contributes to the DI formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. Three objectives are developed to achieve this aim. This thesis is significant because it examines developing countries with prolonged negative DI in the early stages of TALC, which has received limited research attestation. In this regard, this thesis makes theoretical contributions to TALC and DI literature. This thesis also has practical implications when considering the significant economic and social contribution the tourism industry makes to developing countries. A visual methodology was used to address these research objectives, which is summarised next. Finally, this chapter has presented the structure of the thesis. The next chapter is the literature review.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**



## CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Introduction

This thesis aims to examine how user-generated content (UGC) contributes to the destination image (DI) formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the tourism area life cycle (TALC). This chapter presents the comprehensive literature review undertaken and revolves around four main topics. It begins by examining the role and impact of UGC and SM platforms on the communication and promotional efforts of destination marketers as well as on tourist decision-making, in the digital era. Secondly, the section explores the concept of destination, destination marketing, and the role of the DMOs, to set a study frame. This leads to discussing the first of the two main concepts interested in this thesis, namely the concept of the tourist area lifecycle (TALC). After introducing the tourism life cycle, the chapter elaborates on the TALC to identify the worthy gaps found in the literature to explore in this thesis. Thirdly, the chapter moves to the second main concept of interest in this study, destination image (DI). This section explores DI definitions, DI formation models, and DI formation agents. Here, the theory of the hermeneutic circle of representation (CoR) is discussed to understand the role of projected and perceived DI formation. Fourthly, the destination marketing perspectives of developing countries with negative DI and recovery strategies suggested are examined.

### 2.2. User Generated Content and Social Media

By the time, the new millennium had completed a decade, the internet has made a giant leap by enabling the *participative web*, or Web 2.0 as it is commonly referred to. The participative web “is based on an internet [which is] increasingly influenced by intelligent web services that empower users to contribute to developing, rating, collaborating, and distributing internet content and customising internet applications” (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), 2007:9). The participative web (or Web 2.0) changes internet users from being

passive receivers of information (Web 1.0) to active users, who interact with other users by creating and sharing information. Such web 2.0 platforms have given rise to social media, which includes a mixture of blogs, wikis, podcasts, messaging applications, and social networking sites. Consumers are now empowered on multiple fronts due to online digital content, where consumers can share content readily and easily with others (Tellis et al., 2019).

Consumers empowered with new media and technological developments have compelled marketers to absorb these changes into their practices and perspectives. Roughly, until the end of the first decade of the new millennium, marketers treated digital technology only as a tool for searching for information, pushing advertising messages, or as a networking platform (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). The popularity of new media made the communication environment more complex for marketers (Batra and Keller, 2016) leading to an evolution in the field of marketing towards digital, social media, and mobile marketing (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). Capitalising on these new media options not only required new tools but also required new ways of thinking for marketers (Batra and Keller, 2016). The following three sub-sections present the changes new media brought to marketers in general and destination marketers specifically. The section starts with a clarification of the new terms and concepts brought forward with Web 2.0, namely Web 2.0, social media, and user-generated content.

### **2.2.1 Where Do SM and UGC Fit into Web 2.0?**

Web 2.0, social media (SM), and user-generated content (UGC) are interrelating and interdepending concepts that are commonly treated as synonyms by giving rise to confusion (Berthon et al., 2012; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Nevertheless, they are different from each other. Web 2.0 is “the technical infrastructure that enables the social phenomenon of collective media and facilitates consumer-generated content” (Berthon et al., 2012:262). SM employs these mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms that facilitate individuals and communities to co-create, share, discuss, and modify UGC (Kietzmann et al., 2011). SM is defined as “a

group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of UGC” (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010:61). SM’s focus is on the user’s access to content, while web 2.0 technologies are providing the infrastructure to create and distribute such content.

UGC is a part of broader user contribution systems, consisting of “methods for aggregating and leveraging people’s contributions or behaviours in ways that are useful to other people” (Cook, 2008: 62). Munar (2011) defines UGC as the digitalised information uploaded by the users and made available via the internet. Three main aspects of UGC are “i) content made publicly available over the Internet, ii) which reflects a certain amount of creative effort and iii) which is created outside professional routines and practices” (OECD, 2007:9). Simply, UGC is the accumulation or combination of inputs generated by users, with the power to influence others in meaningful ways. The best example is electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which is a type of UGC (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Wang and Rodgers, 2011). UGC shared as eWOM can influence the consumption-related decision-making of potential customers, by making UGC itself a tool for marketers (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). eWOM is defined as “any degree or combination of positive, negative, or neutral comments, recommendations, or any statements about companies, brands, products, or services discussed or shared among consumers in digital or electronic formats” (Wang and Rodgers, 2011:214). SM provides a platform for this type of UGC to be created and shared. In summary, Web 2.0 facilitates SM by providing a technological platform and then SM, in turn, facilitates its users to create and share UGC. eWOM has attracted the attention of marketers and gained a prominent place in a marketer’s communications strategy.

Though SM are commonly referred to as a ‘group of applications’, they are wide in variety. Understanding the differences between such varieties is the key to using SM successfully in marketing communications strategy. For example, the SM engagement experiences of users differ across SM platforms. This makes each SM platform a unique context for advertising (Voorveld et al., 2018). To be successful, marketers should select SM platforms with deliberate care (Kaplan and Heinlein, 2010). For example, the selected SM platform must be more popular among their

target market and one where their target market is adequately represented (Hargittai, 2018). The next section discusses the variety and popularity of SM platforms.

### **2.2.2. Classifying SM Platforms**

Classification of SM platforms enhances the understanding of the differences between them. A variety of classification schemes are available classifying SM platforms based on different factors (e.g., Berthon et al., 2012; Ferlazzo, 2009; Hughes et al., 2019; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Kietzmann et al. 2011; Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Wang and Rodgers, 2011; Young, 2019; Zhu and Chen, 2015) (see Appendix 1 for two examples). Since this thesis intends to understand consumer perceptions through UGC, Hughes et al. (2019) and Wang and Rodgers's (2011) classifications are more suitable. Those two classifications are based on the rationale or the motivation behind consumers' engagement with SM platforms. According to Hughes et al. (2019), two key motives behind consumer engagement with SM platforms comprise content processing and relationship maintenance. The first group of SM users wants to process their content (e.g., Bloggers), while the second group focuses on relationship maintenance via building connections with others (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.). Wang and Rodgers (2011) classify SM based on its ability to facilitate eWOM. They identify two types of platforms that facilitate the circulation of eWOM as below:

Type 1- eWOM in online feedback systems and consumer review sites (e.g., online e-commerce sites, such as Amazon.com, eBay.com; and third-party review websites such as TripAdvisor.com); and,

Type 2- eWOM on electronic discussion boards, online communities, and online social networking sites (SNS) e.g., Facebook, and Instagram.

Users will obtain direct information that is required to make their purchase decision from review sites (type 1). Also, users will only obtain an idea of the kind of experience they would receive through SNS (i.e., type 2) (Wang and Rodgers, 2011). Type-1 is more information-oriented while type-2 is more emotion-oriented. For

consumers whose motive is to process their content, type-1 platforms are more suitable. Meanwhile, type 2 is more suitable if the consumer motive is relationship maintenance.

The scope of this thesis is limited to the UGC shares on social networking sites (SNS). As a type of SM platform SNS is a prime player in the SM landscape. SNS is defined as, “online communities that allow users and firms to share content with people” (Zhang et al., 2017:24). SNS facilitates fast opinion transmission among the many contacts of users. Since the prime motive of the users of SNS is relationship maintenance rather than processing their content, UGC that is shared in SNS is organic information. Information that stems from non-touristic, non-commercial sources, that includes word of mouth communications and also information gained from previous travel experiences are considered as organic (Gartner, 1994; Mak, 2017; Prayag, 2010). Consumers perceive SNS as providing more credible and trustworthy information, making SNS the most used tool for eWOM creation (Chu and Kim, 2011). SNS also has a strong impact on online sales (Zhang, et al., 2017).

The popularity of SNS depends on many aspects such as country-specific factors (e.g., cultural norms and values, level of technological advancement, geographical-based internet coverage, the government’s attitude, and legislations) and users’ characteristics (e.g., age, education level and level of internet use) (Berthon et al., 2012). For example, Facebook, the most popular SNS platform worldwide, is banned in China. Instead, Sina Weibo is the most popular SNS in China (Kim et al., 2017).

Amid these variations in consumer motives, preferences, and popularity, most customers all over the world heavily rely on some type of SM in obtaining product-related information (Kirtis and Karahan, 2011). SM exerts an influence throughout the consumer decision-making process starting from the information search through to the alternative evaluation stage, up to the purchase decision and post-purchase evaluation stages and, ultimately, influences customer satisfaction (Voramontri and Klieb, 2018). The literature about the role of social media in the marketing context is explored below.

### 2.2.3. SM in the Marketing Context

Online marketing is rapidly becoming the centrepiece of brand communications (Hewett et al., 2016). Marketers are compelled to achieve the optimal integration of marketing communications (IMC) by exemplifying traditional and new media to reverberate and echo one another (Hewett et al., 2016). IMC is the “consistent means by which firms attempt to inform, incent, persuade, and remind consumers, directly or indirectly, about the products and brands they sell” (Batra and Keller, 2016:137). Present-day marketers’ have realised that consumers can strengthen or weaken marketing efforts through their engagement with eWOM (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). This has forced a significant shift in the marketer's viewpoint toward eWOM because eWOM is rapidly becoming the most important component in the IMC among other types of advertising, sales promotions, conventional WOM, personal selling, events, etc. (Hewett et al., 2016). In turn, SM as the platform for eWOM circulation has become the hybrid component of the promotional mix and the fundamental part of the organisation’s IMC strategy (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). The total spending on SM advertising by firms has also increased significantly (Chu and Kim, 2011; Colicev et al., 2018; Kumar et al., 2016).

Two means available for marketers to utilise eWOM shared via SM in their communications are owned SM and earned SM. *Owned SM* is brand-controlled social media (Colicev et al., 2018). Since consumers’ brand communications are shifting from one-to-one (e.g., conversations) to one-to-many (e.g., social media) marketers’ communications emphasis is required to switch from one-to-many (e.g., advertising) to one-to-one (e.g., personalised tweets) (Hewett et al., 2016). Here, marketers switch from mass communications to customised communications in order to influence individual customers. This category includes the marketing activities performed through SM profiles/ accounts maintained by business organisations. *Earned SM*, is SM exposure received to products through UGC (Colicev et al., 2018). These are voluntary mentions, likes, shares, and recommendations given to company products by users outside the business organisation.

The combination between both owned and earned SM is important to gain the required brand awareness, purchase intent and customer satisfaction altogether. The volume of engagement with earned SM affects brand awareness and purchase intent but not customer satisfaction (Colicev et al., 2018). In the meantime, owned SM cannot increase purchase intent but can increase brand awareness and customer satisfaction (Colicev et al., 2018). ‘Sponsored blogging’, is a heavily used form of the combination of both owned and earned SM (Colicev et al., 2018; Hughes et al., 2019). It is one of the largest and most important categories of influencer marketing (Linqia, 2017 cited in Hughes et al., 2019). Influencer marketing is “the identification and use of specific key individuals who hold influence over potential buyers of a brand or product to aid in the marketing activities of the brand” (Brown and Hayes, 2008 cited in Evans et al., 2017:138). Under influencer marketing, marketers utilise paid opinion leaders to augment their messages (paid eWOM) (Scott, 2015 cited in Evans et al., 2017).

*Opinion leaders*, who demonstrate opinion-giving behaviour, are individuals who have a high power to influence others' attitudes and behaviour (Chu and Kim, 2011; Flynn et al., 1996). They are recognised as key players in WOM (Litvin et al., 2008). With SM broadening-up the scope of opinion leaders, they can now reach many contacts in their networks easier and quicker. Similarly, with consumer communication becoming increasingly peer-to-peer, many consumers are actively seeking or are exposed to online opinion leaders (Hennig-Thurau, 2004). Such consumers as *Opinion seekers* search for advice from opinion givers to make purchase decisions (Chu and Kim, 2011). Marketers converted these interactions between opinion leaders and opinion seekers into an opportunity through sponsored blogging to reach and influence many opinion seekers.

Sponsored blogging is not generating an organic form of eWOM because it is not a voluntary eWOM (Hughes et al., 2019). Consumers tend to trust non-marketer-controlled sources more than marketer-controlled sources because they consider the former to be organic and transmit independent opinions (Han et al., 2018). However, consumers cannot easily distinguish between paid eWOM and organic eWOM. So, the success of influence marketing lies not in the message content, but mainly in the

customers' perceiving messages from an opinion leader as organic messages (Evans et al., 2017). The challenge is that control over the ultimate advertising message will be with the influencers who generate eWOM rather than with the marketers (Hughes et al., 2019). Only the careful selection of suitable opinion leaders, keeping them motivated through continuous incentives, and measuring the progress of the opinion leadership campaign, would assure the marketer's success in social media strategy through opinion leaders (Lin et al., 2018).

From the consumer perspective, consumers engage with eWOM mainly with three behavioural motives, namely, opinion giving, opinion seeking, and opinion passing (Chu and Kim, 2011; Nagy et al., 2017). All three roles are important since they facilitate the diffusion of innovation (Lin et al., 2018). In the meantime, through eWOM involvement, consumers also expect to gain economic, utilitarian, and social values (Balasubramanian and Mahajan, 2001; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014; Nusair et al., 2017). The key utilitarian value of eWOM is the exchange of know-how, where people with knowledge, expertise and recognition offer their support and opinions to others in their decision-making (Gruen et al., 2006). Such eWOM does not always have to be positive, but negative eWOM also goes viral through SM. Whether they are support-seeking negative WOM (i.e., seeking empathy and understanding) or vindictive negative WOM (i.e., unfavourable communications to disgrace the company), both may bring destructive and undesirable results to the business (He and Harris, 2014). The anonymity of most of the content available in eWOM platforms, especially in SNS, can be used intentionally to mislead users (Litvin et al., 2008).

Hence, the success of utilising the UGC available in SM requires marketers' to have proper knowledge and understanding of the use of UGC. Rather than perceiving SM as a platform to push promotional messages and information to customers, it should be viewed as an interactive platform that is used to listen to and understand customers' viewpoints (Schultz and Peltier, 2013). Such a view may enable a marketer to understand the latent needs of consumers, levels of satisfaction, loyalty, and potential competitive threats.



In the tourism context, SM not only allows tourists to follow, share, rate, and discuss various types of content, but it is also connected to commercial tourism services in a mutually beneficial way (e.g., with booking systems, hotels, tour operators, transportation, and other hospitality services) (Jansson, 2018). SM has transformed the travel and tourism industry into an information-intense one. It has changed the way the tourism industry functions, from travellers, to travel agents, destination marketing organisations (DMOs), and commercial service producers to society at large. For instance, information search behaviours and the decision-making process of tourists are influenced by a large variety of factors, which call for destination marketers to understand them before designing promotional campaigns. The following section explores the literature on the role of UGC in tourism.

#### **2.2.4 Influences of UGC, eWOM, and SM on Tourism**

Tourists show greater interest in the information received via SM and they feel more confident when they use this information for their travel-based decisions (Narangajawana et al., 2017). They trust UGC and UGC creators on SM (Narangajawana et al., 2017). Travellers regard UGC to be more credible and trustworthy compared to the information streaming from induced information sources such as professional reviews or marketer information (Fotis et al., 2012; Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). So, tourism behaviour from the planning of tourist activities, and the navigation within tourist destinations, up to the circulation of spatial representations, has changed due to SM (Amaro et al., 2016; Jansson, 2007). SM has become one of the major players in the pre-visit, during-visit, and post-visit behaviour of tourists. Tourists are even setting expectations on destinations based on this trust in UGC (Narangajawana et al., 2017). Consequently, UGC shared in SM is now setting satisfaction goals for marketers. Travellers will be dissatisfied if destinations fail to meet or manage the potential traveller expectations set by UGC.

As a strategic move, destination marketers tend to influence tourists by incorporating SM into their promotional campaigns. Further, UGC could be used as an analytic strategy to understand and gain consumer insights (Munar, 2011). Both intentional

and unintentional eWOM shared via SM has the power to influence the tourist decision-making (Hudson and Thal, 2013). For example, Ketter and Avraham (2012) identify three ways of employing SM users for the DMOs' online destination promotional campaigns, which create intentional learning. First, persuade the audience to become distributors to share the DMO messages within their social network. Second, persuade the audience to contribute to the creation of the core message of the DMO's campaign with their content. Third, persuade the audience to contribute with their content to create a message and then distribute it within their social network (Ketter and Avraham, 2012). Such practices call for intentional learning and are highly effective since potential tourists are required to actively engage with the destination-related information by enhancing their knowledge about the destination. Intentional learning increases both the familiarity and expertise of the tourists regarding the destination simultaneously (Gursoy and McCleary, 2004).

Incidental learning that occurs through random exposures to the UGC available in SM are also useful (e.g., a friend's Facebook post about a destination). Such incidental learning increases familiarity with the destination (Gursoy and McCleary, 2004). eWOM can be unintentional where travellers are not deliberately spreading such messages to influence others' travel intentions (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Meanwhile, there is a possibility that the people in a user's network may perceive those unintentional messages as intentional recommendations (Williams et al., 2017). For example, the visit-intention of non-visitors was found to be increasing due to the tourists' travel bragging SNS postings either with increased familiarity or by the envy triggered by seeing others in places you have never been (Gannon et al., 2019; Hajli et al., 2018).

Next, this chapter presents literature on the main two concepts of this thesis, namely, destination life cycle (section 2.3) and destination image (section 2.4). The following section begins with defining the destination and exploring the role of destination marketing and destination marketing organisations (DMO). Next, it explains the destination life cycle concept. This section particularly explores the literature on the TALC model, which this thesis uses as the theoretical frame to examine the

developing countries with prolonged negative DIs in the early stages of their life cycle. So, the gaps worthy to explore in TALC-related literature are also identified.

### **2.3. Destination Marketing and DMOs**

A destination is a blend of products that comprise commercial offerings such as accommodation, food and beverages, recreation, sports, priceless goods such as natural, and cultural heritage, landscape, hospitality, and so on (Kastenholz, 2010; McKercher and Guillet, 2011; Pike, 2004). The term “Destination” emphasises the importance of what a specific location offers the tourism industry in terms of potential products and experiences (Rickly-Boyd et al., 2014). However, this does not indicate that destinations are limited to fixed geographic places as commonly framed in the supply side-focused definitions (e.g., Grangsjö and Gummesson, 2006; Leiper, 1979; Pike, 2004). For example, a tourist destination was defined as a “spatially fixed place, where a large number of enterprises offer bundles of services for tourists” (Grangsjö and Gummesson, 2006:61) and as “places that attract visitors for a temporary stay and range from continents to countries to states and provinces to cities to villages to purpose-built resort areas” (Pike, 2004:11). Such supply-side-focused traditional defining of destinations as well-defined geographical areas, is being challenged since the reality in practice is far from being limited by such boundaries (Buhalis 2000). For example, though the Alps are politically shared by several countries, travellers perceive and consume them as one product (Buhalis 2000).

Destinations, rather, offer experience (Buhalis, 2000; Fuchs and Weiermair, 2003; McKercher and Guillet, 2011). Buhalis (2000) argues that destinations are “amalgams of tourism products offering an integrated experience to consumers” (p.97). Here the tourism experience is understood as “an individual’s subjective evaluation and undergoing (i.e., affective, cognitive, and behavioural) of events related to his/her tourist activities which begin before (i.e., planning and preparation), during (i.e., at the destination), and after the trip (i.e., recollection)” (Tung and Ritchie, 2011:1369). Accordingly, as a perceptual concept, consumers interpret destinations subjectively

based on their travel schedule, cultural background, the purpose of visit, educational level, and experience (Buhalis 2000). The failure of tourism industry decision-makers to understand this experiential nature of tourism leads:

“(...) to a mismatch in that the way in which the tourism product is delivered is often not a true reflection of a destination’s identity (or just a poor abstraction of all its multisensory, fantasy, and emotive aspects) and it fails to incorporate the full potential of the prospective-rich tourism experience” (Govers et al., 2007:17).

Rather, destinations can be viewed as experiences provided to consumers in consumer-created spaces based on the consumers’ subjective perceptions. A destination can be defined as an amalgam of consumers' space and tourism products, thereby offering a holistic tourism experience to be interpreted subjectively (Buhalis, 2000; Fuchs and Weiermair, 2003). Such a view would offer marketers a better understanding of customers, providing insights to anticipate their behaviour and, ultimately, direct the marketer towards better strategic decision-making.

In an increasingly competitive and globalised tourism market, destination marketing plays a vital role in the growth and sustainability of a destination (UNWTO, 2011a). Destination marketing is a key component of destination management, which focuses on conveying a positive destination image to the destination’s target market (Ahmed, 1991). UNWTO (2011a) defines destination management as, “The coordinated management of all the elements that make up a destination (attractions, amenities, access, marketing, and pricing). Destination management takes a strategic approach to link up these separate entities for the better management of the destination” (p.234). Destination management involves creating a suitable environment (policy, legislation, regulations, taxation), marketing (promotions, branding and image, customer relationships management) and delivery on the ground (ensures the quality of every aspect of the visitor’s stay) (UNWTO, 2003).

To assure proper coordination and management of the tourism sector, governments establish different organisations (e.g., national tourist organisations (NTO), destination marketing organisations (DMO), regional DMOs, etc.), which play a key

role in the development of tourism in a country. As a result of recognising the importance of destination marketing, many nations, states, and cities have established DMOs and funded them to compete and attract tourists to destinations (Pike and Page, 2014). The DMOs are expected to handle the marketing aspects of destination management. This includes designing and implementing marketing communication strategies with the intention of gaining a competitive advantage by matching the destination resources with the market opportunities (Pike and Page, 2014). The main objective of establishing a DMO is to enhance the destination's competitiveness (Pike, 2004). Nevertheless, irrespective of which stage of the life cycle the destination is at, achieving and maintaining competitiveness are difficult tasks for the DMOs (Pike and Page, 2014). From as early as the 1950s, scholars examined the reasons behind the rise and fall of destinations' popularity (e.g., Christaller, 1963; Noronnha, 1976; Stansfeild, 1978; Wolfe, 1952 cited in Butler, 1980; Plog, 1974). They ascertain that the change or evolution of destinations takes place due to various reasons such as the change in travellers' needs and preferences, development and restoration of physical facilities, and changes that happen to the natural and cultural attractions (Butler, 1980; Plog, 1974). For example, Plog (2001) explains:

“(...) destinations appeal to specific types of people and typically follow a relatively predictable pattern of growth and decline in popularity over time. The reasons lie in the fact that the character of most destinations changes as a result of the growth and development of tourist-oriented facilities. As destinations change, they lose the audience or market segments that made them popular and appeal instead to an ever-shrinking group of travellers” (p.13).

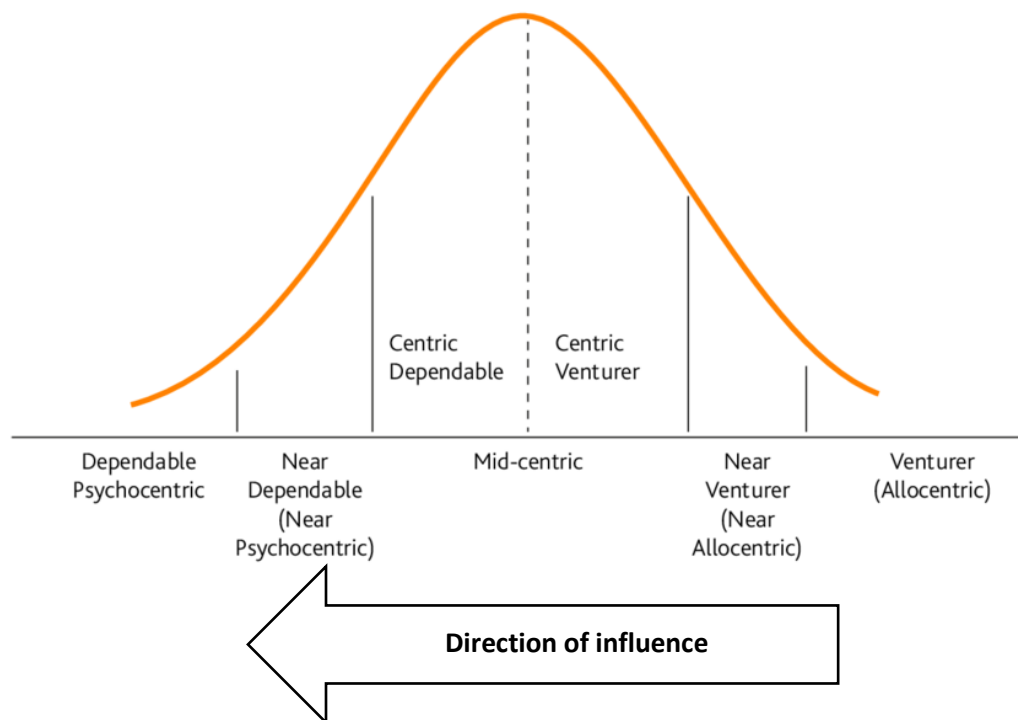
The destination life cycle concept (e.g., Butler's, 1980 and Plog's, 1974; 2001 models) provides useful insights into understanding the competitiveness or the rise and fall of destinations. Plog (1974; 2001) argues that tourists' personality characteristics determine their preferences and travel patterns and proposes a destination life cycle based on the psychographic personality types of tourists. Butler (1980) proposes a

TALC model as a function of the increase/decrease of tourist numbers and time. The following section summarises the life-cycle models by Butler and Plog.

### 2.3.1. Destination Life Cycle by Plog (1974; 2001)

Through empirical examination, Plog (2001) argues that the traveller personality determines travel preferences, where destinations rise and fall in popularity depending on such traveller personality types (Figure 2.1). Plog (1974; 2001) identifies five tourist personality types (or psychographic groups), dependable (psychocentric), near dependable (near psychocentric), mid-centric, near allocentric (near venturer), and allocentric (venturer))<sup>1</sup>, which defines the stage of a destination's life cycle.

**Figure 2.1: Psychographic Personality Types**



**Source: Original model by Plog (2001:16) adapted by Piuchan (2018: 96).**

<sup>1</sup> Plog (2001) changed the terms *Psychocentric* and *Allocentric* used in 1974 to *Dependable* and *Venturer*, respectively in 2001.

Though Plog's (1974) simple model has its limitations, it is recognised for its contributions to setting the theoretical foundations of consumer behaviour in tourism studies (Woodside, 2017). As per the model, different stages appeal to different psychographic groups of travellers and the respective traveller group determines a destination's character and success. Traveller types are suggested to be used as a market segmentation tool to identify the market positioning of destinations (or any other tourism-related products) and guide destination marketers to concentrate on the most important traveller segment of the respective market (Plog, 2001). A destination's development was discussed based on the type of tourist group it attracts and its role in bringing the next group in, the development of infrastructure and facilities, locals' engagement with tourism and investments. A destination's movement along the cycle has been associated with the recommendations and WOM engagement of previous traveller groups. For example, venturers influence and motivate near-venturers to visit and then they to near-venturers, and so on. Accordingly, the personality characteristics provide insights into tourists' travel behaviour (e.g., information search behaviour) and provide a base to understand tourists' travel decision-making processes (Plog, 2001).

Dependable and venturer segments are in two extremes and with mid-centric between them. On the one hand, for example, dependables travel less, spend less time and money per person, prefer to avoid complex decision making, visit more popular destinations and attractions, seek physical and mental comforts when travelling, and prefer to re-visit the same destinations. On the other hand, venturers make decisions quickly and easily, take long and frequent journeys, prefer visiting unusual, underdeveloped destinations and avoid tourist-crowded places, preferring to learn local customs and habits, and preferring to visit a new destination rather than re-visiting the same (Plog, 2001). Plog's model has attracted many criticisms apart from its simplicity and the inherent limitation of adapting a binary categorisation of dependable vs. venturer. Firstly, Plog's classification of psychographic groups of travellers based on personality types was criticised as it provides a narrow perspective by excluding other important psychological influences

on tourist behaviour such as consumer-specific needs, involvement, image self-congruity and experience (Cruz-Millan, 2018 cited in Litvin et al., 2022). Secondly, for Plog, the development pattern is predictable but uncontrollable and, hence, all destinations will pass through lifecycle stages from birth to decline. So, his arguments support the view that tourism destroys tourism (McKercher, 2005), which attracts much criticism to the model. In contrast, Butler (1980), proposes that the TALC is not limited to a tourism life cycle but as an evolution cycle of a tourism area. TALC-related literature is examined in detail in the following section as this thesis explores developing countries with prolonged negative DIs, which are in the early stages of their life cycle through the lens of the TALC model.

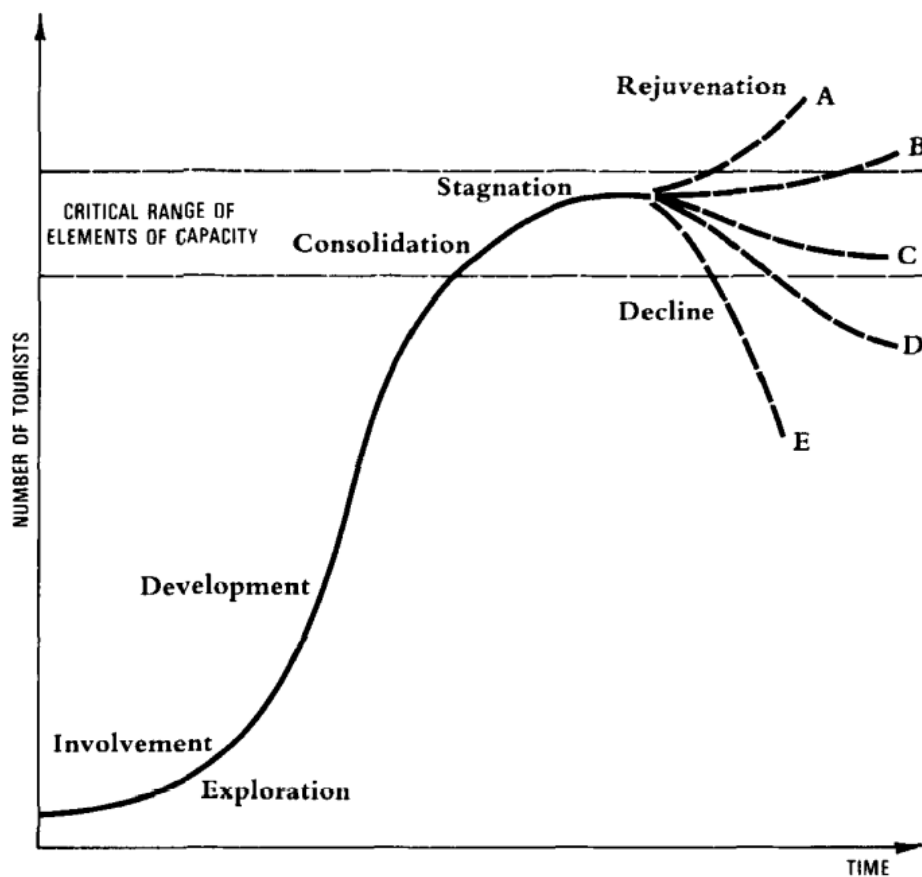
### **2.3.2. TALC by Butler (1980)**

The TALC model by Butler (1980) is a well-researched core concept of tourism (McKercher and Wong, 2021). Researchers display an ongoing interest in the model and continuously contribute to extending and expanding it (Kubickova and Martin, 2020). So, the TALC has retained its popularity as a key tourism model for more than four decades since its introduction. For example, TALC is amongst the recent publications in top tourism journals such as *Tourism Management* (e.g., Albaladejo et al., 2016; Kubickova and Martin, 2020; McKercher and Wong, 2021) and *Annals of Tourism Research* (e.g., Wang et al., 2016) and used to throw light upon such tourism issues as TALC as an evolution cycle, and influence of TALC on tourism research as well as triggers bringing change to TALC stages. TALC is a significant model that shaped the disciplinary assumptions of tourism by linking them with marketing principles, particularly in the areas of product and brand management and consumer behaviour. The model is a key model that articulated linkages between marketing and planning in tourism (Gore et al., 2021; Ketter et al., 2016). In fact, Butler (1980) conceptualised TALC based on the arguments of Polli and Cooks' (1969) validated product life cycle theory, which explains the adoption of new products and suggests that products pass through different stages in a limited life that requires different marketing strategies at different stages.



Inspired by the product life cycle concept, Butler (1980) proposes the TALC model as a hypothetical S-shaped curve with six stages through which a destination passes, defined as a function of time and tourist numbers. The six stages of the TALC comprise exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and post-stagnation stage, with five possible outcomes from decline to rejuvenation (Figure 2.2). At the post-stagnation stage, a destination will face either ongoing stability (C) or one of the two growth options (A and B), or one of the two decline options (D and E) depending on the destination's management decisions.

**Figure 2.2: Tourism Area Cycle of Evaluation (TALC)**

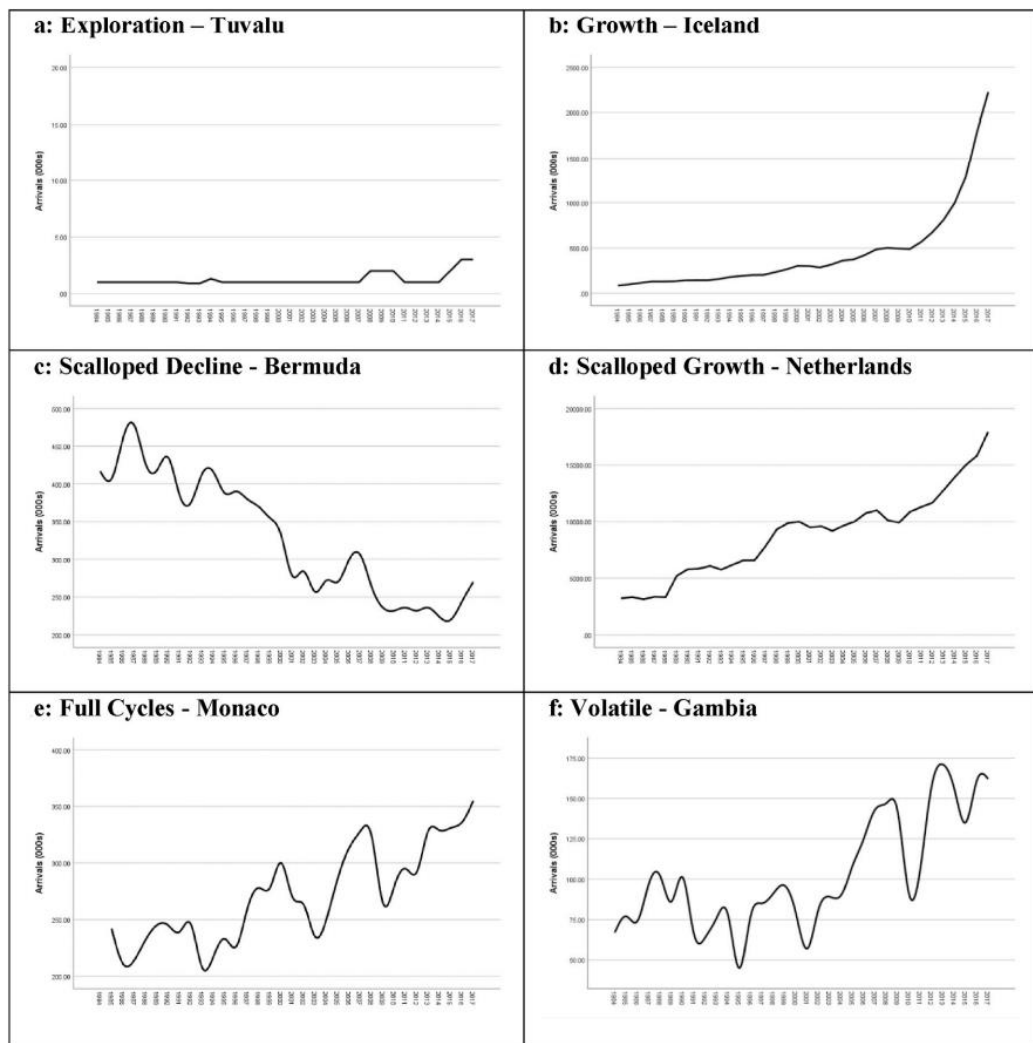


**Source: Butler (1980:7)**

Nevertheless, the TALC approach is destination-specific with different TALC shapes, patterns, and lengths (Agarwal, 1997; Hovinen, 2002). Since, the destinations are not homogenous all destinations may not experience each and every stage of the TALC

(Butler, 1980,2009; Heywood, 1986) and may vary from the S-shape (e.g., Agarwal, 1997; Haywood, 1986). For example, Agarwal (1997) proposes an additional stage after the stagnation stage called the re-orientation stage, while Haywood (1986) proposes four possible alternative shapes of TALC. Further, McKercher and Wong (2021) empirically confirm that destinations have multiple lifecycles as theorised by researchers such as Baggio (2008) and Ma and Hasik (2013). As indicated by Butler's (1980) paper title, "The concept of tourism area cycle of evolution", multiple lifecycles show an evolutionary process of destination life cycles, where destinations change and evolve over time. This is an often-overlooked aspect of Butler's (1980) paper where, beyond the title, he indicated the evolution by keeping both the x and y axis (time and tourist number) open-ended (McKercher and Wong, 2021). The multiple lifecycle concept is a result of viewing the destination evolution from the complexity theory, while challenging the view based on system theories where destinations move through a single lifecycle in a predictive manner. By evaluating a sample of 162 countries, McKercher and Wong (2021) identify six common styles in destination lifecycle evolution by grouping countries displaying similar TALC shapes into six categories (Figure 2.3). They concluded that the destinations that are going through a similar evolutionary journey are co-evolving, especially with the other destinations in geographical proximity.

**Figure 2.3: Categories of Lifecycle**



**Source: McKercher and Wong (2021:3)**

Acknowledging the above criticisms and limitations of the TALC model, Kubickova and Martin (2020), suggest that the model's main contribution may be its framework. Butler (1980) suggests that each stage is characterised by distinctive indicators unique to the stage, which arise due to the impact of increasing tourism numbers with time. These interdependent supply and demand side factors can either delay or accelerate the progress of a destination through its TALC stages (Butler, 1980). However, Butler did not identify a mechanism for the change of stages (Johnston, 2006). Later, the use of the TALC was enhanced in order to identify the stage changes by recognising important events that occur in destinations such as adding, altering or withdrawing of facilities (Johnston, 2006). These indicators are used when identifying

the stage of a destination and when using the model for predictive purposes (Berry, 2006; Gore et al., 2021). Such indicators (Table 2.1) mainly include the type of tourists attracted by the destination at each TALC stage, the emergence of tourist seasons, the level of focus and funding of destination marketing organisations towards promoting tourism, infrastructure development, the economic and social impact of tourism to the destination, locals' reaction towards tourists and contribution of the private sector to the tourism industry (Agarwal, 1997; Berry, 2006; Butler, 1980; Getz, 1992; Goncalves and Aguas, 1997; Gore et al., 2021). The TALC is linked with Plog's (1974, 2001) psychographic personality types where the TALC identifies the possible traveller type attracted by a destination at each TALC stage.

**Table 2.1: Characteristics of Each Stage of TALC**

Stages	Indicators
Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few adventurous (or allocentric) tourists visit the sites.</li> <li>• No or few public and tourist facilities are available.</li> <li>• Visitors are attracted to natural physical features and cultural attractions.</li> <li>• The physical and social fabric is not disturbed by the tourism industry.</li> <li>• Tourists have high contact with the locals and making interactions with locals becomes a significant attraction to visitors.</li> <li>• The arrival and departure of tourists do not affect the locals.</li> <li>• Economic and social impacts made by tourism to the destination will be relatively less significant.</li> </ul>
Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor numbers increase and are regulated.</li> <li>• Tourist seasons emerge and a definite market area begins to emerge.</li> <li>• Locals begin to provide primary or exclusive facilities targeting visitors.</li> <li>• There is a high level of contact between locals and visitors.</li> <li>• The lifestyle of locals who engaged in tourism faces changes.</li> <li>• The developing tourism industry leads to the provision of basic services.</li> <li>• Public investments are made to develop infrastructure and transportation.</li> <li>• Increased advertising induces a definable pattern of seasonal variation</li> </ul>
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourists are now mid-centric/institutionalised tourists.</li> <li>• Visitation grows rapidly.</li> <li>• The tourist market area is well-defined.</li> <li>• Development of additional tourist facilities and fabricated attractions.</li> <li>• Promotional efforts with heavy advertising are increased.</li> <li>• Greater control of the tourist trade by outsiders and more facilities provided by external organisations.</li> <li>• Auxiliary facilities for tourism are developed (e.g., clinics, laundry).</li> <li>• Migrated labour utilised in the tourism industry.</li> <li>• The number of tourists at peak periods far outweighs the size of the resident population, inducing rising.</li> <li>• Antagonism by the resident population towards the tourists.</li> </ul>
Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism has become a major part of the local economy.</li> <li>• There is an increase in tourism numbers, but growth rates have begun to level off or decrease.</li> <li>• Total visitor numbers are more than the population.</li> <li>• A well-delineated business district has taken shape and a significant part of the area's economy is based on tourism.</li> <li>• A considerable level of emphasis is placed on marketing and advertising.</li> <li>• Many hotel chains and franchises are represented, while some of the older deteriorating facilities are perceived as the second rate.</li> <li>• Destination efforts may extend the tourist season.</li> <li>• Locals may feel discontent since they are no longer involved in tourism.</li> </ul>
Stagnation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peak numbers of tourists and capacity levels are reached.</li> <li>• The resort has a well-established image, but it is no longer in fashion.</li> <li>• The accommodation stock is gradually eroded, and property turnover rates are high.</li> </ul>
Post-Stagnation	<p>The option followed out of five available possibilities will partly depend on the success of local management decisions. At either extreme are rejuvenation and decline. Rejuvenation occurs when a complete change happens in the attractions located in a destination.</p>

Source: Adapted from Berry, 2006; Butler, 1980; Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Goncalves and Aguas, 1997; Gore et al., 2021.

The TALC is considered a predictive and descriptive model (Butler, 2006, 2011; Cooper and Jackson, 1989; Getz, 1992). The descriptive ability lies in the ability to use the TALC model to describe the current stage of the TALC. Explaining the TALC's descriptive ability, Cooper and Jackson (1989), argue it "can be used as an analytical framework to examine the evolution of tourist destinations within their complex economic, social, and cultural environments" (p. 382). The predictability of the TALC model lies in its ability to use a set of indicators to suggest the future path of a tourist area, or the stage a destination is moving towards (Berry, 2006; Butler, 2011, Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022). Cooper and Jackson (1989) broadly refer to predictability as prescriptive ability and identify two interrelated uses of TALC as: Guide for strategic decision-making and as a forecasting tool. Literature stipulates the TALC's use as a descriptive model given that its ability to forecast accurately is criticised (Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022; Cooper and Jackson, 1989; McKercher, 2005). This criticism is found in previous research that has tried to forecast the future of a destination, especially after it reaches the post-stagnation stage (e.g., Menente and Pechlaner, 2006). Forecasting whether a destination is going to decline or rejuvenate is questioned (e.g., Butler, 2011; Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022; McKercher, 2005). However, Berry (2006) illustrates the predictive potential of the TALC by showing the use of the model to avoid the negative impacts of regional economic decline in the context of Australia. He argues that the correct use of the TALC model allows for providing a timely warning of the possible deterioration of tourism in a destination. This argument resonates with the Cooper and Jackson's (1989) argument of prescriptive ability, where the TALC is viewed as a guide to strategic decision making. Despite criticising the ability of the TALC to forecast the outcomes successfully, Cooper and Jackson (1989) agree that the model can support general trend projection rather than casual forecasts.

Despite the importance of the TALC as a management model, much attention of TALC literature is on mature destinations rather than on destinations located at the early stages of the TALC. For example, the majority of the empirical TALC studies examine the mature destinations or focus on the post-saturation stage of the TALC (e.g., Agarwal, 1996; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021; Hovinen, 2002; Kozak and Martin, 2012;

Pulina et al., 2006; Rodrigues et al., 2008; Zhong et al., 2008). Some use indicators to identify the period when these mature destinations were in the early stages of the TALC (e.g., Berry, 2006; Gore et al., 2021; Hovinen, 2002). However, leaving a gap in knowledge, the use of the TALC as a management model in the early stages has not been adequately examined. Butler and Hart-Robertson (2022) argue that much-needed research on the past evolution and development of destinations is less studied, while “Many of the problems facing tourism destinations today can be traced back to the nature of their establishment and subsequent growth, and the way in which tourism to them has been promoted, designed and developed” (p.256). In this sense, an empirical examination of a destination at its early stage would add more insights to the TALC literature.

Further, the literature argues that examining and incorporating the impact of external forces into the model enhances the use of TALC (Agarwal, 2002; Lagiewski, 2006). For example, Agarwal (1997) argues that the application of TALC holistically to one destination is also difficult due to the impacts of different endogenous and exogenous factors. In a recent paper, Butler and Hart-Robertson (2022) argue that examining the impacts of intentional and unintentional endogenous factors and controllable and uncontrollable exogenous forces that bring change to the destinations is important. Such examination leads to identify the triggers of destination development brought by those changes. While the identification of such triggers affecting the transition process from one to another stage of TALC provides better idea about ‘whys’ of destination development, they are much under-explored in literature (Butler, 2011; Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022). The impacts of triggers such as economic crisis (Berry, 2006); environmental factors such as climate and geographic location (Singh, 2021); the level of government involvement and market competitiveness (Kubickova and Martin, 2020); power and politics (Gale and Botterill, 2005); why lagged demand is not linear (Albaladejo et al., 2016), major restructuring process in destinations (Garay and Canoves, 2011), crises such as bombing and terrorism on TALC (Putra and Hitchcock, 2006; Moss et al., 2008) and COVID-19 global pandemic (Butler, 2022) were examined to identify their impact on all or particular TALC stages. For example, Kubickova and Martin (2020), by examining the

government involvement and destination competitiveness on TALC stages suggest that the effectiveness of governance changes with the TALC stage, where government structure changes from the proprietary and authoritarian in the early stages to the cooperative and managerial in the later stages.

Though the TALC is a management model that can be used to improve destination competitiveness, supply-side support or the government's supply-side role in tourism development and planning is not adequately studied (Kubickova and Martine, 2020). TALC literature has given minimal attention to the destination marketing aspects, and especially the influence of DI as a trigger bringing change to destinations is not adequately examined. For example, Singh (2021) argues that a major criticism of the TALC is not taking effect of marketing on tourists (e.g., on tourist's volume or satisfaction), where "(...) the difference made by different extents of marketing or in the type of marketing strategy on different types of destinations is not taken into account" (p.219). The indicators of each TALC stage (Table 2.1 above) are mainly identified based on demand, supply, distribution, promotions, and competitive situations by taking a marketing approach. Although, the promotional elements are included in this list of indicators, it limitedly focuses on the increased investments of promotions and advertising. For example, Goncalves and Aguas (1997) argue that demand at the early TALC stages can be increased by form (e.g., leisure) and by product category (e.g., sun and sea holiday) and communicate the available product through publicity or promotional activities. However, despite being one of the key elements in destination marketing, DI has received inadequate attention in destination life cycle literature. A comprehensive understanding of DI not only facilitates understanding of the destination's strengths and weaknesses (Selby and Morgan, 1996), it also equips the DMO with a working tool since DI is key to positioning, differentiation, and promotion of a destination (Vaughan and Edwards, 1999). The limited view on destination promotional aspects, and especially the limited examination on the impact of DI in early stages of the TALC, presents a gap worth exploring in the TALC literature.

A core element of the TALC model is the carrying capacity or growth ceiling. Reaching the carrying capacity is considered as the key turning point of a destination and the



future of a destination (decline or rejuvenation) depends on the decisions made at this point (Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022). After this point, the tourism numbers exceed the resident population of a particular attraction thereby leading to broader social, cultural, and economic issues. Tourist numbers exceeding the carrying capacity in terms of economic, social, environmental, and physical parameters of the destination would reduce the quality of traveller and local experience, leading to the loss of market appeal as well as causing environmental and other problems (Butler, 2009; Haywood, 1986). Destinations are mainly assumed to encounter carrying capacity issues after the stagnation stage (Lundtorp and Wanhill, 2001) but it could be at any stage depending on the resource availability of a destination (Butler, 2011). Dodds and Butler (2019), argue that overtourism has already become a widespread issue that has been brought to the attention of the destination's management. They identify enabling factors of overtourism as, a greater number of tourists, travel becoming more affordable, emerging new tourists groups, dominating growth-focused mindset and the short-term focus of a destination (supply-side), increased competition for space, amenities, and services, tourists' wider access to media and information (including social media), the destination's lack of control over tourist numbers, power imbalance among stakeholders and, finally, tourism stakeholders being fragmented and at odds (Dodds and Butler, 2019). They argue that the widespread use of social media has enabled tourists' access to information and, thereby, has attracted large numbers of tourists to destinations thus creating overtourism issues. However, this view on overtourism is criticised as it supports Plog's (1974) arguments which state that, tourism destroys tourism. McKercher (2005) counter-argues that rather than tourism destroying itself, tourism changes tourism, by citing Butler (1980) as follows:

“Over time, the nature, structure, and scale of tourism as well as the source and level of investment, change, and in doing so they transform the destination from one based on the appeal of natural and cultural attractions to one focused primarily on built attractions” (McKercher, 2005:99).

Consequently, the sustainability of the destination depends on how it is managed and, if well managed, a destination will have a long life (McKercher, 2005). However,

considering the tourists' wider access to information and media as a disadvantage is a limited view since such an argument ignores the role of UGC in the early TALC stages. Interestingly, no arguments were found in the TALC literature that recognises the UGC shared in social media as a trigger attracting more tourists to the destinations located at the TALC early stages. Unlike the later stages of the TALC, in the early stages the DMOs are investing higher efforts and funding to attract more travellers to the destination (Table 2.1 above). Governments are also highly involved with tourism development in the early stages compared to the matured stages (Mei et al., 2015). Moreover, Venturers, the most common traveller type at the early stages are influential and spread WOM among family and friends to build destination awareness (Plog, 2001). Further, due to their quick technology adopting nature (Plog, 2001), there is a higher potential that they would actively engage with UGC creation and sharing via social media by enabling eWOM. Interestingly, destination life cycle literature has not explored the role of UGC in the early stages of the TALC, thereby leaving a gap worth exploring.

The chapter next moves to present the second core concept of this thesis, DI. The following sections critically examine the literature on DI definitions, DI formation, interrelatedness of projected and perceived DI, and implications of congruity between projected and perceived DI. Afterwards the literature review of negative DI and the implications of negative DI on developing countries are presented.

#### **2.4. Destination Image and Its Importance**

Destination image is an important aspect in the overall success of tourism destinations and has its impacts on both supply and demand side facets of marketing (Tascil and Gartner, 2007). Tourists act upon their images rather than the objective realities of a destination, causing DI to exert a substantial impact on their decision-making process (Crompton, 1979; Gallarza et al., 2002; Kastenholz, 2010; McCartney, 2008). DI influences the tourist's expectation-setting, buying behaviour, return intention, loyalty, and positive WOM communication (Boo et al., 2009; Kastenholz, 2010; McCartney 2008; Leisen, 2001; Selby and Morgan, 1996). DI provides a 'pre-

taste' of the destination, especially for those who lack prior experience with the place (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991). DI aids marketers to understand the strengths and weaknesses of a particular destination (Selby and Morgan, 1996) and enable better strategic decision-making (Echtner and Ritchie 2003). Due to this importance, DI is one of the most widely researched areas in tourism studies. The sections below present definitions and key components of the DI and its formation. Two DI formation models were used as examples and how such models fit into tourist decision-making is also explored. Particularly, the concept of the circle of representation (CoR) is presented as a model explaining how DI projections and perceptions occur in an interrelated fashion.

#### **2.4.1 Destination Image and Its Formation**

DI is a complex concept and, hence, no unique meaning is ascertained to the concept of image. In general, "image represents the sum of beliefs, attitudes, and impressions that a person or group has of an object. [...] The impressions may be true or false, real, or imagined, but regardless, images guide and shape behaviour" (Barich and Kotler, 1991:95). Reynolds (1965) argues that the term image is often regarded as equivalent to reputation, and the image is different from the identity. Image is "what people believe about a person or an institution" and the identity is the "character, what the person or institution is." (Reynolds, 1965: 70).

Due to the lack of a unique meaning for image, DI has been defined differently by different researchers (Choi et al., 2007; Gallarza et al., 2002). Such differences in image definitions mainly lay in the incorporation of three image components, namely cognitive, affective, and conative into the definitions. The *cognitive* image component relates to "how the tourist would describe the physical attributes or features of the area" (Vaughan and Edwards, 1999:358). The *affective* image component relates to the feelings of positive or negative responses, which may have varying intensities from high to low (Tasci et al., 2007a). The *conative* image component is the active component that is related to behaviour (Gartner, 1994).

Most early DI studies exclusively examine its cognitive structure (Hosany et al., 2007; Martin and Bosque, 2008). For example, Crompton defines DI as the "(...) sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that people have of a place or destination" (Crompton 1979: 18). Later, wider definitions were produced by capturing both cognitive and affective DI together to capture a more accurate picture of DI (Agusti, 2018; Lindblom et al., 2018; Martin and Bosque, 2008; Zhang et al. 2018). For example, Kastenholtz (2010) identifies the image as a "complex mental system of cognitive, affective and imagery associations linked to a product or brand, which can be understood as a holistic, multi-attribute and multi-dimensional construct" (p.314). Baloglu and McCleary (1999) define DI as "an attitudinal construct consisting of an individual's mental representation of knowledge (beliefs), feelings, and global impression about an object or destination" (p.870). Mak (2017) specifically defines online DI as the "online representation of the collective beliefs, knowledge, ideas, feelings and overall impressions of a destination" (p.282). Some have even incorporated both group and individual decision-making into the DI definitions (e.g., Alhemoud and Armstrong, 1996; Gartner, 1994). For example, Alhemoud and Armstrong (1996) argue that DI "comprises the ideas or conceptions held individually or collectively of the destination" (p.76), which incorporates the DI generally held by society or region collectively on a destination. For example, western tourists' DI on Bangladesh as a developing country.

Overall, DI can be defined as an individual's or a group's mental representation of knowledge, beliefs, ideas, feelings, and overall perception of a destination. DI is formed through the above-explained three image components, cognitive, affective, and conative which are distinctly different, but hierarchically interrelated (Gartner 1994). By linking image formation to the tourist decision-making process, Gartner (1994) argues that the images are developed during the cognitive stage and then evaluated in the affective stage. Consequently, the affective image depends on the cognitive image, while the tourist actions (connotation) conative image depends on both the cognitive and affective image components (Gartner 1994; Mak, 2017; Prayag, 2010). DI formation is a complex mental process that involves potential tourists' processing of information. DI formation involves the "construction of a

mental representation of a destination on the basis of information cues delivered by the image formation agents and selected by a person” (Tasci and Gartner, 2007:414). Potential tourists act as active receivers of information coming from different sources of information including organic (from the demand side), induced (from the supply side), and autonomous (independent). Then, these potential tourists creatively engage in the DI formation process by elaborating, embellishing, and ordering the selected impressions (Reynolds, 1965).

Gunn (1972) classifies information sources into two categories: induced and organic, where induced sources are from the supply side and the rest are organic (from the independent and demand side). Extending Gunn’s (1972) perspective further, Phelps (1986) presents a primary and secondary classification of information sources. Phelps (1986) puts both induced and organic sources of Gunn’s (1972) classification together and names them as secondary sources. Then he identifies another source as a primary source, which includes internal information gained by tourists through previous experiences. Gartner (1994) takes a combined view of both the above classifications and categorises information sources into eight DI formation agents arranged in a continuum. This categorisation includes four types of induced agents (namely, overt induced-I, overt induced-II, covert induced-I, and covert induced-II), three types of organic agents (namely, unsolicited-organic, solicited-organic, and organic), and autonomous agents. According to Gartner (1994), different information sources (or agents) act independently, or in some combinations to form a unique DI in the mind of an individual.

*Organic agents* are sources which are not directly from the destination or the supply side. These are based on information assimilated from non-touristic, non-commercial sources, such as WOM (including UGC) and personal experience from prior travel (Gartner, 1994; Mak, 2017; Prayag, 2010). *Induced agents* are from the supply side such is the marketing and promotion efforts of a destination using media and information (Govers et al., 2007). For example, travel brochures, travel agents, travel guidebooks, and contents delivered via television, radio, newspapers, magazines, or by residents come under induced agents (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Selby and Morgan, 1996; Vaughan and Edwards, 1999). *Autonomous agents* are independent

sources that provide information on a destination. These agents are modifying, enhancing, or diminishing the information cues being transmitted, such as general media (news reports, magazines, books, and movies), education (school courses); and, popular culture (Gartner, 1994; Tasci and Gartner, 2007).

However, a clear separation between organic, induced, and autonomous agents would be difficult to seek due to the strong relationships established by the DMOs with the media and other parties (Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Selby and Morgan, 1996). New media, today, has complicated this separation further. Customers are no longer passive receivers of information. Customers, today, actively engage in image creation and influence other customers through UGC by creating eWOM (Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). Both WOM and eWOM are considered prominent destination image-building agents (Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). Spreading positive WOM is considered a better indicator of a favourable DI than an intention to revisit the destination (Papadimitriou et al., 2018).

DMO websites are found to be less important for tourists' decision-making compared to other online sources such as UGC via social media (SM) (Jacobsen and Munar, 2012; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018; Statista, 2019). Conversely, DMOs providing tourism information through SM platforms have been found to influence DI formation more positively (Kim et al., 2017). Hence, DMOs, today, actively engage in SM communications through both owned SM and earned SM (e.g., sponsored blogging, influence marketing). As a result, some eWOM coming from SM users may be influenced by DMOs without the knowledge of consumers who receive such information. This converts such eWOM from Unsolicited-organic to Covert induced-II agents. Similarly, SM influencers who are believed to be independent sources may try to establish links with induced agents with the motive of gaining some financial or non-financial benefits (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019). From the tourist perspective, it has become an extremely difficult task to differentiate between these agents, thereby exposing them to sponsor messages without their knowledge.

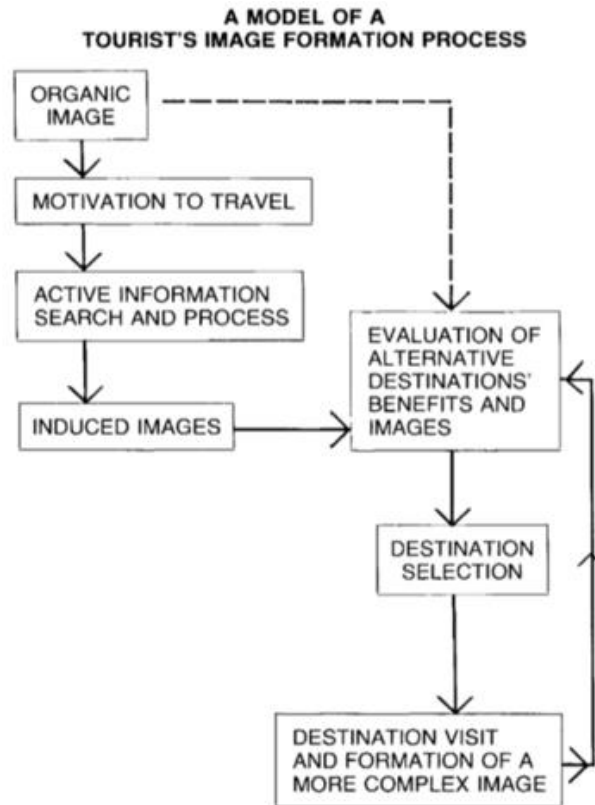
As discussed in earlier sections (2.2.3 and 2.2.4), marketers are now more empowered with new media options available to them and, at the same time, are more vulnerable due to these new media options that have empowered the

consumers. Since the interest of the DMO is developing the desired DI in potential tourists' minds, the DMOs require selecting the right combination of DI formation agents from all the available options (Agusti, 2018). This selection of a proper combination of agents by a DMO depends on the budget, demographic characteristics of the target market, nature of the decision-making unit (e.g., individual or family), timing of launching the promotional campaign, nature of the current DI of the destination, and many other factors (Gartner, 1994). Developing appropriate DIs for their target market compels DMOs to understand how DIs are formed. Both the static and dynamic approaches are used to understand DI formation (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999). Static approaches are interested in studying the relationship between DI and tourist behaviour, while dynamic approaches study DI formation itself. Hence, the dynamic approaches aid more in understanding how DI formation occurs. The DI formation process is intricately entwined with the tourist's decision-making process, where DI aids potential tourists in their decision-making at each stage of decision-making (Gartner, 1994; Selby and Morgan, 1996). Many researchers have developed models to gain an in-depth understanding of DI formation such as Gunn (1988); Fakeye and Crompton (1991); Echtner and Ritchie (2003); Govers and Go (2004); and Tasci and Gartner (2007). The following section explores two selected DI formation models: Fakeye and Crompton (1991) and Govers, Go and Kumar (2007). Both these models are based on the general models of consumer behaviour, which consider tourists as rational utility maximisers and the decision-making process as an input-output process. Regardless of this limitation, both models, below, aid to enhance the understanding of DI formation.

#### **2.4.2 Image Formation Models**

Though with limitations, the model by Fakeye and Crompton (1991) (Figure 2.4), is a simple model providing insights to destination marketers on their tourism promotion efforts.

**Figure 2.4: The DI Formation Model by Fakeye and Crompton (1991)**



**Source: Fakeye and Crompton (1991:11)**

The model starts by assuming that potential visitors already own an organic image (or an awareness set) relating to potential destinations. Then, when there is a motivation to travel, individuals will engage in an active information search. This results in a more refined induced image of alternative destinations, in the potential tourists' minds. Next, tourists evaluate these alternatives based on the benefits and images they have of alternative destinations, to select a destination to visit. Actual experiences gained by visiting the selected destination will form a more complex image in tourists' minds. Hence, Fakeye and Crompton (1991) suggest that promotional material should be informative at the organic stage, persuasive at the induced stage and reminding at the complex stage.

However, the model has limitations inherent in choice-set models developed under the structured process approach. Simple choice-set models assume the consumer moves through a sequence of pre-designed stages and such a view is inadequate and

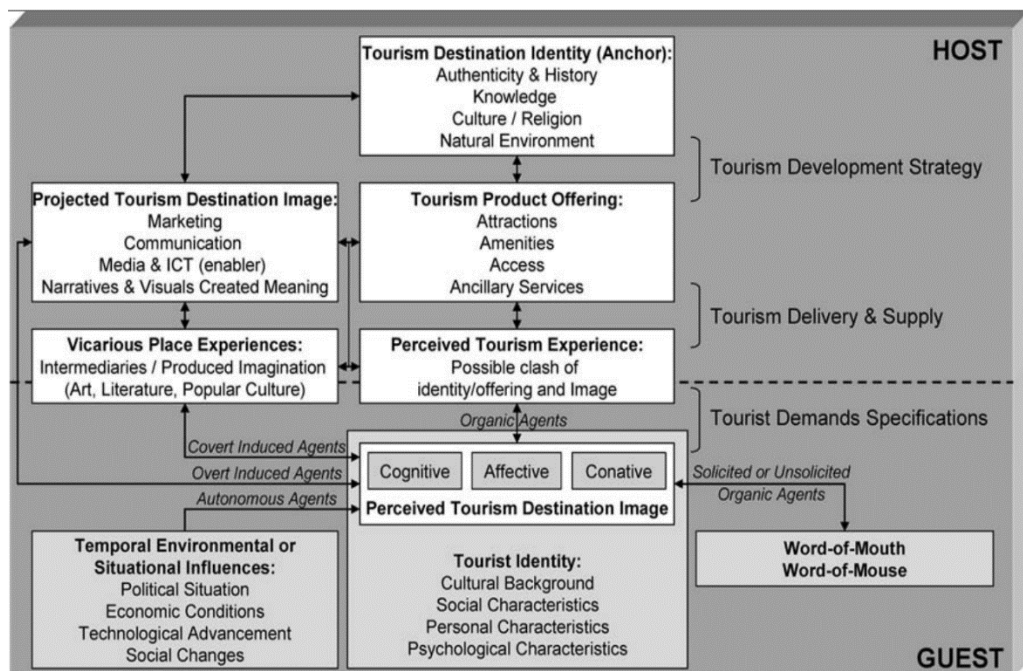


limited in scope to understand complex consumer behaviour (Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005; Smallman and Moore, 2010). From the view of complex process approaches, consumer decision-making varies with the consumer's level of involvement with the purchase (Szmigin and Piacentini, 2018). It can be a high to low level of involvement and consumer decision-making depends on factors such as information needs, information availability, stage of information processing, availability of alternatives, and the differences that exist between such alternatives (Szmigin and Piacentini, 2018). For example, when consumers are unable to retrieve information from memory or when the information is not previously acquired to aid their choice in decision-making, they will search the external environment for information (Gursoy and McCleary, 2004). This results in active learning, which is characterised by extensive information search and is referred to as high involvement. In contrast, when consumers in a purchase situation engage in an internal search for accumulated information stored in their memory, this could be regarded as passive learning (Schmidt and Spreng, 1996). Consumers engage in active learning when the perceived risk is high. So, consumers may engage with dissonance reduction strategies to make sure that they make the right decision and are involved with extended problem-solving (Szmigin and Piacentini, 2018). For example, a tourist may engage in an extensive information search due to the high involvement with the situation. Most first-time visitors, or when visitor familiarity with the destination is low, engage in extensive information searches (Gursoy and McCleary, 2004). Conversely, when tourists are familiar with and have prior experience of the destination, they may engage in limited problem-solving. Here, the information search and alternative evaluation would be less rigorous compared to extended problem-solving (Gursoy and McCleary, 2004). Nevertheless, tourists' involvement with the information may vary depending on their stage of information processing. For example, upon reaching the information processing/alternative evaluation stage, if tourists perceive their cognitive load is too high, they will decide to use a heuristic system (McCabe, et al., 2016). Moreover, tourists would rely more on external information in situations where they feel they have to exert a high cognitive effort to obtain internal information, (i.e., their cost of the internal information search is high) they will rely more on external information (Gursoy and McCleary, 2004). Accordingly,

when consumer physiological characteristics (e.g., need for cognition) come into play, the capacity of marketer influence may be limited. Therefore, information-overload marketing communications would not be effective in inducing potential tourists to a destination. Despite the availability of a large amount of information, tourists' information usage will depend on their need for cognition and involvement. The kind of information sources tourists are exposed to would determine their perceived image (Beerli and Martin, 2004) and, ultimately, influence their destination choice.

Other than the inherent limitations of a choice-set model, Fakeye and Crompton's (1991) model also excludes internal (e.g., tourists' characteristics) and external factors affecting the tourist's decision-making. Conversely, the image formation model by Govers and Go (2004), which is elaborated further by Govers, Go and Kumar (2007) incorporates internal and external factors affecting tourist decision-making as well as all eight DI formation agents by Garner (1993) into their model (Figure 2.5). Internet and eWOM have also been identified under organic agents.

**Figure 2.5: The Three-Gap Model of Tourism DI Formation**



Source: Govers et. al. (2007: 16)

The model is developed to demonstrate three gaps that hinder the creation of a favourable DI, which should be identified and tackled by the DMOs. This model is mainly based on Reynolds' (1965) argument that image<sup>2</sup> is "what people believe about a person or an institution" and can be different from the identity of a person or an institution, which is the "character, what the person or institution is" (Reynolds, 1965: 70).

- Gap 1 (tourism development strategy gap): This occurs when the DMO's image projections (induced DI formation agents) are not in line with the destination's identity. Based on the argument of Reynolds (1965) DI is what potential tourists believe about the destination, while the destination's identity is the character of what it is. The gap occurs when the identity of the destination and the way the destination appears in DMO communications are not compatible with each other.
- Gap 2 (tourist demand specifications gap): The potential travellers receive information from various information sources. They form the pre-travel perceived DI by evaluating the received information based on factors such as the person's identity (e.g., social, cultural, and demographic characteristics), potential temporal environmental or situational influences of the destination country (e.g., political, and economic conditions) (receives from autonomous agents), and the direct or indirect interaction with other consumers (via solicited or unsolicited organic agents). This perceived DI sets expectations or demand goals for a potential tourist. A gap occurs if tourists set too high expectations or unrealistic demand goals. Though the DMO is not fully responsible for this gap, it will cause traveller dissatisfaction.
- Gap 3 (tourism delivery and supply gap): This gap occurs due to the failure in delivering the tourism products and services and in interacting with tourists in line with their realistic expectations that are built based on projected promises. Here the falsely raised expectations of tourism promotion by induced agents (e.g., the DMO and tourism intermediaries in a host

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<sup>2</sup> Reynolds (1965) considered image as the synonym to reputation.

destination) are responsible for tourists' dissatisfaction. Realistic DMO DI projections would prevent this gap from occurring.

The dissatisfied tourists in gap situations two and three will amend their perceived destination image to re-align with the perceived reality of their actual travel experience. Overall, the model emphasises that DI projected from various DI formation sources forms the basis for the perceived DI in the potential tourists' minds. The tourists' satisfaction with the travel experience depends on the congruity between their perceived DI with the DMO projected DI as well as the ability of the destination to meet the promises made. So, a discrepancy between projected and perceived DI may occur either due to unrealistic perceived images held by the tourist or due to the destination failing to meet expectations (Selby and Morgan, 1996). The DMOs can intervene by designing realistic and not over-promising marketing campaigns to prevent a negative discrepancy. However, compared to other products, destination images are influenced by a much wider variety of information sources (Selby and Morgan, 1996). Also, organic information sources contributing to the perceived image are, to a large extent, out of the marketer's control. The DMO's challenge, here, is to increase the destination's brand presence in the minds of the tourists to build DI among potential tourists through adopting suitable promotion strategies (Liu and Fang, 2018). Bridging any possible gaps between projected and perceived DI to assure tourist satisfaction and favourable DIs is highlighted in the literature (e.g., Govers et al., 2007, Tasci and Gartner, 2007). The following section explores two types of DI, projected, and perceived, and then the congruity between them. For this purpose, two relevant models are used. First, the interdependent nature of projected and perceived images will be understood using the theory of the circle of representation (CoR). Then, the DI formation model proposed by Tasci and Kozak (2006) will be presented to understand the congruity between projected and perceived images.

### **2.4.3 Projected and Perceived Image**

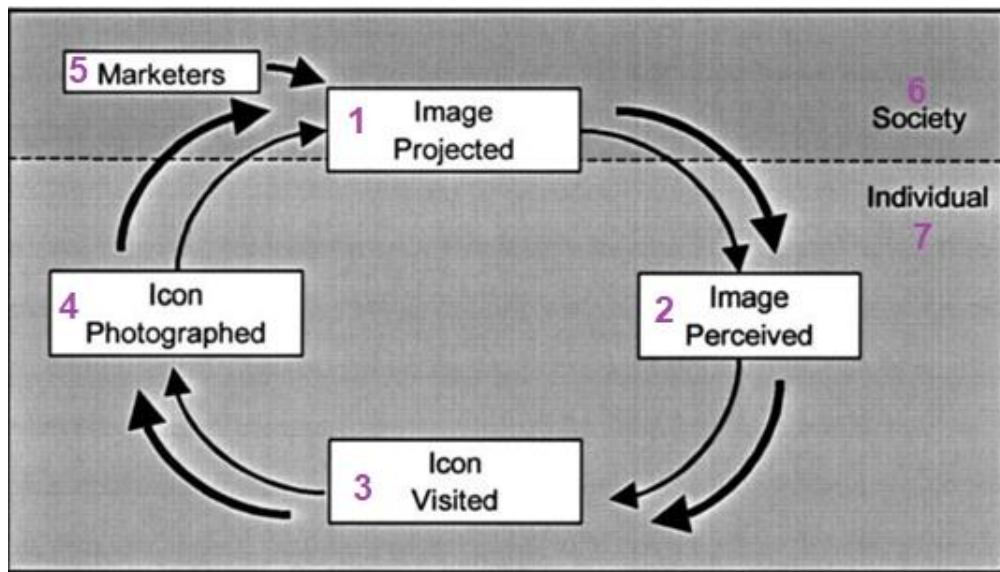
DI is classified into the projected and perceived image based on the arguments of the supply-demand perspective (Kotler et al., 1993). The supply-demand perspective is derived from the tourism system models, which consist of an origin and a destination (e.g., Leiper, 1979). The demand-side is the origin or the source of tourists, and the supply side is the destination that provides the tourist experience (Leiper, 1979). From the supply-demand perspective, the projected DI is the image of the destination that the supply side wants to create in the potential tourist's mind and the perceived image is the impressions tourists as the demand side hold about the destination (Kotler et. al., 1993). From the supply-demand perspective, perceived image is what is received by the tourists before their travel through all the different information sources (e.g., induced, autonomous, and organic) (Jenkins, 2003; Tasci and Kozak, 2006). Nevertheless, the supply-demand perspective narrowly limits the projected image solely to the information that is coming from induced agents (supply-side) (e.g., Govers et. al., 2007; Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Tasci and Kozak, 2006; Selby and Morgan 1996). They have not incorporated other information agents (e.g., autonomous, solicited, and unsolicited organic agents) into the definition of the projected image. However, others include all the above sources as image-projecting agents since all sources are projecting DI by providing information to potential travellers (e.g., Agusti, 2018). For example, Agusti (2018) refers to the projected image as a secondary image of Phelps's classification, which includes autonomous, solicited, and unsolicited organic agents.

From a constructionist point of view, Hunter (2016) argues, "in constructivism projection and perception of destination imagery are theoretically mingled" (p.222). So, there is no unanimously accepted differentiation between projected and perceived DI (Agusti, 2018). From the point of the hermeneutic circle of representation (CoR), DI circulates as a closed hermeneutic circle where the boundaries between projected and perceived images are not very clear (Hunter, 2016; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013; Urry, 1990b). For them, DI is continuously produced and consumed in one hermeneutic circle. CoR is a well-recognised theory that provides useful insights into understanding and explaining tourists' behaviour

(Jenkins, 2003; Caton and Santos, 2008; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013). CoR enables us to understand how projected and perceived DI interactively exist and that incorporates the role of different information sources in DI formation. Hence, the concept, model, and arguments of CoR are explored below.

From the tourist perspective, Urry (1990a) refers to representation as the 'tourist gaze' or, broadly, as the visual consumption. He argues that the tourists' experiences are important to them only because they are in a distinct visual environment from what they are daily exposed to and so tourists find such locations unusual (Urry, 1992). Hence, tourist consumption is primarily visual (Urry, 1990a). Different types of tourists employ different gazes because tourism is a multi-faceted phenomenon that relates to social and cultural elements of contemporary societies (Urry 1990a, 1990b, 1992, 2002). The gaze is socially constructed "through signs and tourism involves the collection of such signs" (Urry, 1990a:27). And "photography gives shape to travel. (...) Indeed, much tourism becomes in effect a search of photogenic; travel is a strategy for the accumulation of photographs (...)" (Urry, 2002:128). Hence, Urry (1990b,2002) argues that tourists' involvement in tourism is much of a hermeneutic circle, where tourists are seeking what they have seen prior to travelling through promotions or media; and capturing those in their photography, which they would then show to others after returning. Though not using the exact terms, by the notion of the hermeneutic circle, Urry (1990b,2002) relates how image projections influence the perceived images of potential travellers and, then, how travellers influence future travellers through their photographic representations. Thus, the hermeneutic circle concept provides a suitable perspective to compare the projected and perceived DI (Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013). Jenkins (2003) presents the concept in a diagram by proposing the circle of representation (CoR) as a model to understand tourists' behaviour. She proposes this model as an application of Hall's (1997) circuit of culture and Urry's (1990b, 2002) hermeneutic circle (Figure 2.6).

**Figure 2.6: CoR by Jenkins**



**Source: Jenkins, 2003: 308** (Numbers added)

According to the model, tourists form a perceived image of the destination before travel (component 2) through exposure to the projected images (component 1). Initially these images are projected by both the induced (component 5) and autonomous image formation agents (e.g., news media and popular culture). These projected images shape potential tourists' perceptions of host cultures and destinations (Caton and Santos, 2008). With these perceptions (component 2), tourists visit the main attractions (component 3) seen in the projected images. Tourists travel to destinations to gaze at the landscapes, scenery, people, or any attribute of places that they expect to find within that space to which they were priorly exposed through the visual representations of image projections (Garrod, 2009; Urry, 1990b, 2002). Such represented places and attributes receive the status of an icon (Garrod, 2009).

At the icons visited, tourists take photographs to record their experiences (component 4). Through their photographing efforts, tourists are consciously or unconsciously trying to capture scenes that replicate their existing perceptions that are developed based on projected images seen before the visit (Jenkins, 2003; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013). But these visual captures are tourists' versions of

what they had seen originally in projected images before their visit (Urry, 1990b, 2002). After returning [or while at the destination (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019)], tourists will either show or share these photographs with their families and friends as proof of their visit (Jenkins, 2003; Urry, 1990b, 2002). The inner layer of the arrows in the model depicts the completion of a cycle. Then photographs shared by tourists will also contribute to the image projections (shown through the arrow from component 4 to 1), which causes the cycle to re-start by influencing the perceived images held by other individuals. The outer layer of arrows depicts this re-start of the next cycle/s. This process aids the gazes to be endlessly reproduced and recaptured, acting as a circle, a circle of representation (Urry, 1990b, 2002; Jenkins, 2003).

By empirically testing the model, researchers have found similarities between the projected images (e.g., DMO promotional material) and perceived images of the tourist under different conditions (e.g., different tourist groups, different destinations, and different platforms facilitating image projecting and perceiving) and found evidence to confirm the presence of a “hermeneutic circle of representation” in the tourism context (see, Caton and Santos, 2008; Garrod, 2009; Jenkins, 2003; Mak, 2017; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013). Recently, researchers have shown more interest in examining the online representations of destinations by responding to the changes in the technological environment and consumer preferences. For example, early researchers have studied photographic samples obtained from conventional media (e.g., Caton and Santos, 2008; Garrod, 2009; Jenkins, 2003), while more recent researchers tend to study online images such as UGC (e.g., Mak, 2017; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013). Further, based on recent changes in the technological and communication environments, researchers have suggested modifications to the Jenkin’s (2003) CoR model as well. For example, Balomenou and Garrod (2019) suggest removing the split between the society and individual. Technological advancements have made it possible for individuals to communicate with society in real-time and travellers no longer wait until they return home to show their travel pictures to others. Rickly (2019), suggests an additional arrow from icons photographed to marketers to show that tourists share images on social media and



post reviews to eWOM websites by supporting, challenging, or amending the DMO image projections.

In summary, the tourism studies on the hermeneutic circle of representation have commonly agreed that tourists, who are exposed to the representations of host cultures and people through projected images, try to confirm the images during their visits. Then, these tourists reproduce their perceived images through their photographs by closing the hermeneutic CoR. Accordingly, Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell (2018), argue that “DI is a complex social construct, resulting from two-way mutual influence of projected (supply-side) and perceived (demand-side) images” (p.238). Tourists actively contribute to DI formation narratively, visually, and/or in the form of audio through UGC (Munar, 2011). This recapturing enables tourists to become active participants in this circular process of cultural production and reproduction, and they themselves act as tourist destination promoters (Caton and Santos, 2008; Jenkins, 2003; Mak, 2017). With the popularity of social media (SM) and the development of mobile technologies (e.g., smartphones, self-photographing (Selfie) facilities), tourists’ contribution to UGC has significantly increased in the recent past. Consequently, tourists have become major contributors to image formation (Munar, 2011) and co-creators of DI (Mak, 2017).

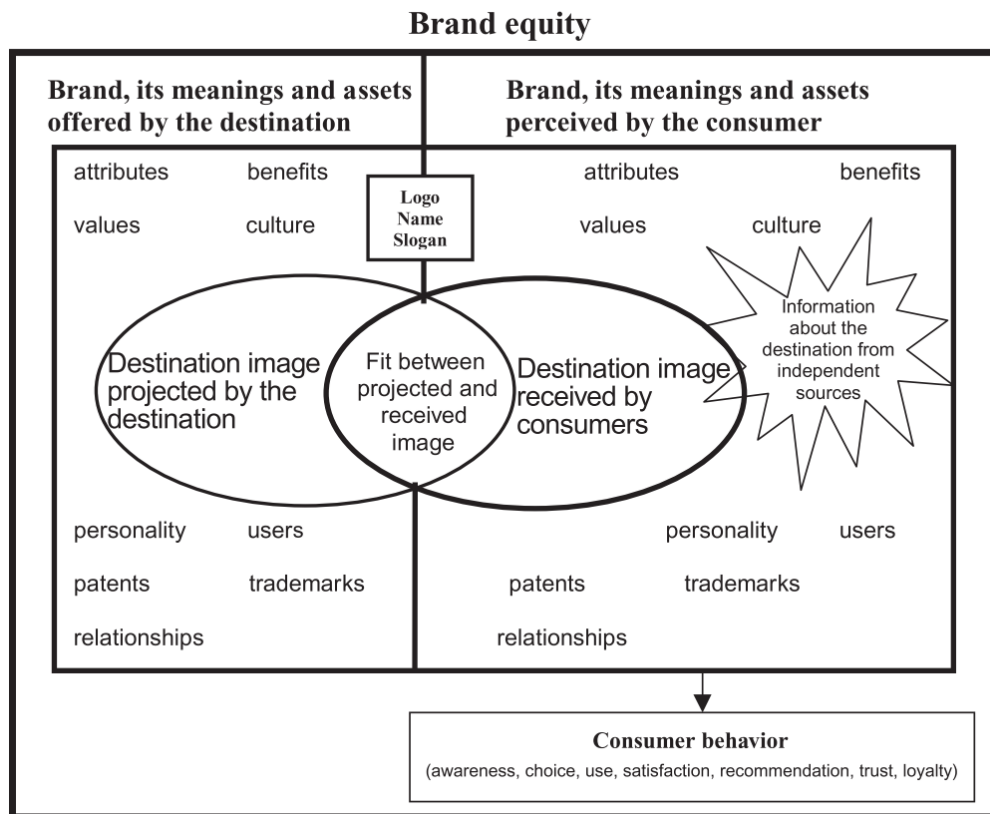
Hence, UGC predicts to challenge the destination branding ability in tailoring and framing the DI (Munar, 2011). Traditional DI formation and marketing are also challenged (Munar 2011; Wise and Farzin, 2018). As discussed previously, UGC, which facilitates eWOM, can be identified as one of the major challenges destination marketers have to face in today’s information-intense tourism industry. eWOM shared in SM is considered more credible than the WOM created by the destination (e.g., by the DMOs) (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). Nevertheless, there is a possibility of converting UGC’s influence on the DMO projected images into an opportunity by incorporating UGC into DMO DI projections (Munar, 2011; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). For instance, Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell (2018), argue through integrating UGC into their official promotional materials, the DMOs can increase tourist satisfaction and achieve a more congruent image by minimising the gap between projected and perceived images. However, not all destinations have

congruency between projected and perceived images (e.g., Hunter, 2016; Mak, 2017; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018) and such incongruencies have implications on DI as discussed below.

#### **2.4.4 Congruity between Projected and Perceived Image**

Informative promotions from the supply side aiming to provide knowledge of a destination are significant to induce potential tourists into a destination (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991). However, the projected image does not always demonstrate one-to-one correspondence with the received image (Tasci and Gartner, 2007). Tourists select a destination where their positive perceptions outweigh the negatives (Ahmed, 1991). The issues of representative dissonance or the congruity between perceived DI and DI projected via a wide array of information sources increasingly attract researchers' attention (Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). How tourists perceive the destination is strategically more important than what marketers know about the destination, because the travel decisions are based on traveller knowledge and the DI of a destination (Ahmed, 1991). So, assessing the perceived DI of tourists is important to ensure effective DI management (Gartner, 1994). Especially, now tourists have become image co-creators through their engagement with UGC, the regular and systematic monitoring of UGC would be key to effective DI management (Mak, 2017). Tasci and Kozak's (2006) DI formation model, which is focused on destination brand equity (Figure 2.7), effectively depicts correspondence between the projected and the perceived DI.

**Figure 2.7: DI Formation Model by Tasci and Kozak (2006)**



Source: Tasci and Kozak (2006:213)

The model demonstrates that the tourist behaviour (e.g., awareness, choice, use, satisfaction, recommendation, trust, and loyalty) is influenced by: i) How tourists perceive the brand meanings and assets projected by the destination; and, ii) how tourists are influenced by the information received from independent sources (autonomous agents). The common area formed by collapsing the set, shows the fit or commonalities between the projected and perceived images. The size of this common area demonstrates the degree of success achieved by the destination's marketing activities and the level of impact it has on tourist satisfaction (Tasci and Kozak, 2006).

The match between the pre-visit perceptions built based on all information sources (projected image) and re-evaluated image after visiting the destination would trigger positive or negative reactions of the tourist thereby leading to positive or negative re-evaluated DI (see Selby and Morgan, 1996; Vaughan and Edwards, 1999). While

positive DI has an affirmative relationship with the purchase decision, negative DI adversely affects potential tourists' decision-making (Selby and Morgan, 1996). The periodic monitoring of projected and perceived DI is, hence, suggested to identify and rectify negative DIs (Selby and Morgan, 1996). Image incongruity occurs when DI as projected by DMO is different from realities as perceived by tourists (Mak, 2017). The DMOs attempting to project desirable attributes of destination, while having a larger incongruity with perceived images, weaken DMO promotions rather than strengthen them (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). The closer the projected image and perceived image are to each other, the more it is considered better (Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). So, for decades the focus of destination marketers was to alter the perceived DI to closely align with the destination's desired position (Ahmed, 1991). To be successful, destination marketers should be able to convince "tourists to view a destination in the manner intended by the destination's marketers" (Ahmed, 1991:25). Though the degree to which negative images can be changed by the destination is not specific, countering these negative images is critical to attracting potential tourists to the destination (Selby and Morgan, 1996). The chapter next moves to examine the negative image and its specific impact on developing countries.

## **2.5. Negative DI and Developing Countries**

DI has been classified in many ways as rich or poor, and open or closed (Avraham and Ketter, 2016). Kotler et al. (1993) classify DI into six categories as positive, weak, negative, mixed, contradictory, or overtly active. Favourable or positive DI is crucial to attract more tourists to a destination and to assure continuous tourism growth amidst the competitiveness between the destinations (Ahmed, 1991; Morakabati et al., 2014; Uysal et al., 2011). Maintaining a positive image is also challenging (Uysal et al., 2011). Similarly, negative DI is the main cause of failure to attract enough tourists to many destinations (Ahmed, 1991). Especially, many developing countries suffer from negative DIs (Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Martinez and Alavares, 2010; Ryu, et al., 2013; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b). Meanwhile, the tourism industry is identified as a significant contributor to improving the socioeconomic conditions of developing countries (e.g., Martinez and Alavares, 2010;

Novelli et al., 2012). Despite the importance and the efforts put in, compared to developed countries, most developing countries are struggling to succeed as expected in their tourism industry. Identification of the underlying reasons behind tourism failures of developing countries and to suggesting a way out has attracted much researcher attention over past decades (e.g., Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Ayikoru, 2015; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Echtner and Prasad, 2003; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b). The main drawback behind the lack of tourism growth has been identified as the negative DI of these developing countries (Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Grosspietsch, 2006; Martinez and Alavares, 2010; Ryu, et al., 2013; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b).

Incidents such as terrorism, crime-related incidents, natural disasters (Fourie et al., 2020; Novelli et al., 2012), epidemic outbreaks (Novelli et al., 2012), corruption (Fourie et al., 2020), war and civil/political unrest (Mansfeld and Pizam, 2006) create negative DIs for destinations. Such incidents present threats to tourists' safety, which is an important prerequisite to attracting tourists (Fourie et al. 2020; Mansfeld and Pizam, 2006; Patwardhan et al., 2019). Higher perceived safety generates greater positive WOM, revisit intention and, ultimately, loyalty to the destination (Patwardhan, et al. 2019). In examining the developing countries, negative images of most of the developing countries were created mainly due to the above mentioned relatively uncontrollable reasons in the first place (see, Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b; Martinez and Alavares, 2010). Negative occurrences would attract negative media reporting (Avraham, 2016; Ryu et al., 2013, Mansfeld and Pizam, 2006; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b). Most of these media reports either distort or exaggerate the situation and may not be congruent with reality (Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016) and would receive extra popularity through WOM and eWOM (Ryu et al., 2013). This negative image shared widely would negatively influence tourists' decision-making process (Selby and Morgan, 1996). Even though it is difficult to control how the media and press would publish such occurrences (Kotler and Gartner, 2004), it is important to attend to DI corrections immediately after a

crisis (Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016). Unfortunately, these negative DIs have been left unattended by most developing countries (e.g., Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b). The lack of government support, positive attitude towards the tourism industry and the inadequate knowledge about destination management of these countries have been found to be to the main barriers in countering persisting negative images (e.g., Alam and Paramati, 2016; Hossain and Islam, 2019; Khanom and Buckley, 2015; Markwella et al., 2017; Novelli et al., 2012; Zahra, 2012). Most of them have not made enough communication effort, and inadequately used new media communication strategies that present new opportunities to DI recovery (e.g., Hossain and Islam, 2019; Khalid and Chowdhury, 2018; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Zahra, 2012). A negative DI unattended for a long period leads to the creation and dissemination of negative stereotypes of the destination (Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Kotler and Gartner, 2004). A stereotype differs from an image, because “A stereotype suggests a widely held image that is highly distorted and simplistic and that carries a favourable or unfavourable bias” (Kotler et al., 2002:229). Once formed, negative stereotypes are difficult to change (Ahmed, 1991). Avraham and Ketter (2016) distinguish between destinations with short-term negative DI to those with cumulated negative DI as follows:

“For places with a strong and positive image and with few crises in their near past, a new crisis will result in a short-lived impact on their image, which will soon be forgotten. In contrast, places in the developing world that suffer from stereotypes and problematic images – due to a history of previous crises – might respond very differently. For such places, the new sudden crisis will trigger the cumulative prolonged negative image, and “reinforce” the negative image.” (Avraham and Ketter, 2016:158).

Accordingly, Avraham and Ketter (2016) classify negative DI into two:

- i) Negative DI due to an *unexpected and short-term crisis* such as a natural disaster or terror attack (Avraham and Ketter, 2016), (e.g., 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami disaster for Thailand and Maldives); and,
- ii) *accumulated image crisis* (or extended negative DI or prolonged negative DI), which is created due to long-lasting issues such as

continuous civil war, high crime rates, political instability, etc., which cumulates over the years to create a negative image (Avraham and Ketter, 2016). The impacts of such issues are more severe and have more long-term effects than a short-term crisis (Kotler, et al., 2002).

Compared to the accumulated image crisis, strategies to overcome short term image crisis are common in the DI and destination crisis management literature (e.g., Carlsen and Hughes, 2008; Mansfeld and Pizam, 2006; Ryu et al., 2013). The interest of this thesis is on the accumulated image crisis or the prolonged negative image<sup>3</sup>, which is more common in developing countries suffering from tourism growth (Avraham and Ketter, 2013; 2016). The literature on the components of prolonged negative DI, and strategies suggested to overcome such prolonged negative DI including the role of UGC is presented below.

A prolonged negative DI of developing countries constitutes four main components as follows (Avraham and Ketter, 2016):

- i.) Negative Stereotypes - Stereotypes are also referred to as 'closed images', where no new characteristics are added to the core image established on a destination (Avraham and Ketter, 2016). Most developing countries, with varying degrees, are portrayed as dangerous, primitive, not hygienic, dirty, polluted, over-crowded, high crime, and violent places, with uncivilised and uneducated people.
- ii.) Generalisations - When the negative stereotypes are believed by most people from developed countries, which is the source market of generating many tourists, these stereotypes tend to generalise to an entire continent or a region (Avraham and Ketter, 2016). Such may lead to recall the developing destinations as dangerous places with low quality of life. So, "the effect of the negative image can be generalised to affect other countries and entire region" (Taylor, 2006: 180).

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<sup>3</sup> The term prolonged negative DI will be used throughout the thesis to refer to accumulated image crisis or extended negative image.

- iii.) Negative occurrences as part of the nature of developing countries - Negative and incomplete media reports facilitate the above generalisations causing negative occurrences to be viewed as an inherent part of such developing countries.
- iv.) 'Us vs. them' perceptions - With generalised negative stereotypes, residents of developing countries are perceived fundamentally differently from developed countries; i.e., residents in developed countries as educated, rational, and advanced, and residents in developing countries are the opposite. Bender et al. (2013) found there is no such discrimination towards a developed country from other developed countries since none considers the other as a minority.

Accordingly, negative stereotypes on developing countries are created when the destination management did not attend to reduce the impacts of negative media reports pertaining to past crisis over a period. These negative stereotypes will be deeply rooted in the memories of potential tourists and will come to the surface when a new crisis occurs. So, the DIs of these developing countries are damaged soon after a new crisis. The negative country image of developing countries is a reason for the negative perceptions held by potential tourists about these destinations (Martinez and Alavares, 2010). Hence, prolonged negative DI has become a common scenario in these developing countries and acts as a major barrier to reaching their full tourism potential.

Previous research attention on negative images that arise due to short-term crises is comparatively higher than examining the prolonged negative DI of developing countries in the literature. Ahmed (1991) argues that tourists' evaluation of the received DI is subjective based on their travel purpose, and psychographic variables (e.g., travel experience) and, hence, negative DI correction strategies should also focus on changing the identified target market's beliefs of the destination (Ahmed, 1991). He has suggested a six-step process to correct negative DIs as follows:

- i) Capitalise on positive images of components - Rather than concentrating on the overall negative image, identify the positive components in the



destination that matches the target market's travel purpose (e.g., natural resources) and capitalise on them.

- ii) Schedule mega-events - e.g., sporting events, cultural festivals, and food fairs
- iii) Organise familiarisation tours to parties, which can greatly influence travel decisions (e.g., travel writers, tour operators, and tour agents).
- iv) Use selective promotion - downplaying negative aspects while highlighting the positive aspects of all advertising and promotions. Manipulating travel writers and media can be a strategy under this.
- v) Host international travel and tourism conversions.
- vi) Take the advantage of a negative image - Encourage tourists to visit the destination to evidence the negative occurrence. (e.g., US travellers to USSR due to curiosity to see once 'evil empire').

These strategies either suggest accepting the negative DI and acknowledging them in promotions (e.g., point vi) or suggest ignoring them or downplaying the negative DI in their promotions. Avraham and Ketter (2013) identify two types of media strategies in use towards correcting prolonged negative DI, namely the cosmetic approach and the strategic approach. The cosmetic approach exerts to change the DI without changing the reality of the destination. Such strategies include ignoring the image crisis problem, disassociation from the problematic location, association with prestigious locations, acknowledging a negative destination image, delivering a counter-message to the negative stereotype, spinning the negative characteristic to a positive, and ridiculing the stereotype (Avraham and Ketter, 2013). On the other hand, the strategic approach to media strategies deals with both the DI and the reality. They are not only higher in willingness to accept and confront the negative DI, but are also willing to change the physical reality, which made the strategic approach more successful. Such strategies are more aligned to the extent of change, such as hosting spotlight events, hosting events that spin liabilities into assets, tackling the problematic reality, and branding contrary to stereotypes. (Avraham and Ketter, 2013). So, they argue that crisis communication strategies and techniques must be at the core of the marketing strategies of developing countries even when they are not facing any crisis at present (Avraham and Ketter, 2016). It is suggested to use the

source, message, and audience strategies to manage the destination's public and media images to counter the negative perceptions and shatter negative stereotypes (Avraham, 2004; Avraham and Ketter, 2016). Such destinations can use regular destination marketing which are used by destinations without DI issues, only after completely recovering from prolonged negative DI.

The literature commonly suggests image repair strategies from the supplier's perspective and the role of the DMOs in such (e.g., Carlsen and Hughes, 2008; Avraham and Ketter, 2016). Internet, including social media, is recognised as an important alternative source strategy (e.g., Avraham and Ketter, 2016). However, the potential role of UGC in overcoming negative DI is heavily overlooked. For example, Avraham and Ketter, (2016) who specifically examined source, message, and media strategies to overcome negative DIs, limit the role of the internet and SNS as a source that DMOs can use to communicate DMO messages. However, the potential role played by UGC in projecting DI cannot be undermined due to the increasing role played by travellers as DI co-creators, especially when consumers' trust in non-marketer-controlled sources is considerably higher than the marketer-controlled sources (Han, et al., 2018). UGC is cost effective as the content is voluntarily shared in SM and has a wider reach among the target audience when compared to that of DMO promotional reach. In addition, most promotional tools including advertising campaigns are not strong enough to correct the prolonged negative images and induce travellers to such destinations (Anholt, 2006 cited in Avraham and Ketter, 2013). Nevertheless, among the large body of literature addressing UGC in DI formation, the potential role of UGC in overcoming negative DI is not appropriately conceptualised or adequately explored. This leaves a knowledge gap worth exploring. Accordingly, this thesis aims to examine the role of user-generated content (UGC) in developing countries with negative destination images (DI) from the lens of the Tourist Area Life Cycle (TALC) model. The knowledge gaps identified through this literature review are summarised below.

## **2.6 Summary**

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature to theoretically situate this thesis. This thesis aims to examine how UGC contributes to the destination image DI formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. To begin with this chapter explored UGC broadly in the context of web 2.0 infrastructure and its role in marketing generally. Then the destination life cycle models were explored and the TALC by Butler (1980) was elaborated as the thesis intends to make theoretical contributions in this area. Next, the literature on DI and its formation was explored. This chapter then explored the literature on negative DI and the role of UGC in addressing negative DIs. Critical examination of the TALC and DI literature presented knowledge gaps worthy of exploring. These are elaborated in above sections and further in other chapters (e.g., Chapters 1, 6, and 7) and so are not extensively explained, here, in order to avoid repetition. Firstly, there is a lack of literature on destinations in the early stages of the TALC and, particularly, of developing countries located in the early stages. Secondly, TALC literature is limited to exploring destination marketing promotions with a narrow focus on advertising expenditure and efforts at each stage. Thirdly, the ability of UGC, shared through social media to promote these destinations, is limitedly explored. Based on these gaps which were identified, three research objectives were formed. The next chapter explains the methodology of this thesis.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

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### **3.1 Introduction**

The thesis aims to examine how user generated content (UGC) contributes to the destination image (DI) formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the tourism area life cycle (TALC). This thesis was carried out to achieve the three objectives below:

- I. To examine the impact of negative DI on the early stages of the TALC
- II. To explain the role of DMO and UGC DI projections on the DI of a destination in the early stages of the TALC
- III. To conceptualise the influence of UGC in the DMO's DI projections in the early stages of the TALC and also in mitigating negative DI

The context of developing countries with negative images in the early stages of the TALC is examined specifically in relation to Bangladesh as this country fits the selection criteria, which are discussed later in this chapter. This chapter first presents the ontological and epistemological grounding of the research, which lays the essential foundation for a social science researcher to justify the selection of methodologies and methods. The research was approached from a relativist ontological position with a social constructionism epistemology. Secondly, the chapter informs and justifies the methodology, which is the procedure of the research. Constructionism leads to qualitative research that aims to “understand how people make sense of their lives and their experiences” (Merriam, 2009:23). This thesis aims to understand the meanings and perceptions of tourism suppliers (DMOs) when projecting their destination for touristic consumption as well as meanings and perceptions of tourists on their tourist experiences. The context-specific meaning constructed by tourism suppliers and tourists was studied using a qualitative methodology, known as the critical visual methodology. Thirdly, the chapter justifies and explicates the data collection methods and analytical approaches selected. The data were collected using multiple methods. Multiple sources and independent measures to study the same improve the accuracy of interpretation and in-depth

understanding of the phenomenon in its real-world context (Denzin, 2012; Jick, 1979). The data were collected from: I) Travel-related visual images on Instagram, comprised of UGC and Bangladesh DMO's promotional materials; and, II) in-depth interviews with international travellers to Bangladesh and with an official of the Bangladesh Tourism Board representing the DMO. Tourism-specific and country-specific reports, statistics, and records also served as data collection tools. The chapter also covers steps taken to adhere to the ethical conduct of research. This study was conducted by adhering to Nottingham University's ethical procedures. The ethical approval to collect data from the above sources was obtained from the Nottingham University Business School Research Ethics Committee (Appendix 2). Instagram data used in this thesis were considered public. Using Instagram photos for non-profit educational purposes is considered a fair use of copyright work (Instagram Code of Conduct, 2020). Therefore, using Instagram photos as primary data in this thesis is considered ethical. The data were analysed using qualitative content analysis, cultural analytics, and thematic analysis. Further, the means to assure the validity and reliability of the data is explained under data analysis methods.

### **3.2 Research Philosophy: Ontology and Epistemology**

The research question was approached from a relativist ontological position with a social constructionism epistemology. The conceptual separation of epistemology and ontology is difficult. Both ontological and epistemological issues emerge together rather than one preceding the other (Crotty, 1998). Ontology is "the study of being" (Crotty, 1998:10). Based on the assumptions made about the form and nature of reality, Smith et al. (2012) identify four ontological perspectives: Realism, internal realism, relativism, and nominalism. Realism argues for a single truth that is waiting to be revealed. As per internal realism, truth exists, but it is obscure. In contrast, relativism argues for multiple truths, which are created by people. Nominalism argues that all facts are human creations and, hence, there are no truths (Smith et al., 2012). The research question of the study was approached from the ontological

position of relativism. Accordingly, the researcher believes that the “realities are apprehensible in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature (although elements are often shared among many individuals and even across cultures), and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994: 110-111). This is paired with an interpretivist epistemology that argues for the existence of multiple realities that are essentially mental, perceived, socially constructed, and subject to change because people actively create and interact to shape their environment (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988).

Epistemology is "a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know" (Crotty, 1998:8). It is a general set of assumptions about ways of inquiring into the nature of the world (Smith, et al., 2012). According to Crotty (1998), the three main epistemological stances are objectivism, constructionism, and subjectivism. Objectivists believe in the existence of objective truths waiting to be discovered (Crotty, 1998). For them, meanings and meaningful reality exist separately from human consciousness (Crotty, 1998). Subjectivists, on the other hand, believe the meaning is not discovered but created. For them, “meaning is imposed on the object by the subject”, where objects do not contribute to meaning making (Crotty, 1998:9). Constructionism rejects both the arguments of objectivists’ meaning discovery and subjectivists’ meaning creation. They believe that meaning is constructed as an act of interpretation resulting when human beings interact with the world (Crotty, 1998). Constructionism rejects the subjectivist argument of meaning imposed upon objects by the subject, without any interplay between subject and object. In contrast, constructionism views that "all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of the interaction between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context” (Crotty, 1998:42). For social constructionism, reality consists of ideas as well as the natural world. As such, social constructionism can take many orientations. Social constructionism is not self-explanatory and requires researchers to explain precisely what they mean and how they feature constructionism in their research (Pernecky, 2012). Hence, the social constructionism

orientation adapted to address the research objectives concerned with this thesis is as follows.

Tourism is seen as constructionism in action (Pernecky, 2012), as touristic spaces are social constructions (Cartier and Lew, 2005; McCabe and Marson, 2006; Rickly-Boyd et al., 2014). A DI is socially constructed. DI is defined as the individuals' or groups' mental representations of knowledge, beliefs, ideas, feelings, and overall perception of a destination. Destination marketers, government authorities, tourists, intermediaries, influencers, residents, service providers, and media contribute to this meaning-making process. This thesis mainly takes the supplier's perspective as the TALC is a supplier-oriented model. However, DI is understood as a complex and dynamic social construction with the image co-creation involvement of tourists. Travellers contribute to the construction of DIs through their engagement with UGC. The aim of this thesis concerns how UGC contributes to the DI formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. This thesis questions how UGC can be a viable supplement to build the DI of developing countries with negative DIs in the early stage of the TALC. This question is applied to the destination life cycle model.

When humans are described in constructionism, their engagement with the world and the meaning they derive from it should be set within a historical and social perspective (Crotty, 1998). Humans are born into a world of meaning and do not individually make sense of the world (Burr, 2015). Rather, they import meaning from culture and society (Crotty, 1998). Therefore, meaning and experience are not inherent within individuals but are socially produced and reproduced (Burr, 2015). Hence, Crotty (1998) argues that the interpretivist approach looks for "culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social lifeworld" (p.67). Accordingly, all reality (i.e., social, or natural/physical reality) is socially constructed as a meaningful reality (Crotty, 1998).

Speaking from a constructionism standpoint, Hall (1997) argues that representation acts as an essential part of the process of production and exchange of meanings between members living within a culture, where people use language, signs, and images that stand for or represent things. People make sense of the world by sharing



their experiences with others using language as a medium (Smith et al., 2012). So, the representation is the production of meaning through language, where language is not limited to written or spoken systems but also includes visual images, facial expressions, gestures, music, or any sound, word, image, or object that can carry and express meaning when organised with other signs into a system (Hall, 1997). These representations structure the way people behave in their everyday lives (Rose, 2016). The same applies to the behaviour of a tourist.

The social and cultural factors affect how tourists perceive the images projected by different information sources, including DMO image projections, and then they reconstruct the DI based on their touristic experiences. The tourists' construction of the destination is not limited to the tourist experience, but they also recreate the experience and destination by bringing the experience back to the domestic sphere (McCabe and Marson, 2006). Through sharing travel experiences with others, tourists contribute to the formation of perceived DI of other tourists. Tourists' perceptions on DI may change with this continuous learning gained through interactions with others and multiple travel experiences. Hence, multiple realities co-exist concerning on the DI. UGC shared on social media plays a vital role in providing a platform for this experience sharing. UGC facilitates continuous representations to be accumulated and reproduced.

Since tourism UGC is characterised by ease of access, popularity, and direct traveller participation to it, UGC is a reliable way to research DI (Li et al., 2022). However, out of three main categories of digitalised content - narrative, visual, and audio (Munar, 2011) - the narrative component of UGC is widely analysed compared to the visual and audio components (e.g., Kim et al., 2017; Li et al., 2022; Papapicco and Mininni, 2019; Xiang et al., 2017). "Compared to textual data, the photos uploaded by tourists involve a wealth of interesting information and are more informative in spatiotemporal attributes, providing a new perspective to study tourists and destinations" (Zhang et al., 2019: 595). Travel photographs can act as a vital means to close two significant cognitive gaps available in tourism research - between words and visuals, as well as researchers and participants (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019). Travel photos are a means of capturing reality and a powerful medium reflecting

tourists' perception of a destination (MacKay and Couldwell, 2004; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013). Importantly, travel photography can reveal the affective image of the destination, which otherwise is difficult to expose (Pan et al., 2014) and creates silent WOM (Fatanti and Suyadnya, 2015). Mak (2017) argues that a relatively higher percentage of affective dimensions was identified in the photographic data than in the textual data by confirming that visuals are a more effective medium to convey affective DI. Hence, visuals were identified as a reliable way to research DI to answer the research question of this thesis. The following section discusses the selection of visual methodology to guide the research design of this thesis.

### **3.3 Selection of Visual Methodology**

Photography not only acts as a record of the tourism experience but also as a means of performing tourism with the power to transfer rich, complex, and powerful meanings (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019). For example, Lo and McKercher (2015) argue that photography and tourism are linked intrinsically "as if one cannot travel without being engaged in some forms of photography" (p. 105). Further, with tourism becoming a search for the photogenic, tourism has turned into a strategy to accumulate photographs (Urry, 1990). Arguing tourism as the visual consumption of the physical environment, Urry (1992) regards the eye as central to the tourist system and that tourist photography is a social construction.

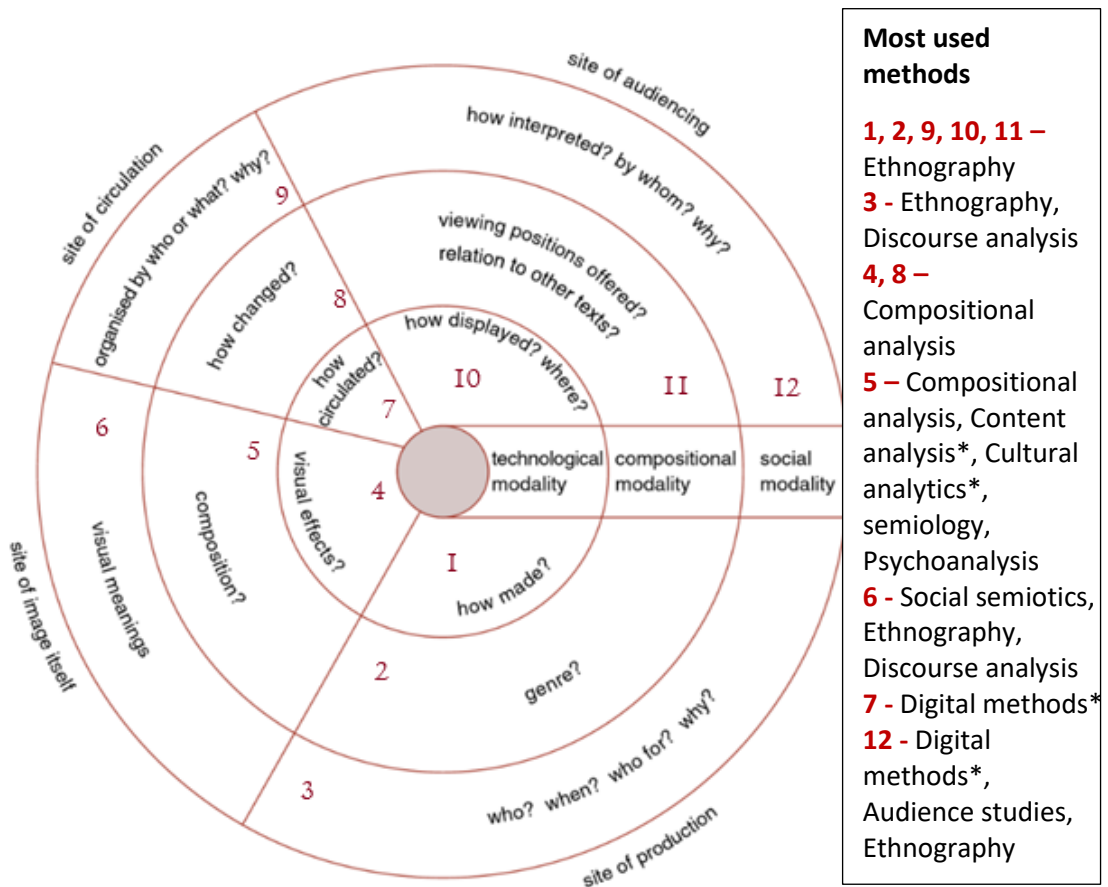
Writers from diverse disciplines regard visual as "central to the cultural construction of social life in contemporary western societies" (Rose, 2016:2). Seeing has become a modern form of knowledge in understanding the world. With the wide availability, access, and development in information and communication technology, the above claim may be equally valid to most other societies. By referring to the very common language use of 'do you see?' or 'see what I mean' to refer to what is 'known' in everyday conversations, Jenks (1995) argues that "looking, seeing and knowing have become perilously intertwined" (p.1). Hence, vision and visibility have become the core of understanding the world around us.

Vision refers to the physiological capability to see via the human eye and visibility refers to how it is seen, or the scopic regime. Visibility includes “how we see, how we are able, allowed or made to see, and how we see this seeing and the unseeing therein” (Foster, 1988: ix cited in Rose, 2016:3). Visibility and scopic regime, which share similar meaning argue that what is seen and how it is seen are culturally constructed (Rose, 2016). Moreover, since the understanding of visual images is embedded in the social world, visual images are comprehensible only when that social embedding is taken into an account (Rose, 2016). These social constructions occur through different practices, technologies, and knowledge and, hence, visual imagery is never innocent or transparent (Rose, 2016). For this very reason, a critical approach is demanded to interpret visual images. A critical approach requires visual data to be approached by incorporating cultural significance, social practices, and power relations embedded with them (Rose, 2016). Accordingly, a critical visual methodology was used to approach the research question, which is presented below. Subsequently, the data collection and analytical methods are presented.

### **3.3.1 Critical Visual Methodology**

A critical approach to visual images requires the researcher to consider the agency of the image, social practices, and effects of images’ circulation and viewing as well as reflecting on the variability of various audiences’ views and academic criticism (Rose, 2016). Accordingly, a critical visual methodology must concern the social effects of visual materials under study. Rose (2016) argues that social effects of images are made at four sites, namely the sites of production, the image itself, circulation, and audiencing. Rose (2016) identifies three different aspects or modalities under each of these sites. They are technological, compositional, and social modalities. Rose (2016) proposes a framework guiding the interpretation of visual materials by combining these sites and modalities and further suggests the most used methods to interpret the visual data under each of these sites and modality combinations (Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3.1: Sites and Modalities for Interpreting Visual Material**



*\* These are the methods used in this thesis to study the selected site-modality combinations, which are discussed in the next section 3.3.2.*

Source: Rose, 2016: 25 (Numbers 1-12 were added)

A visual researcher can use the above framework to identify which site and modality combinations are relevant to interpret the images under study to answer the identified research questions and subsequently on deciding suitable methods. For instance, technological modality at the site of production (combination 1) argues that the meaning of an image is determined by the technologies used to make the image. That is, what kind of camera, film, and developing process a photographer used, and the photograph's apparent truthfulness on whether the subjects are posing in front of the camera or whether naturally. The compositional modality at the site of production (combination 2) relates to the genre of the image. Ethnography is the most used method to study both the above-mentioned site and modality

combinations. However, slavishly following the most frequently used method is not expected; rather researchers are free to use other suitable methods (Rose, 2016).

Apart from Rose's (2016) book on 'Visual Methodologies', other seminal work on visual methodology includes books such as Banks and Zeitlyn's (2015) *Visual Methods in Social Research*, Pink's (2007) *Doing Visual Ethnography*, Pink's (2012) edited volume *Advances in Visual Methodology*, and Van Leeuwen and Jewitt's (2001) edited volume *The Handbook of Visual Analysis*. While most of these academic works are either limited to discussing either specific methodologies or methods (e.g., Pink, 2007; 2012 emphasises on ethnography), Rose (2016) proposes a clear framework guiding social researchers in selecting appropriate visual methods based on the research questions and visual material to hand. Hence, this thesis uses Rose's (2016) analysis on critical visual methodology to guide its theoretical formation. More complete meaning interpretations require considering several site-modality combinations (Ownby, 2013). This thesis investigates multiple site-modality combinations to achieve the stated research objectives as explained in the following section. The selected methods are explained in detail in the later sections of this chapter (sections 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7).

### **3.3.2 Selecting Site-Modality Combinations and Methods**

Image data for the analysis were collected from Bangladesh's DMO promotional media and from Bangladesh-inspired travel UGC on Instagram. Husbands (1983) cited in Agusti (2018) suggests that the distinction between attraction and attractiveness should not be overlooked when analysing tourist photographs. The attraction is the space visited where photographic content is generated and shared in UGC (Agusti, 2018). The attractiveness is what is projected by the DMO in its visual media (Agusti, 2018). Such examination of attraction and attractiveness is essential to address the research objectives of this thesis. For example, to explain the role of DI projections by the DMO and UGC of a destination in the early stages of the TALC, both the projected DI by DMO (i.e., attractiveness) and perceived DI in UGC (i.e., attraction) were examined together with the level of alignment between provided insights in

order to address this objective. The process of collecting visual images as study data is presented later in the chapter (subheading 3.5.1). Appropriate analytical methods were chosen according to the identified site-modality combinations suitable to address the research objectives as summarised in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Chosen Site-Modality Combinations**

<b>Selected sites to study</b>	<b>Selected modalities to study</b>	<b>Nature of the data to be analysed</b>
Site of image	Compositional	Images
Site of circulation	Technical	
Site of audiencing	Social	
Site of production	Social	In-depth interviews

Source: Compiled based on Rose (2016)

The site of the image itself is the main interest of meaning-making for this thesis because it intends to see how UGC can be a viable supplement to build the DI of developing countries with negative DIs in the early stages of the TALC. Compositionality is argued as the most important modality that affects the image itself, which refers to the specific material qualities of a visual object such as content, colour, and spatial organisation (Rose, 2016). So, the focus of this thesis is on the compositional modality of the site of the image itself (combination 5 in Figure 3.1). Rose (2016) argues that content analysis and cultural analytics are the best methods to study the compositional modality of the site of the image.

However, content analysis has several limitations, which requires to be minimised to obtain richer and critical interpretations (Bell, 2004; Echtner, 1999; Pritchard and Morgan, 2001; Rose, 2016). Firstly, content analysis alone is incapable of making judgments about the significance, effects, or interpreted meaning of a domain of representation (Bell, 2004). To overcome this limitation, connotative elements implied by the image's composition were identified and interpreted (e.g., Hunter,

2012, 2016) through qualitative content analysis. Content analysis can be used to reveal the cognitive component of the DI since it is successful in revealing the patterns of destination attributes denoted in visual images (Jenkins, 2003, Hunter, 2016; Stepchencova and Zhan, 2013). However, it is difficult to reveal feelings or emotions attached to the images through content analysis, especially when no other explanatory text is associated with or analysed. So, content analysis is inadequate to unleash affective DI. Capturing both cognitive and affective image components of DI together provides a more accurate picture of DI (Agusti, 2018; Martin and Bosque, 2008). So, cultural analytics, which is an automatic computer-based version of content analysis was performed together with content analysis. Justifications for using content analysis and cultural analytics as data analysis methods for this thesis are explained in sections 3.5 and 3.6.

Thirdly, in its efforts to assure replicability through inter-coder reliability, content analysis assumes that different viewers see the same image the same way (Rose, 2016). This is hardly a possibility due to the individual differences in image interpretations that are socially and culturally constructed. Cultural analytics, also, cannot overcome this; because, it is only replacing the coder with software. Both methods ignore the audience's creativity (Rose, 2016). To overcome this limitation, interviews were conducted (e.g., Lutz and Collins, 1991). The use of a traditional method such as interviews alongside photographs adds valuable insights into tourism and enhances the results (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019); it also enables overcoming some shortfalls of the visual image analysis methods (Rose, 2016). In-depth interviews were conducted with two types of informants: An official representing Bangladesh DMO; and, international tourists to Bangladesh. Interviewing as a data collection method and analysing interview data through a thematic analysis is explained in section 3.7.

In-depth interviews were to investigate the social modality of the site of production (e.g., Lutz and Collins, 1991). Examining the social modality of the site of production adds more value to the interpretations, where social modality incorporates not only the social aspects but any economic, political, or social institutes and practices surrounding an image (Rose, 2016). The site of production refers to where an image

is made, and the site of production of all of the visual images under this study is in and on Bangladesh that is circulated and audienceed online<sup>4</sup>. Hence, digital methods were combined when and where necessary. For example, digital methods were used in the selection of online sources, sampling, obtaining visual images from online platforms, and sorting such images, which are explained in section 3.5. The use of interviewing and digital methods set off the fourth limitation of content analysis and cultural analytics, which is that their focus is on the image itself by failing to capture other sites: production, circulation or audienceing (Rose, 2016). DI formation is inherently linked with the sites of circulation, audienceing, and production. Various agents projecting images through multiple sources of information contribute to DI formation. Potential tourists perceive the images based on their personal, social, and cultural factors. Since the tourists are not passive receivers of information, they also engage with the DI co-creation through their UGC shared on social media. Since the particular interest of the study is images circulated online (e.g., UGC on social media and DMO visual media) digital methods were applied to examine the technological modality at the site of circulation (combination 7) and social modality at the site of audienceing (combination 12) to collect, analyse and interpret data. Accordingly, visual images were interpreted to understand the selected modalities under three sites namely, the image itself, circulation, and audienceing. Insights into the social modality of the site of production were gained through in-depth interviews.

Further, in collecting and handling both types of data, i.e., online images and interview data, adhering to ethical practices was essential. The following section explains how the researcher handled ethical issues and assured ethical conduct in collecting, handling, storing, using, and disposing of data.

### **3.3.3 Ethical Practices**

Obtaining ethical approval is a mandate when and where the research involves the participation of human participants and their data (UON, 2019). Ethical approval was

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<sup>4</sup> *Selection of Bangladesh as the appropriate research context for this thesis is discussed in section 3.4.*



obtained from the Business School Research Ethics Committee to collect data from the above methods and sources (Appendix 2). In addition, researchers are expected to follow the ethical behaviours set out in the Nolan Principles, namely selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership (UON, 2019). By adhering to the ethical conduct of research, informed consent was obtained from the interview participants. Participants were furnished with the Business School Research Ethics Committee approved copy of the information for the participant's sheet as well as the privacy notice at the first instant of communication. These forms were briefly explained to the participants at the beginning of the interviews. Participants were free to withdraw themselves or their data from the research, during or within three months after the interview (King et al., 2019). Written consent was obtained from the participants through the participant consent form, where possible, or otherwise via email.

Online images collected were publically available. Instagram data were collected based on its code of conduct (2020) considering the use of public Instagram photos for non-profit educational purposes as fair use of copyright work. Ethical practices followed in collecting and handling Instagram images are explained in detail under sections 3.5.2.2 Sampling (under Step 2: Drawing the Sample), 3.5.2.3 Obtaining Visual Image Sample, and 3.5.2.4 Data Arrangement. All the collected data were stored on the hard disk of a password-protected desktop in a locked office, in a password-protected personal laptop, and in a pen drive. The researcher is to remove and destroy all the data collected for the study after the lapse of time required to obtain the degree and complete the publications.

Before explaining how the data collection and analysis are executed, the chapter next presents the context of the study. Bangladesh was selected because it is a destination in the early stages of its TALC with prolonged negative DI. This section covers methods used to validate Bangladesh as a destination with a negative DI in the early stages of its TALC as, thus, an appropriate research context for the study.

### **3.4 Selecting Bangladesh as an Appropriate Research Context**

To achieve the aim of this thesis, which is to examine how UGC contributes to the DI formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC, Bangladesh was selected as the suitable destination among other potential destinations. The selected context must fit into the following criteria to fulfil the objectives of this study: I) A developing country, II) with a prolonged negative DI III) is in an early stage of its TALC. Additionally, the selected destination should be a country that recognises tourism as an industry and shows an interest in developing it to gain potential economic and social benefits.

Based on Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, The World Bank classifies world economies into three groups: Low-income (\$1,045 or less), middle-income (consists of lower-middle income from \$1,046 to \$4,095 and upper-middle income \$4,096 and \$12,695); and, high income (above \$12,695) (World Bank, 2022). Low and middle-income economies are considered developing countries (World Bank, 2022). A total of 137 countries are classified as developing countries with 27 low-income and 55 lower-middle and upper-middle income categories in 2022 (World Bank, 2022). Among them, most of the developing countries are in the Sub-Saharan African region where 45 out of 48 in the region are developing economies (World Bank data). Interestingly, the South Asian region is the only region without a single developed economy, with the Maldives being the only upper-middle-income country in the region in 2022. When selecting a developing country for this thesis the researcher decided to select one among the South Asian region due to the methodology and methods selected for the thesis. The main source of data is online images that are unaccompanied by text and analysed using qualitative content analysis. This requires some familiarity with the culture and the social setting of the selected destination. The researcher's ontological and epistemological beliefs of relativism and social constructionism, argue that people do not individually make sense of the world but import meaning from culture and society and, hence, meanings are socially produced and reproduced (Burr, 2015; Crotty, 1998). Since, the researcher is a national from a South Asian country, and familiar with the social, cultural, political, and economic conditions of the region, a country in this region was investigated for suitability.

Bangladesh attracted special attention because it is commonly cited in the literature as an example of a country with a negative DI over a period of years (e.g., Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Kotler et al., 1993; Kotler et al., 2002). Statistics further show that Bangladesh is one of the highest-growing economies in the region with rapid GDP growth (World Bank, 2019), but demonstrate the lowest tourism growth and tourism development in the region (UNWTO statistics; World Economic Forum (WEF), 2017). India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Nepal displayed high tourist performance in the region and Bhutan was excluded from the search because their policy is to discourage tourism rather than promote it. The two remaining countries of Pakistan and Afghanistan do not maintain any tourism records. Bangladesh further showed suitability to serve as the context for the thesis as Bangladesh's tourism authorities show a high interest in developing the tourism industry to gain economic and social benefits for the country (Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, 2021). Bangladesh demonstrates a high tourism potential (WEF, 2019) and is a country rich with natural beauty, including the world's longest natural unbroken sea beach; furthermore it is home to a unique historical and cultural heritage including five world heritage sites (Zahra, 2012). A portion of Sundarbans, the world-renowned mangrove formation is located in Bangladesh, which is a habitat of Bengal Tigers and home to wild heritage sites (Khanom and Buckley, 2015).

By satisfying all the above-mentioned criteria Bangladesh is identified as a suitable context for this thesis. However, further steps were taken to identify the TALC stage of Bangladesh to validate the country as an appropriate research context for the thesis, which requires a destination with a negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. Methods used to locate Bangladesh in the TALC are explained below. Results are presented in Chapter 4, the first analysis chapter.

To obtain the shape of Bangladesh's TALC, six conceptual and measurement decisions proposed by Haywood (1986) were adopted (Gore et al., 2021; Lundtorp and Wanhill, 2001; McKercher and Wong, 2021; Pulina et al., 2006). They comprise: i) Defining a unit of analysis; ii) selecting a relevant market; iii) pattern and stages of the TALC; iv) identification of the area's shape in the life cycle; v) determination of the unit of measurement; and, vi) determination of the relevant time unit.

### ***i. Defining a unit of analysis***

The tourist area or unit of analysis has to be decided based on research objectives and the intended use of the information since there is no universally accepted unit of analysis or what is referred to by the term 'tourist area' in the model (see, Haywood, 1986; Singh, 2011). A wide variety of units were taken as the tourist area, including countries (e.g., Kubickova and Martin, 2020; McKercher and Wong, 2021), a territory within a country (e.g., regions, city, or town) (e.g., Berry, 2006; Gore et al., 2021; Hovinen, 2002; Lundtorp and Wanhill, 2001; Rodriguez et al., 2008), and specific tourist facilities (e.g., accommodations, attractions) (e.g., Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 2001; Pulina et al., 2006; Zhong et al., 2008). Since this thesis examines the destination image of Bangladesh as a developing country, the entire country of Bangladesh was taken as the unit of analysis. Different territories, attractions, or facilities within the country will not be separately examined.

### ***ii. Selecting a relevant market***

Here, also, the researcher has to select either the total market or a particular tourist type (e.g., domestic versus international), a distribution method, or a market segment (group, family, or individual) that is more appropriate to the researcher (Haywood, 1986). This thesis considers only the international tourist market. This decision is moot as there are no datasets available on the domestic tourist numbers of Bangladesh. Homogeneity was assumed for the international tourist market, so international tourists were treated as one homogeneous segment (see McKercher and Wong, 2021). Subsequently, the TALC is to be mapped using statistical data to identify the: iii) Pattern and stages of the TALC; and, iv) the TALC shape in the life cycle. Nevertheless, to map and obtain the shape of the TALC a pre-requisite is deciding the unit of measurement and the time unit. Hence, conceptual decisions v and vi are explained before iii and iv below.

#### ***v. & vi. The units of measurement and time***

Tourist population, tourist expenditure, or profitability are the measurement units originally suggested by Haywood (1986). However, researchers commonly face difficulties with obtaining adequate and accurate tourism industry-related data and statistics on the destinations (see, Gore et al., 2021; Lundtorp and Wanhill, 2001; McKercher and Wong, 2021; Pulina et. al., 2006). For example, Haywood (1986) suggested tourism profitability as the best data upon which to map the TALC. However, business profitability statistics are difficult to obtain (Haywood, 1986; Pulina et.al., 2006). Alternatively, the number of tourist arrivals (e.g., Gore et al., 2021; Haywood, 1986; McKercher and Wong, 2021; Zhong et al., 2008), change patterns in accommodation (e.g., Pulina, et al., 2006), and government expenditure on tourism (Getz, 1992) was commonly used as the measurement unit. The same issue is also there with the unit of time. The annual tourist arrival statistics of destination are the most common, accurate and reliable data sets available to obtain (e.g., McKercher and Wong, 2021; Gore et al., 2021).

In the case of Bangladesh obtaining most tourism-related data was difficult. Mapping the TALC requires a time series dataset/s on the unit of measurement (e.g., tourism numbers, government expenditure, or profitability) for a considerable number of years. Tourism industry-related data and statistics in the reports published by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the Bangladesh Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh tourism organisations, or elsewhere were found to be comparatively brief, limited, and dated (tourism numbers were given from 2006 to 2014). The most accurate, complete, and up-to-date datasets on international tourist numbers to Bangladesh extending for a considerable period of years (from 1995 to 2019) could only be obtained from the UNWTO reports. So, the unit of measurement was taken as international tourist numbers, and annual data as the time unit.

#### **iii. & iv. Identification of TALC shape and stages**

To identify the shape of Bangladesh's TALC, the annual growth rate of tourists and the smoothed data series is required (Gore et al., 2021; Haywood, 1986; McKercher

and Wong, 2021). So, a quantitative method had to be used to assure a more accurate mapping of Bangladesh's TALC position (e.g., Gore et al., 2021). UNWTO statistics on annual international tourist arrivals to Bangladesh for 25 years (1995 to 2019) were obtained and the data set was smoothed to control any anomalies before calculating the annual growth rates (see, Gore et al., 2021; McKercher and Wong, 2021). The simple exponential smoothing formula is as follows (Gore et al., 2021).

$$F_t = a A_{t-1} + (1 - a) F_{t-1}$$

where,

$F_t$  is the Forecasted demand for the period  $t$

$a$  is the smoothing constant.

$A_{t-1}$  is the actual value for the time  $t-1$

$F_{t-1}$  is the forecasted value for the  $t-1$

Simple exponential smoothing was performed using MS Excel's data analysis function with a smoothing constant of 0.2, which is the optimum alpha value ( $a$ ) obtained for the series. The optimum alpha value is the one that gives the least Mean Squared Error (MSE). Series was tested under  $a=0.1$ , 0.2 and 0.3. The least MSE was a 0.2. Next, the annual growth rates of the smoothed series were calculated using an MS Excel array using the following annual growth rate formula.

$$(\text{End value} / \text{Start value})^{(1 / (\text{periods} - 1)) - 1}$$

[e.g., exponential smoothing value of the year 2020/same of 1996)  $^{(25-1)-1}$ ]

Accordingly, the following data sets were obtained:

- a) Smoothed data series on tourist arrivals to Bangladesh
- b) Annual growth rates of international tourist numbers

Smoothed data series (a) was used to derive the shape of the TALC. The smoothed data series of international traveller arrivals (Y-axis) were mapped against the time (years) (X-axis) in a diagram using MS Excel. The resulting line is the shape of

Bangladesh's TALC (see, Gore et al., 2021; McKercher and Wong, 2021). Next, a basic idea of the present stage of Bangladesh in the TALC was obtained from the annual growth rates (b). For this, the standard deviation of the annual growth rates was calculated, and this standard deviation was compared against the decision criteria proposed by Haywood (1986) to identify Bangladesh's TALC stage quantitatively (Gore et al., 2021), which is presented in Chapter 4. However, this quantitative identification of TALC stage is performed only to complete the operationalisation process of the TALC model. A qualitative approach was used to locate the TALC stages to address research objectives.

Hence, though the quantitative approach is the standard practice for TALC studies to construct the TALC's shape, to bridge this with the ontological and epistemological foundations of this thesis, a qualitative examination was performed to locate the TALC stages of Bangladesh. A qualitative approach is useful to identify TALC stages of Bangladesh by referring to the indicators or criteria that characterise each stage, especially when using the TALC for predictive purposes (Berry, 2006). The tourism-related and other relevant data that provide information on tourism development of Bangladesh in published reports, articles and the Bangladeshi government websites were examined to identify hypothetical life cycle stages (e.g., Berry, 2006; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021). Here, the life cycle stages were identified by chronologically arranging these data to identify the significant events occurring during periods that affected the tourism development of Bangladesh. Three such periods were identified, which are explained in Chapter 4 (4.4.2). Next, the characteristics identified to be present in Bangladesh under the above identified TALC stages were examined against the indicators (Table 2.1 page 37 in Chapter 2: Literature Review) that are expected to be present in each relevant stage to confirm that Bangladesh was and is in the particular stage (e.g., Agarwal, 1997; Berry, 2006; Butler, 1980; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021). The indicators were examined to identify the laggard and leading indicators present at each stage of the TALC (e.g., Berry, 2006; Gore et al., 2021). Laggard indicators are used to confirm when the TALC stage occurs, and leading indicators predict the general direction of the destination. For example, if all 10 indicators of the development stage given in Table 2.1 are present in a selected destination at a

particular point, it shows that all are laggard indicators by confirming the destination as in the development stage. However, few indicators are expected to be present in the next higher stage; for example, if some indicators of the consolidation stage are also present in the development stage, they are referred to as leading indicators. The presence of leading indicators predicts that the destination is heading towards the next stage. Accordingly, the identification of leading factors at a particular TALC stage gives the model its predictability (Berry, 2006). These findings are presented in Chapter 4 to confirm Bangladesh as an appropriate context for this thesis and are further used to address the first research objective.

Next, the chapter moves on to elaborate on data collection methods and three data analysing techniques separately. Accordingly, sections 3.5 and 3.6 explain how the qualitative content analysis and cultural analysis were performed to obtain interpreted meaning of a domain of representation from visual images and, then, section 3.7 explains the interview data collection, interviewing process and the data analysis using thematic analysis.

### **3.5 Qualitative Content Analysis of Images**

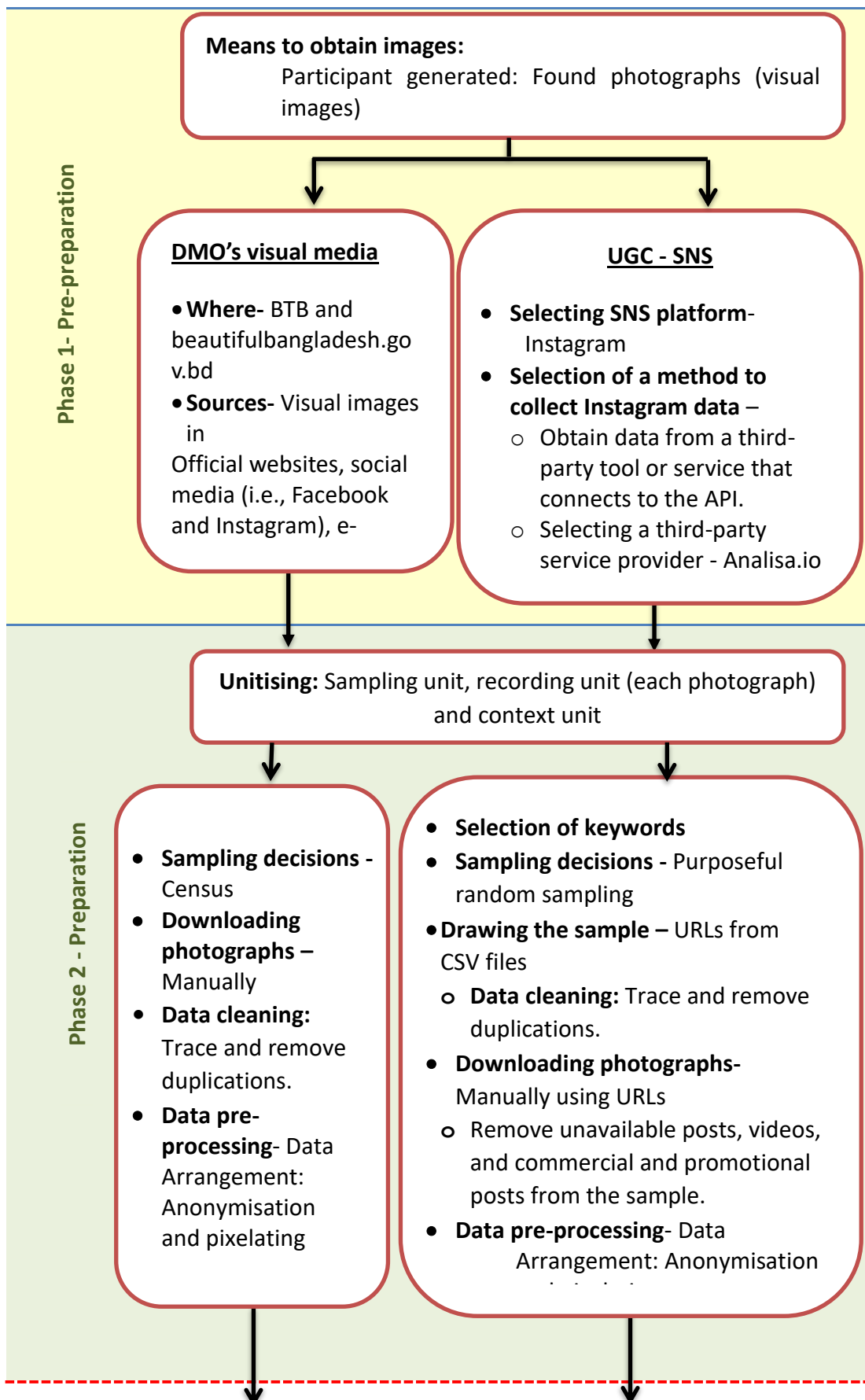
Content analysis is a longstanding common technique used to analyse text, which can be defined as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter)” (Krippendorff, 2019:18). Text can be any kind of meaningful written, verbal, or visual information (Bell, 2004; Krippendorff, 2019; Rose, 2016). The content analysis enables a large amount of qualitative information to be reduced to a small number of manageable but representative forms. Further, the content analysis can facilitate revealing the complexity of phenomena more adequately and would reveal unexpected and otherwise unnoticed information (Smith, 2000). Content analysis is a commonly accepted formal methodology to study photographic media (Albers and James, 1988; Bell and Milic, 2002; Rose, 2016) and is often used in tourism studies in examining photographs (e.g., Caton and Santos, 2008; Filieri et al., 2021; Hunter, 2016; Jenkins, 2003; Mak, 2017; Munar, 2011; Pritchard and Morgan, 2001; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013; Zhang et al., 2015). For

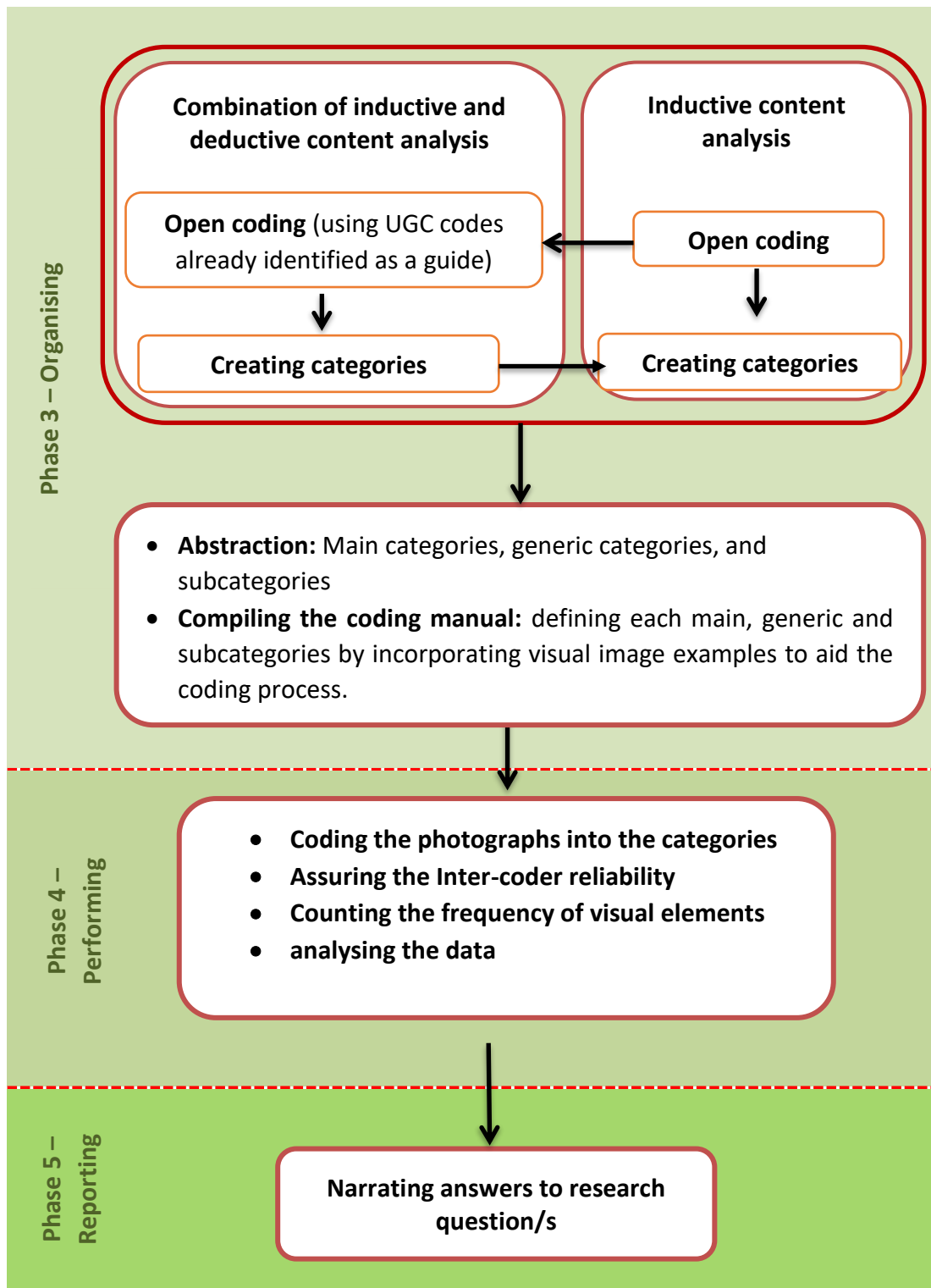


example, Zhang et al. (2019) argue that “[v]isual content analysis of tourist photos is an effective way to excavate tourist behaviour and explore tourists' cognition in the tourism destination” (p.595). Content analysis is capable of revealing how compositional elements are used in the denotation of visual content within the image (Ownby, 2013). So, it allows systematic engagement with a large number of images and facilitates analysing a large number of images in a consistent manner (Rose, 2016). Further, content analysis can provide a rigorous and structured analysis of cultural objects that are usually difficult, contentious, and subjective (Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). So, qualitative content analysis was used to capture both denotative and connotative meanings of images to provide a complete picture (e.g., Hunter, 2012, 2016). Denotative means the real or literal meaning conveyed by signs in an image, while connotation is the social or value-laden implications of such denotations (Barthes, 1977).

General steps suggested to perform content analysis are, obtaining a representative and a significant sample, unitising, devising coding categories, coding, counting the frequencies, and analysing those frequencies (Bell, 2004; Elo and Kyngas, 2008; Krippendorff, 2019; Rose, 2016). Hunter (2012; 2016) elaborates on the last step further where, after obtaining the frequencies of denotative elements, the next step is to identify the connotative elements implied by the image. However, there is no standardised and detailed procedure to conduct a content analysis (Krippendorff, 2019; Elo and Kyngas, 2008), especially in the context of interpreting online images. A process with five phases to perform the content analysis (Figure 3.2) was derived by consulting the content analysis processes suggested by Bell (2004), Elo and Kyngas (2008), Krippendorff (2019), Rose (2016) and Hunter (2012, 2016). Three preliminary steps suggested by Marine-Roig and Clave (2016) under the UGC data analytic process developed by them were incorporated into the process. The steps comprise: hosting website selection, data downloading, and data pre-processing (including data arrangement, data cleaning, and data debugging).

Figure 3.2: Photographic Data Collection and Analysis Process





Though the diagram presents a linear process, the actual analysis does not happen linearly. Hence, the explanations provided below will allow the reader to understand how the actual analysis took place.

### **3.5.1 Phase 1: Pre-preparation Stage**

Firstly, the sources and means to obtain online images have been decided. Photographic data for research can either be researcher-driven (i.e., photographs taken by the researcher) or participant-generated (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019; Rose, 2016). Participant-generated visual images can be either photographs commissioned for research or found photographs not commissioned for research (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019). This thesis used only the found visual images, which are not commissioned for research. Such visual images were obtained both from UGC and from the DMO's visual media. Website selection and platform selection procedures are discussed below.

#### **3.5.1.1 Collecting the DMO Data**

The DMO promotional materials are commonly studied to assess the projected image of a destination (e.g., Agusti, 2018; Hunter, 2012; Mak, 2017; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013). The DMO data were collected from the online visual media of the Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB), which is the authority responsible for the promotion of tourism in Bangladesh. The BTB website was continuously monitored for changes since September 2019. All images uploaded or shared on the BTB website ([tourismboard.gov.bd](http://tourismboard.gov.bd)) and their affiliated Facebook and Instagram account from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 to 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 were manually downloaded.

In December 2019, another interesting website named [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd) was observed online. Yet, it contained photographs and information on Sri Lanka, a neighbouring country. However, the website was monitored for changes from December 2019 to March 2020; after that it was no longer available on the internet. Subsequently, an interview with a BTB official on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 revealed that in mid-2020, BTB launched a new promotional website [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd), named after the Bangladeshi tourism tagline "Beautiful Bangladesh". As a result, all online promotional tasks were transferred to the [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd) website, which was affiliated to Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram

accounts. The role of BTB and its website, [tourismboard.gov.bd](http://tourismboard.gov.bd), is now strictly limited to internal communications and it redirects tourism traffic with a link to [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd).

Given that this is a recent change, the international tourists who participated in the interviews or who shared images on Instagram (UGC sample) may not have come across the images on this new website [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd), as the UGC sample was drawn before mid-2020 and interview participants had been to Bangladesh before summer 2020. Hence, the images in [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd) have not influenced the perceived image of tourists and the UGC created by them. Nevertheless, this introduction of the new platform offered a rare opportunity to examine a transformation of the DMO online promotional infrastructure and to assess whether UGC influences DMO promotions and contributes projected images through DMOs. Therefore, all the images in the [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd) website, Facebook and Instagram accounts were manually downloaded during November 2020. Accordingly, two samples of DMO visual images were collected and analysed. The first sample (DMO-I) includes images available on the BTB website ([tourismboard.gov.bd](http://tourismboard.gov.bd)) + Instagram + two Facebook accounts from 1st January 2017 to 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020. The second sample (DMO-II) includes images available on [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd) + Instagram + Facebook from 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Each DMO image sample was then cleaned to remove duplications and anonymised. Duplications were prevalent since the same images were shared on both Facebook and Instagram. The DMO-I and DMO-II samples contain 653 and 1875 images respectively.

#### **3.5.1.2 Selecting the SNS Platform to Collect UGC**

UGC data were collected from a social networking site (SNS). A photo-sharing SNS platform to collect UGC visual image data was chosen upon satisfying two conditions. Firstly, the platform should be one giving prominence to sharing photographs and, secondly, the platform should be a popular SNS platform. Accordingly, a list of SNS platforms with the facility to share photographs was compiled in order of popularity

from most popular to least. The top three candidates were Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest. After a comprehensive comparison of their characteristics, Instagram was identified as the most suitable platform to collect UGC images (Appendix 3). In summary, Facebook is profile-oriented, and Instagram is content-oriented. Instagram photographs are publicly available unless the user made them private. Any required types of photographs can be accessed by using specific keyword searches. This cannot be done on Facebook because all content, including photographs, is tied to the profile. Moreover, researchers argue that Instagram has the capability of shaping moods, impressions and DIs as well as improving the awareness and interests of potential tourists towards a destination (Yu et al., 2020).

Three main methods are available to extract photographs from Instagram (Laestadius, 2017):

- i. Extract data directly from the Instagram application program interface (API);
- ii. obtain data from a third-party tool or service that connects to the API; or,
- iii. extract data from the Instagram user interface manually.

Manual extraction and direct extraction from the Instagram API are time-consuming and it is difficult to filter data (e.g., obtaining images shared during a selected time interval) (Laestadius, 2017). Hence, Instagram photos were obtained with the help of a third-party service that connects to the API. Comparisons between the possible service providers were performed as given in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Third-Party Services that Connect to the Instagram API**

Service Provider	Characteristics and benefits	Key limitation
<b>ICONOSQUARE</b> (e.g., Laestadius et al., 2016; Nazarov, 2019) <b>HitAlama</b> (e.g., Nazarov, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate the account holder to analyse statistics for a given period, which they can use to make management decisions (Nazarov, 2019).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides account analysis for Instagram Business accounts only (ICONOSQUARE, 2020).</li> </ul>
<b>WEBSTA, HASHTAGS, PARASITE, CHOTAM</b> (e.g., Nazarov, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These facilitate hashtag search, posting reposts and monitoring comments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None of them is fully digital and data mining is not possible.</li> </ul>
<b>Instaloader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides hashtag and account search.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instaloader completely runs in Python programming language and requiring users to be competent in the programming language.</li> </ul>
<b>Octoparse</b> (Yu, et al., 2020; Yu and Egger, 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows extracting images from Instagram including the data such as the number of likes, comments, date posted, check-in locations and URLs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restricted to account analysis. So, the data can be obtained only from pre-identified accounts.</li> <li>Hashtag analysis is not possible.</li> </ul>
<b>Analisa.io</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artificial intelligence-powered analytics open platform for Instagram.</li> <li>Provides both account analysis and hashtag analysis (e.g., obtaining search results under a specified keyword hashtag combination but not only for specified accounts).</li> <li>User-friendly interface.</li> <li>Premium services option gives access to up to 12,000 posts per hashtag search for a monthly fee.</li> <li>Provides downloadable reports in both Comma-Separated Values (CSV) and PDF formats.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The PDF report can generate results based on a specified period (e.g., 2017-2018). However, PDF reports include results on only a few posts. CSV reports can include results on the most recent data. Results cannot be based on a specified period. But the results provide 12,000 most recent posts on the day of search.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSV files contain information about each post such as the user's Instagram profile name, Uniform Resource Locator (URL) link, the number of comments, and likes, and accompanying hashtags.</li> </ul>	
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Analisa.io was selected to collect Instagram data by considering the user-friendly interface with the ability to generate a large amount of relevant data. Especially, it can generate reports based on hashtag keyword combination searches. Next, basic preparations were made to obtain the visual images from selected platforms.

### **3.5.2 Phase 2: Preparation**

The pre-preparation phase comprises making unitising and sampling decisions, obtaining a representative and a significant sample of images and, finally, data pre-preparation/ data arrangement for analysis.

#### **3.5.2.1 Unitising**

Sampling units, coding (or recording) units and context units have different functions to play in content analysis (Krippendorff, 2019). According to Krippendorff (2019), sampling units are the “units that are distinguished for selective inclusion in an analysis” (p.98) whereas the coding units “are distinguished for separate description, transcription, recording, or coding” (p.99). Sampling units for content analysis should be defined in a way that connections across the sampling units (if there is any) do not bias analysis and in a way that individual sample units contain all the relevant information. Hence, the sampling unit for this research is a URL link to an Instagram post containing a visual image for the UGC sample and a visual image on DMO visual media for DMO samples. Next, the coding units involve identifying and defining a basic unit of text to be classified (Weber, 1990). This thesis considered each image as



a single unit of content. These coding units were later classified into main, generic, and subcategories after the coding process. Next the sampling decisions were made.

### **3.5.2.2 Sampling**

Qualitative researchers usually use purposeful sampling, which involves selecting the sample intentionally based on the needs of their study (Coyne, 1997). Online visual images can be obtained through purposeful or proportionate sampling strategies or as a combination of both, whichever meets the requirements imposed by the research objectives. For example, Rose and Wills (2019) and Stepchenkova and Zhan (2013) adopted the proportionate sampling strategy to ensure their samples represented the pre-specified period of data collection. In contrast, Hunter (2016) obtained a sample of the most recent 900 images from each selected search engine based on non-proportionate sampling. He argues that most recent images those most likely viewed by users and, hence, most representative of the DI.

However, not seeking statistical representativeness in qualitative research does not mean a complete ad hoc opportunistic sampling strategy is suitable (Mason, 1996 and May 2002 cited in King et al., 2019). The sample should be both representative and significant and should be drawn in a systematic manner relating to the phenomena under investigation (King et al., 2019; Rose, 2016). Though purposeful and probability sampling techniques are different, they can be combined usefully (Coyne, 1997). Purposeful random sampling is one such strategy, which can be used when there is “a very large pool of potentially information-rich cases and no obvious reason to choose one case over another” (Sandelowski, 2000:249). This reduces the bias in a larger purposeful sample and increases the credibility (Patton, 1990). Hence, the UGC sample was obtained based on the purposeful random sampling strategy. Accordingly, the sample can be drawn randomly from a sampling frame, but each selected case should be information-rich to meet the purposeful sampling criterion (Sandelowski, 2000). Accordingly, first, the appropriate keyword combinations were identified to generate the sampling frame.

### **Step 1: Selection of Keywords**

Purposive sampling with keywords search was used to obtain photographs from Instagram. A subscription to Analisa.io-premium was set up to obtain reports of different hashtag keyword combinations. An exploratory search was conducted to find the best word combinations that give the highest number of results, by employing a variety of keywords (e.g., Hunter, 2016). Researchers have commonly used the word 'travel' combined with the selected destination's name in their online photograph searches (e.g., Hunter, 2016; Stepchencova and Zhan, 2013). For example, Hunter (2016) used travel, tour, and visit as keywords for the initial search. He has chosen the key word 'travel' for his data collection since the results generated under the keywords 'tour' and 'visit' were very low. The keyword combinations of travel, tour, and visit with Bangladesh were selected for the initial hashtag search. A search of the Instagram user interface provided the following results on 13th March 2020.

- #travelbangladesh 14,057 posts (and #bangladeshtravel 3,589 posts)
- #visitbangladesh 30,109 posts
- #tourbangladesh 188 posts (and #bangladeshtour 999 posts)

A very small number of posts available under #tourbangladesh indicates that it is not a popular keyword combination among travellers. Hence, #tourbangladesh was dropped from further analysis since it does not adequately represent the views of travellers to Bangladesh. Next, to obtain a more representative sample of images, other possible keyword combinations (hashtags as referred to in Instagram) were explored.

Instagram allows users to use up to 30 hashtags per image. Analisa.io provides the facility to identify up to 20 of the most co-appearing hashtags with a particular identified hashtag. Analisa.io PDF reports were obtained for #travelbangladesh and #visitbangladesh for the past one-year period to discover the other most used hashtags associated with them. Results revealed that #naturalbangladesh, #beautifulbangladesh, #walkbangladesh, #nature, #bangladesh, #dhaka, and #bd are the most tagged other hashtags. #bangladesh, #nature, #dhaka and #bd were

removed from further analysis since they are not word combinations indicating travel to Bangladesh. Notably, 'Beautiful Bangladesh' is the official tourism slogan of Bangladesh. Next, #beautifulbangladesh, #naturalbangladesh and #walkbangladesh were searched on the Instagram user interface and they contained considerably higher numbers of posts, with 176,352; 95,968 and 65,589 posts respectively. Accordingly, these three hashtags were included in the list. Finally, five keyword combinations were selected to collect data, namely, #travelbangladesh, #visitbangladesh, #beautifulbangladesh, #naturalbangladesh and #walkbangladesh. Then, each of these keyword combinations was searched on Analisa.io using its hashtag search option. This generated five CSV files under each keyword that contain information such as the URL, name of the account, number of likes, comments, geotags, associating hashtags, and accompanied text on the most recent  $\pm 12,000$  Instagram posts per hashtag search. Next, the sample size was decided as explained below.

## **Step 2: Drawing the Sample.**

The lists of URLs from the above obtained CSV files under each keyword set were taken as the sampling frame to obtain the UGC image sample. Each list of URLs contained the most recent  $\pm 12,000$  posts in chronological order on the day the search occurred which is 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020. All these Instagram posts included in the sampling frames were shared in or after 2018, which qualifies them to be referred to as recent. The sample satisfies Hunter's (2016) argument on recent online images as those that adequately represent the present DI of the destination.

No rigid rules guide the sample size for image analysis (Rose, 2016). The sample for content analysis should be representative enough to capture the variation among all the relevant images, large enough to contain examples of those variations but small enough to facilitate the subsequent analysis without overwhelming the resources available for analysing at the same time (Pritchard and Morgan, 2001; Rose, 2016). Accordingly, systematic random sampling with a randomly selected starting number was used to select a sample of URLs within each CSV file (e.g., Stepchenkova and

Zhan, 2013). To obtain a manageable sample size, every 50<sup>th</sup> URL in each list starting from the  $n^{\text{th}}$  URL was drawn for the sample. The initial sample contained 1,203 URLs. Subsequently, the visual images were manually obtained using these URLs in the sample. Automation allows quick and easy download of photographs. However, Instagram's terms of use explicitly state that Instagram "prohibit crawling, scraping, caching or otherwise accessing any content on the Service via automated means, including but not limited to, user profiles and photos (...)" (Instagram, 2020). A request was emailed to Instagram seeking permission to download photographs automatically from the identified URLs. A response was received stating that Instagram can no longer be contacted via email. Users are advised to refer to the information provided in the Instagram help centre for any clarifications. According to Instagram's code of conduct (2020) using Instagram photos for non-profit educational purposes can be considered a fair use of copyright work. Hence, images were manually obtained after following the data-cleaning steps as explained below.

### **3.5.2.3 Obtaining Visual Image Sample**

Before obtaining the UGC image sample to analyse, it was necessary to trace any duplications available between URL samples obtained from five keyword searches. Since Instagram allows multiple hashtags in a post, there is a possibility that the same post is available under two or more keyword combinations used to obtain the sample frame. Therefore, URLs in the sample were compared with MS Excel to identify duplications. Duplicated URLs were removed from the lists by keeping a particular URL on one list (see Rose and Wills, 2019).

The ownership of the Instagram photographs is with the person who posted on Instagram (Instagram, 2020). These users who make their photographs publicly available on Instagram hold privacy expectations. Moreover, Instagram users have the power to delete, alter or make their photos private at any point should they not want their photographs to remain public anymore. This compels researchers to have an explicit policy to deal with any such changes before analysing the collected

Instagram data (Highfield and Leaver, 2014 cited in Laestadius, 2017). Laestadius (2017) suggests that an attempt must be made to download the same photographs again for the second time after a month after the first download. And Rose and Wills (2019) have removed images that are no longer publicly available at the end of their data collection period from the analysis. Photographs that were in the first set but not available in the second set of photographs downloaded after a month indicate that the user may have deleted or made those images private. Such photographs should be removed from the analysis (Laestadius, 2017). Moreover, if the post is found to be modified at this second downloading attempt, the sample must include this amended version (Laestadius, 2017).

Similar precautions were taken in obtaining the final UGC sample for this thesis. Accordingly, as explained, the sample of URLs leading to Instagram posts was selected on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020, but manual downloading of images using these URLs was started only after a lapse of one month, that is, on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2020. When the URL was searched, some posts were unavailable, indicating either the user removed or made the images private. The videos posted and images on commercial advertisements were removed from the sample. After this data-cleaning process, 249 posts were excluded from the analysis. The final UGC sample contained 954 visual images, which is 79% of the initial sample of 1203 URLs.

#### **3.5.2.4 Data Arrangement**

All three visual image data samples obtained from Instagram and DMO visual media were then sorted, and Instagram data was anonymised before analysis. The faces and any other symbols revealing the identity of any person appearing in Instagram images have been pixelated and anonymised. Anonymised images were used when these publicly available visual images were used in the thesis or publications as exemplars. Next is to analyse these data obtained. Devising coding categories to code the visual images under phase three is explained below.

### **3.5.3 Phase 3: Organising: Deciding Coding Categories**

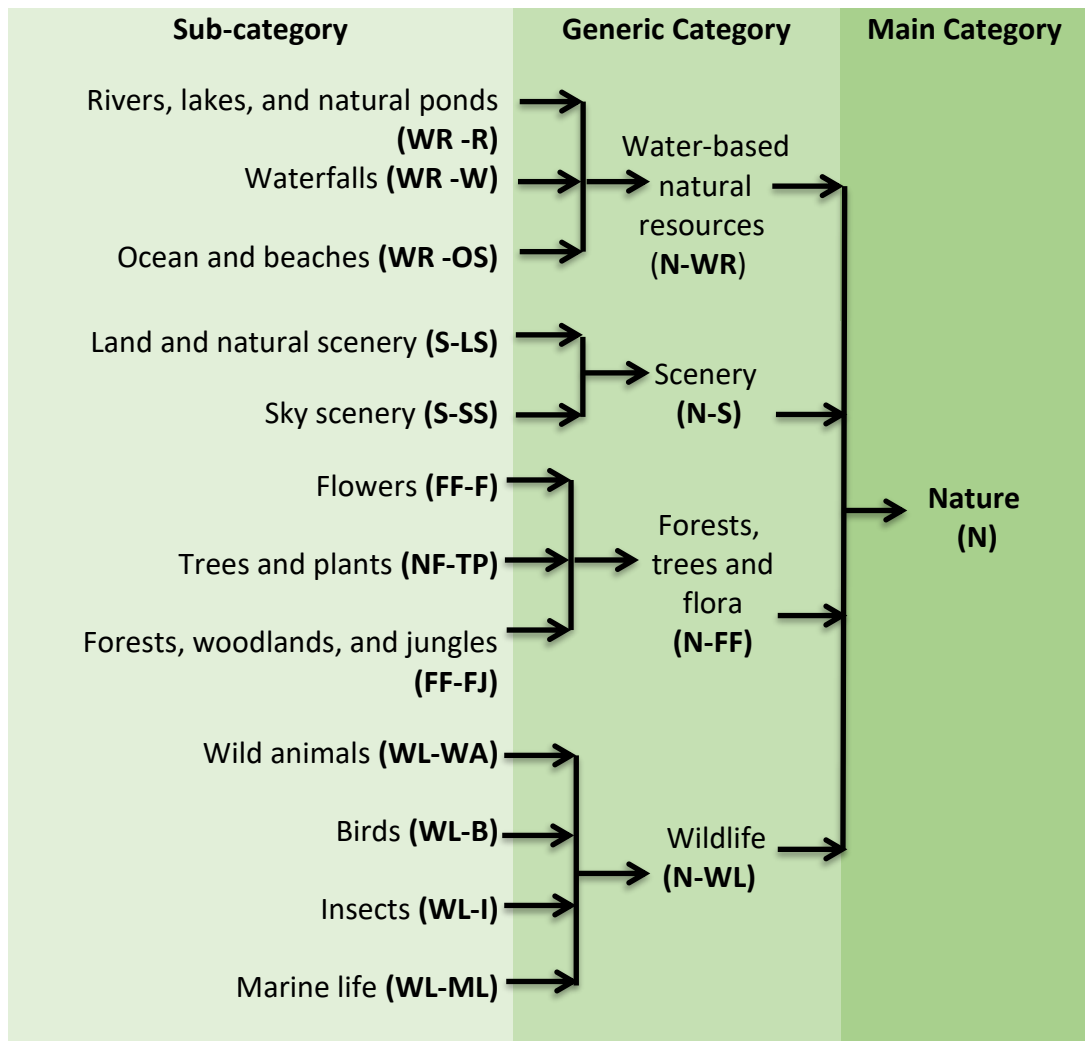
The development of independently verifiable and reliable classifications is the key to successful content analysis (Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). Inductive content analysis guidelines given by Elo and Kyngas (2008) were used to guide the organisation of the Instagram photographs in the sample. Inductive content analysis is suitable in the absence of enough former knowledge about the phenomenon or if the knowledge is fragmented. Deductive content analysis is suggested when the researcher expects to retest the existing data for a new context. Though there are previous studies that performed content analyses with UGC images (e.g., Mak, 2017; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013) the phenomena of their studies are different to this study and the available knowledge is fragmented.

The inductive coding process consists of three steps, i.e., open coding, creating categories and abstraction (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). The open coding process began with the UGC sample. At the open coding stage, the researcher freely identified coding categories to devise cognitive DI of Bangladesh. It is suggested to read the text repeatedly and note down the headings identified in the margins of the document in order to assure all the relevant headings describing all the aspects of the context are identified. These headings can be then taken down to coding sheets to guide categorising and abstraction later. Since the sample consists of images available in digital versions and not hard copies of written text, headings were directly typed into an MS Excel spreadsheet when identified. For example, some such headings identified are flowers, domesticated animals, people, archaeological sites, urban buildings, insects, and rivers. Such headings identified with UGC images were used as a guide to identify headings in the DMO samples. However, whenever necessary, new headings were identified and recorded into the same MS Excel spreadsheet. Hence, the DMO image coding process was a combination of inductive and deductive analysis. Then all the images included in the three samples were looked through repeatedly to identify all the possible headings. It was a time-consuming and complex task, as expected (see Krippendorff, 2019). However, the researcher's familiarity with the image set at the image obtaining and subsequent data sorting and arrangement processes immensely facilitated the open coding process.

The second step, creating categories, involved grouping these freely developed headings into higher-order headings to reduce the number of categories (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). Accordingly, the headings were grouped based on the similarities shared by them to develop initial categories with a name also given to represent characteristics of the content. These groups formed the sub-categories, too, as referred to in the subsequent abstraction process. For example, the headings wild animals, insects and birds were grouped to form a higher-order category as wildlife. The categories developed by previous researchers such as Albers and James (1988); Mak (2017) and Stepchenkova and Zhan (2013) were also consulted.

The third step is abstraction, where categories are generated to express general descriptions of the research topic (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). Accordingly, three hierarchical layers of categories as subcategories, generic categories and main categories were developed (Figure 3.3). By grouping the subcategories with similar characteristics together, a set of generic categories were identified. Then these generic categories that share similar characteristics were grouped to form main categories (e.g., Elo and Kyngas, 2008). This abstraction process requires to be continued as far as it is possible and reasonable (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). Thus, each level of the category was revisited to assure the necessity for such a category. As a result, some subcategories were removed or combined. The researcher intended to have a manageable amount of meaningful and adequate categories that adequately represent all essential features of the cognitive image of Bangladesh.

**Figure 3.3: Three Hierarchical Layers of Categories**



Accordingly, five main categories were developed to represent cognitive DI. An additional category was developed to put images not revealing any destination attributes such as COVID-19 awareness messages, non-touristic notices and quotes, and unclassified images. A coding manual was prepared as a complete guide to the coding and categorising process (Appendix 4). This provides operational definitions of all the categories with photographic examples.

#### 3.5.4 Phase 4: Performing

Next, the images were coded and categorised into the identified categories. UGC DMO-I and DMO-II samples were coded and categorised independently from each



other. How coding took place, measuring the inter-coder reliability and getting the frequency counts are explained below.

#### **3.5.4.1 Coding the Images into Categories**

Three samples were coded separately using separate file folders created to represent each subcategory within a sample. Each unit of content is normally classified into one category (Webber, 1990). However, visual images are complex units of content compared to written or verbal text. Breaking down a photograph reliably into a smaller content unit is complex and difficult (Stepchencova and Zhan, 2013). Hence, in practice, each photograph is coded into several categories limited to a maximum of four categories (Stepchencova and Zhan, 2013; Mak, 2017). Hence, each image within a sample was taken separately and was copied into the relevant sub-category folders up to a maximum of four most relevant sub-categories. At this stage, also, the required and necessary changes were done to the sub-categories and then to the coding manual accordingly. For example, new categories were created, merged, or removed to assure the categories adequately represent all essential features of the cognitive image of Bangladesh. Therefore, each image had to be re-evaluated and then they were put into the most suitable sub-categories they should be categorised into. This process assured intra-coder reliability, which is explained in the subsequent section. After all the images within the three samples were coded and categorised into their respective sub-categories, a set of generic file folders were created under each sample. Then the sub-category folders falling into the relevant generic category were placed accordingly; e.g., Insects (WL-WA), Birds (WL-B), and Wild animals (WL-WA) sub-category folders were put into a file folder named Wildlife (NSFW -WL), which is the relevant generic category. Then, six folders were created to represent six main categories under each sample and the relevant generic category folders were transferred to the respective main category folders.

#### **3.5.4.2 Assuring Reliability**

Assuring the validity and reliability of content analysis is critical since there is no linear or agreed-upon procedure to perform content analysis. Replicability is the key concern under reliability (Bell, 2004; Krippendorff, 2019). Hence, both intra- and inter-coder reliability were assured. Firstly, the coder (researcher herself) categorised all three visual image samples of UGC and DMO based on the coding manual guidelines. After two months, a sample of 100 images, which included 50 UGC and 50 DMO images were taken separately and categorised by the coder independently from the previous coding. Intra-coder reliability was assured with an average percentage agreement of 96%. Next, two academic researchers independently analysed the same sample of 100 images. The coder is required to perform fresh coding if statistical reliability is not gained (Bell, 2004). Agreement on each image coded into at least one common category was considered as agreed on the categorisation of the image to the respective category. Inter-coder reliability was assured with an average percentage agreement of 93.33%  $((94+95+91)/300*100)$  among the three coders. Above 90% of the agreement is recommended to assure reliability (Bell, 2004).

#### **3.5.4.3 Counting the Frequency of Visual Elements**

Next is to perform the final step of the content analysis, i.e., counting the frequencies of the number of occurrences, and recording. Under this step, frequencies of denotative signs (codes) represented by the UGC and DMO images under each sub-category (or generic category in the absence of a subcategory) were counted and entered into an Excel spreadsheet. Each sub-category total was calculated for generic category totals. Relevant generic category counts were calculated to obtain the main category totals. These frequency counts were interpreted to narrate answers to research questions, which are presented in Chapter 5. The frequency count of the UGC and DMO images will be used to observe the similarities and differences between the contents captured by UGC and DMO. Comparisons were made between UGC and both DMO-I and DMO-II samples, and between the two DMO samples. Comparisons between the DMO and UGC samples reveal the degree of congruity

between image projections by the DMO and images perceived by the tourists that are expressed through their UGC. As a further analysis, a correspondence analysis was conducted as a statistical test to see the associations between destination attributes across the samples. Correspondence analysis is an effective visual representation to show the attribute-brand (destination) associations since the multidimensional frequency data can be reduced into a two-dimensional map (Choi et al., 2007).

#### **3.5.4.3 Interpreting the Results and Narrating Answers to the Research Questions**

In the previous step through the frequency counts, the most frequent representations of Bangladesh, or in other words, the most frequent denotative elements appearing in UGC and DMO online images were identified. Next, these denotative elements were interpreted connotatively. Such a “secondary interpretative analysis of connotative elements can generate more insights into the message of the destination image as depicted in photographs” (Hunter, 2012:429).

Cultural analytics was conducted to uncover the affective image of Bangladesh as depicted in DMO and UGC image samples, which is discussed in the next section. Cultural analytics facilitates to further reveal patterns in large amounts of visual images available online, which are not visible to a researcher (Manovich and Douglass, 2011 cited in Rose, 2016). This method is used to reveal the notions of HSB<sup>5</sup> (hue, saturation, and brightness) colour space expressed through a large collection of images holistically (Rose and Wills, 2019). These colour space statistics are interpreted to reveal the emotional aspects of DI in the images (e.g., Rose and Willis 2019; Yu et al., 2020; Yu and Egger, 2021). Colour space is successfully used in marketing studies, also, to reveal the affective component of visual images (Yu et al., 2020). Under cultural analytics, first, the colour space statistics of image samples were obtained using the computer software, Image Plot. Second, the image samples

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<sup>5</sup> HSB is also referred to as LHC to denote *Lightness, Hue, and Chroma*

were visualised again with the Image Plot. Resulting colour space statistics and visualisations will be used in Chapter 5 to interpret the meanings to reveal emotions associated with the image samples.

### **3.6 Cultural Analytics Procedure**

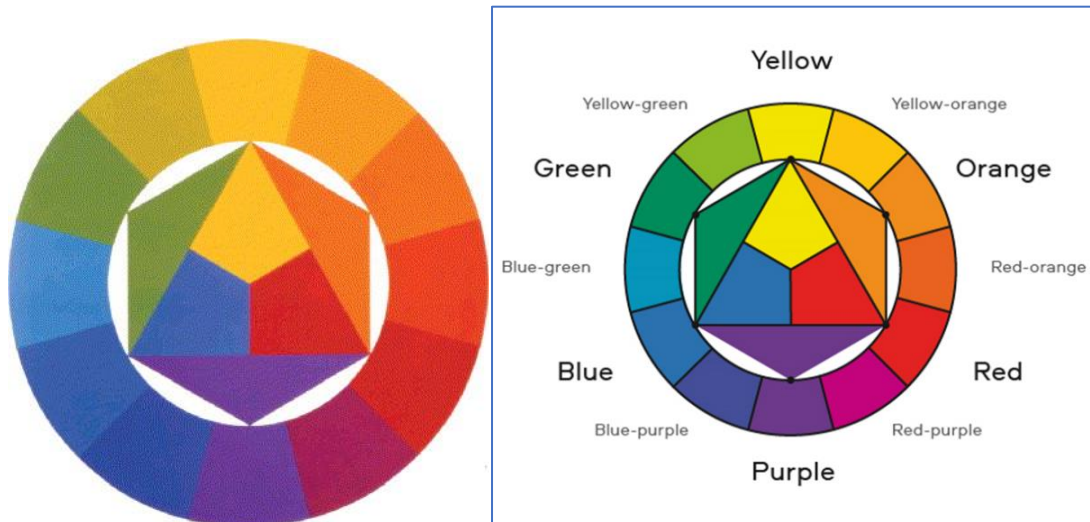
Different colours are claimed to connate various meanings and have an impact on human perception (Yu and Egger, 2021). Though divided from the psychology discipline, this colour psychology has attracted the interest of researchers from diverse fields of studies as a tool to examine human emotions expressed through colours (Yu and Egger, 2021). Hence, colour psychology is identified as a suitable method to reveal the affective DI construction of Bangladesh. This section first presents an introduction to the colour dimensions and colour space concepts. Then it moves to explain the cultural analytics process, starting with selecting a platform to obtain colour space statistics and then obtaining colour space statistics, visualising and, finally, extracting dominant colours through visualisations.

#### **3.6.1 Colour Dimensions and Colour Space**

Colours result from light waves and, hence, light generates the colour (Itten and Birren, 1970). Colour is a multidimensional construct composed of three main dimensions, namely hue, brightness, and saturation. Hue refers to the colour appearance parameters, which is the wavelength of light within the visible spectrum (Hsieh et al., 2017; Yu et al., 2020). The human eye is only capable of perceiving a light wavelength between 400 to 700 millimicrons (Itten and Birren, 1970). Hue is a scale from blue to red and people typically use hue to describe a colour (e.g., red, green) (Labrecque and Milne, 2012). Saturation (or Chroma) refers to the degree of purity or quality of a colour (Itten and Birren, 1970). Colours appear grey and washed out when saturation is low and appear vivid when saturation is high (Labrecque and Milne, 2012). Brightness (or value/lightness /intensity) is the greyscale, which is scaled from maximally light (white) to maximally dark (black) (Kress and Van

Leeuwen, 2002). The hue effect is the most studied dimension, particularly the only one studied in early studies on colour psychology (Labrecque and Milne, 2012). Based on hue, Itten (1961) developed a 12-hue colour circle to propose a way to colour design (Figure 3.4) (Itten and Birren, 1970).

**Figure 3.4: Itten's 12-Hue Colour Circle**



Source: left- Itten (1961) (Original model) cited in Harkness (2006: 221); right-reproduction with colours tagged

The circle starts from the three primary colours at the centre (Red, Yellow, and Blue). Then it moves to the secondary colours, which are careful mixtures of each primary colour pair (e.g., Red and Yellow make Orange). Finally, the colour circle completes after mixing each primary colour with each secondary colour to obtain the tertiary colour (e.g., the primary colour Red mixed with the secondary colour orange makes the tertiary colour Red-Orange). Each colour in this colour circle has its fixed place since these hues are sequenced in a natural spectrum (Itten and Birren, 1970). Each complementary colour is located on opposite sides (e.g., Red and Green) (Itten and Birren, 1970). Complementary colour to a selected colour is a mixture of the other two primary colours; e.g., complementary colour to Red is a mixture of yellow and blue that is green.

Though many colour psychology studies limitedly examine the hue effects, saturation and brightness dimensions are considered to play an even more important role in predicting emotions and perceptions (Labrecque and Milne, 2012). For example, Labrecque and Milne (2012) argue that high saturation has a more arousing effect and induces feelings of dominance. Meanwhile, high brightness (whiter) has a more calming effect and decreases the arousing effect as well as dominance. Therefore, high brightness can lessen the arousing effect and dominance of certain colours (e.g., in the colour red) and induce calmness (Labrecque and Milne, 2012). Hence, including all three-colour dimensions to analyse colour psychology is important to examine emotions depicted by colours.

The colour dimensions (hue, brightness, and saturation) can be measured in numbers and interpreted to give meanings. A colour space can be used for the purpose. A colour space is when a specific colour model or system is used to turn colours into numbers. Many colour spaces are based on the RGB colour model. RGB stands for red, green, and blue because it uses combinations of red, green, and blue light to generate colours. RGB is the standard method of producing colour images on screens such as TV, smartphones, and computer screens. However, the RGB colour model is not closely aligned with human visual perception. For instance, other than the three primary colours (red, yellow, and blue) all the other colours are made as a mixture of colours. The human eye cannot single out any individual tone in a mixture of colours and so cannot see component hues in a mixed colour (Itten and Birren, 1970). For example, if the colour green (green is a mixed colour) is singled out in a prismatic spectrum, the human eye can see only its complementary colour, red (Itten and Birren, 1970). This arouses a need for developing alternative representations to RGB that are closely aligned with human visual perception. Two commonly used alternative colour spaces are HSL (hue, saturation, and lightness) and HSV (HSB) (hue, saturation, and value/brightness). Many computer-based software and tools are available to calculate colour space statistics of images, which can then be used for different purposes. In this thesis, the colour representations of the DMO and UGC image samples were used to extract the emotions expressed by UGC and DMO image

samples (e.g., Yu and Egger, 2021). The following sections explain the process used to obtain colour representations.

### **3.6.2 Selecting an Application to Obtain Colour Space Statistics**

Lev Manovich developed the concept as well as the term cultural analytics in 2005, to analyse massive cultural data sets, and flows using computational, and visualisation techniques (Software Studies Initiative, 2021). They use open-source software ImagePlot to perform cultural analytics. Later, many such software and online tools, which enable the analysis of colour space of visual images and video, were developed (e.g., Image Colour Summarizer, colour extraction application by TinEye, Google Cloud Vision). Most of these software and tools use every pixel in an image to compute these statistics, which results in more accurate results. Three such software programs recently used in tourism studies comprise Google Cloud Vision (e.g., Yu and Egger, 2021), Image Color Summarizer (e.g., Yu et al., 2020) and ImagePlot application (e.g., Rose and Willis, 2019). ImagePlot was selected to analyse the image sample by comparing the capabilities of these three applications (Table 3.3). The main advantages ImagePlot has above others are its ability to provide colour space information statistics and perform further analysis (e.g., visualising) using such statistics of thousands of images in a few minutes, which can be used by a researcher who does not possess knowledge on in-depth computer programming language.

**Table 3.3: Comparison Between Colour Space Analysis Software and Online Tools**

Application	Characteristics
<b>ImagePlot</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “ImagePlot is a free software tool that visualises collections of images and video of any size. It is implemented as a macro which works with the open-source image processing program ImageJ” (Software Studies Initiative, 2021).</li> <li>• Images in any of the formats (e.g., jpg, .png) or URLs of images can be used for the analysis.</li> <li>• Image J can generate colour space statistics (e.g., HSB, RGB), and identify shapes of hundreds to thousands of images within minutes.</li> <li>• The main function of ImagePlot is to visualise thousands to millions of images in plots (Image Plot).</li> <li>• This visualising capability is the key difference between other tools and ImagePlot, as it is developed for cultural analytics.</li> <li>• The metadata of the images (e.g., year, names) also can be used to generate visualisations. e.g., year and hue median into x and y axis.</li> <li>• Further analysis such as cluster analysis can be performed with the visualised maps.</li> <li>• ImagePlot has a Graphical User Interface, which does not require the user to program or script. To run some of the functions, knowledge of Java programming language is required (e.g., expanding the processing memory allocated to the ImageJ). However, elaborated documentation is also provided to assist the user in performing most of the tasks.</li> </ul>
<b>Image Color Summarizer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open-source online tool, introduced by Canada’s Michael Smith Genome Science Centre, which is now having to be purchased.</li> <li>• Results produce descriptive colour statistics for an image, which comprise the average, median, minimum, and maximum of each component of RGB, HSV, LCH and Lab. Average hues are calculated using the mean of circular quantities (Image colour summarizer,2021). This uses K mean clustering to identify and measure the colour space of visual images.</li> <li>• Bar or line charts can be generated using these statistics.</li> <li>• Online analysis analyses one image at a time. Either the image or URL can be used for the analysis.</li> <li>• Command lines should be used to run the downloaded version of the software, which requires technical and computer programming language knowledge. However, no support or guidance was given to assist users.</li> </ul>



<b>Google Cloud Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This API allows performing multiple functions including the detection of faces, landmarks, logos, labels, texts, handwriting, crop hints and objects in the images. Moreover, it allows the measurement of image properties, which is the main use for a researcher intending to analyse the colour space of images.</li> <li>• ‘Image properties’ function allows the detection of dominant colours in an image by representing each colour in the RGB colour space. This has a confidence score and displays the fraction of pixels occupied by the colour from 0 to 1.</li> <li>• One main weakness compared to both other applications is the results are given only in RGB data. Therefore, the results are not straightforward and these RGB data should be converted into HSL colour space using another application (see Yu and Egger, 2021).</li> </ul>
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Colour analysis was performed in two steps by using the ImagePlot application as explained below. Firstly, HSB statistics were used to identify the dominant colour spaces. Secondly, the image samples were mapped in scatter plots to obtain visual representation.

### 3.6.3 Identifying Dominant Colour Space in Samples

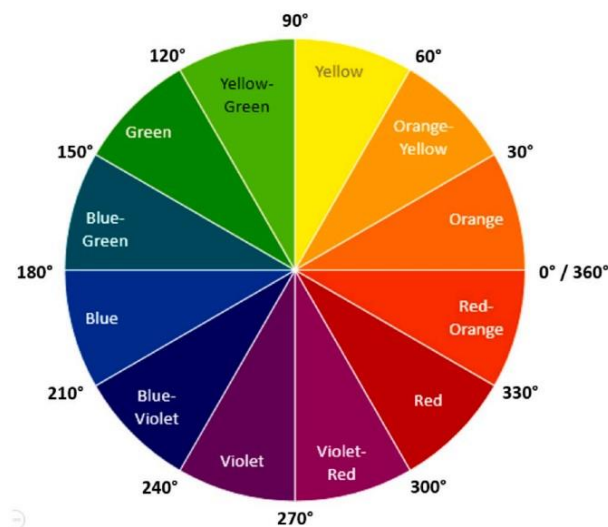
ImagePlot application was used to obtain Hue, Saturation and Brightness (HSB) colour space statistics of the images under:

- i. Each full sample of UGC, DMO-I and DMO-II
- ii. Separately for each of the five main content categories developed above, under each sample (subheading 3.5.3). The images in the sixth category of all three samples were excluded from this analysis since they do not represent any destination attributes of Bangladesh.

Accordingly, HSB colour space statistics were obtained for three total samples and 15 image sets representing the cognitive image of the DI of Bangladesh (five main categories representing the cognitive image x 3 samples=15 image sets). Many social researchers, including tourism researchers, have applied hue measurements to Itten’s colour circle to interpret the colours of images (e.g., Yu et al., 2020; Yu and

Egger, 2021). Hue is normally represented in a degree of a circle (360°) where twelve hues are evenly spaced in 30° intervals (Figure 3.5). Accordingly, 0-30°: Orange, 30°-60°: Orange-yellow, 60°-90°: Yellow, 90°-120°: Yellow-green, 120°-150°: Green, 150°-180°: Blue-green, 180°-210°: Blue, 210°-240°: blue-violet, 240°-270°: Violet, 270°-300°: Violet-red, 300°-330°: Red, 330°-360° (0): Red-Orange.

**Figure 3.5: Itten's Colour Wheel**



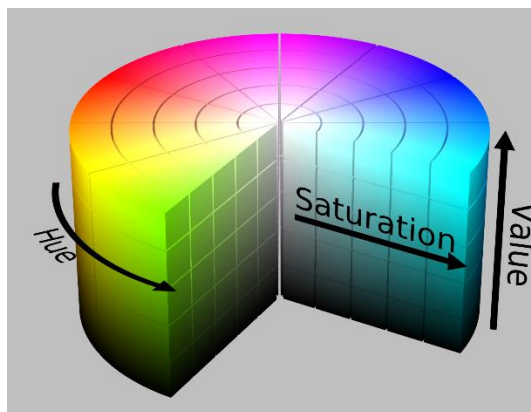
Nevertheless, the ImagePlot application does not provide hues on a 0-360 scale. ImagePlot uses an RGB colour model to generate HSB statistics. RGB is measured on a 0-255 scale, in contrast to the hue measured on a 0-360 scale to be applied to Itten's wheel (Saturation and Brightness are normally measured on a 0-100 scale). ImagePlot measures all three HSB dimensions on a 0-255 scale. This requires an additional step to convert hue values from 0-255 to 0-360 scale for each separate image. So, first, the median HSB values for **each image** were obtained from Imageplot which were then converted to a 0-360 scale using a formula in MS Excel (median hue value/255 x 360). These resulting median hues were used to locate the respective colour in Itten's colour circle. For example, an image's median hue of 63.53 falls into yellow in the colour circle. After obtaining the median hues of all the images within a sample (and within each category under a sample), the hues (or colours) represented by them were identified. Then the frequencies of 12 hues in each sample were obtained.

Each colour's percentage representation also was obtained as a percentage of the total number (N) of images in the respective category or sample. Then these colour space statistics were plotted using the ImagePlot application as explained below.

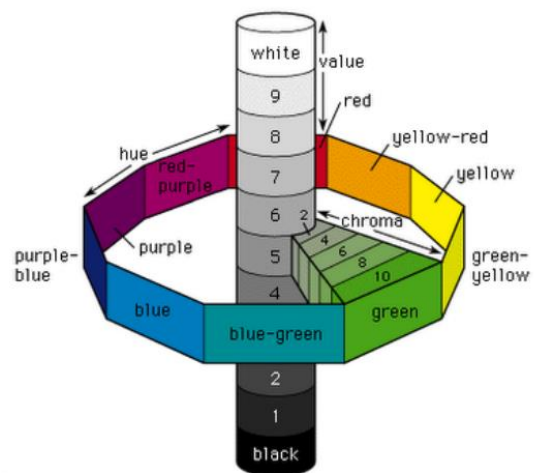
### 3.6.4 Obtaining ImagePlot Visualisations

Categorising an image to one colour (or hue) through its median values has limitations. For example, the average hue may indicate a selected image is pure yellow, while it has different tones of yellow. Yu et al. (2020) argue that interpreting the colours obtained through averages of hue values is problematic and may provide misleading results. HSB is not a flat but a cylindrical colour model, which uses all three colour dimensions in visualising. Munsell's colour sphere demonstrates these colour dimensions using nine brightness levels (values) of 12 colours (Figure 3.6).

**Figure 3.6: Cylindrical Colour Models**



HSB cylindrical colour model

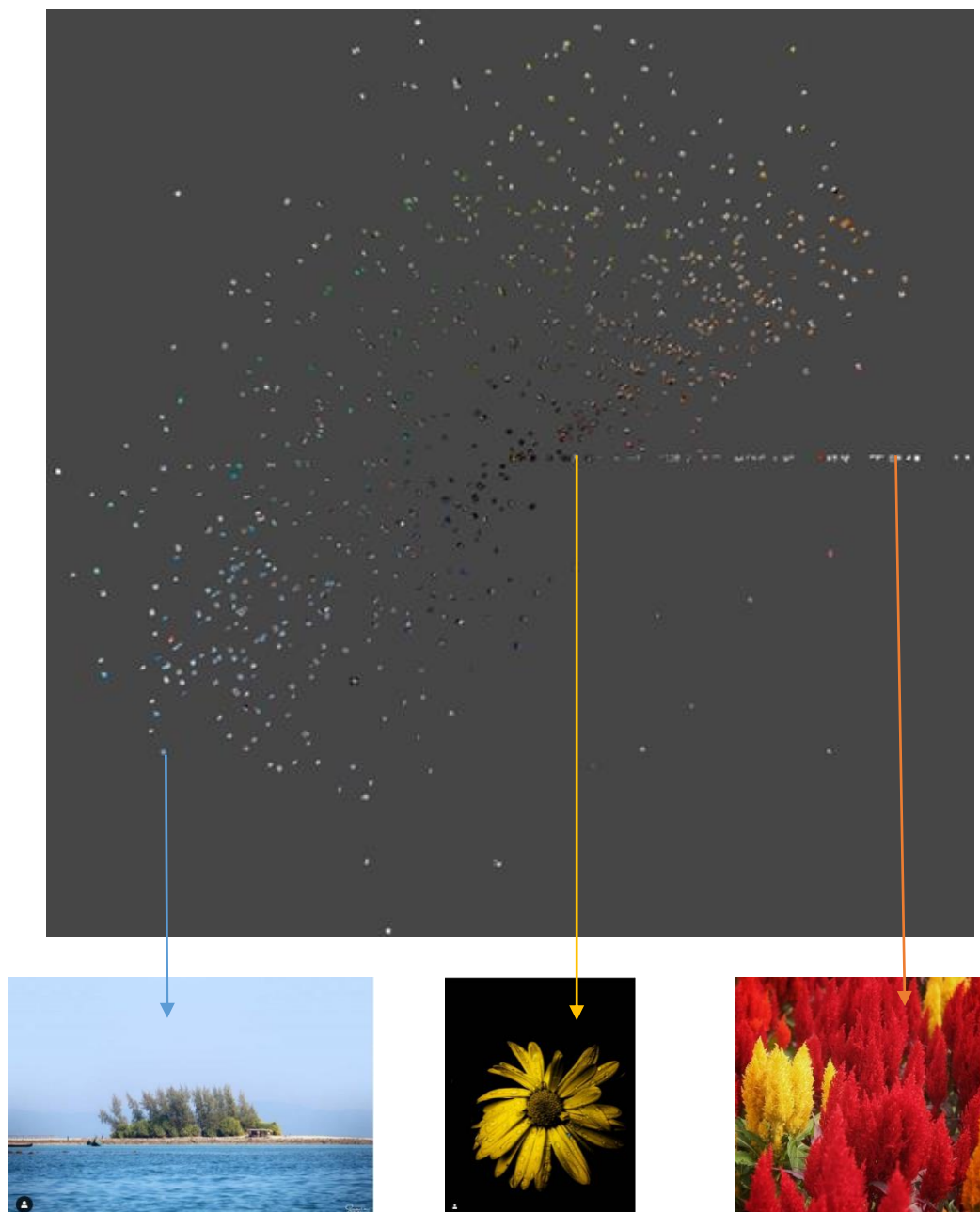


Munsell's colour sphere (Source: Van Leeuwen, 2011)

For example, brightness shows through varying shades of any selected colour (hue) from white (highest brightness) to black (lowest brightness) at the extreme ends. Meantime, saturation can also vary on a grayscale from grey to vivid colours. ImagePlot addresses the above concern of Yu et al. (2020) because ImagePlot

visualisations allow visualising thousands of images on a scatterplot by using any two image space statistics (e.g., hue, brightness, saturation) or even metadata (e.g., date, name) in two axes. So, the ImagePlot visualisations under each sample and each category were obtained using the median values of hue and brightness (e.g., Rose and Willis, 2019). The brightness allows the incorporation of different degrees of lightness or darkness in colours (Van Leeuwen, 2011). These plots are also zoomable on the screen to view the individual thumbnail (images in the samples) (Figure 3.7).

**Figure 3.7: Zoomable ImagePlot Visualisations**



### 3.6.5 Extracting Dominant Colours

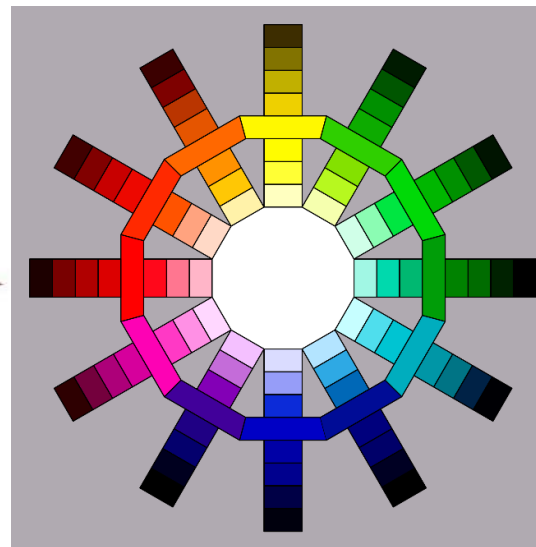
Capturing the brightness of a hue provides additional insights into the interpretation of colours (Van Leeuwen, 2011). ImagePlot visualisations obtained with medians of hue and brightness can be understood using Itten's colour star or Kuppers's colour sun (Figure 3.8).

**Figure 3.8: Combinations of Hue and Brightness**



Itten's colour star

(Source: Itten and Birren, 1970: 67)



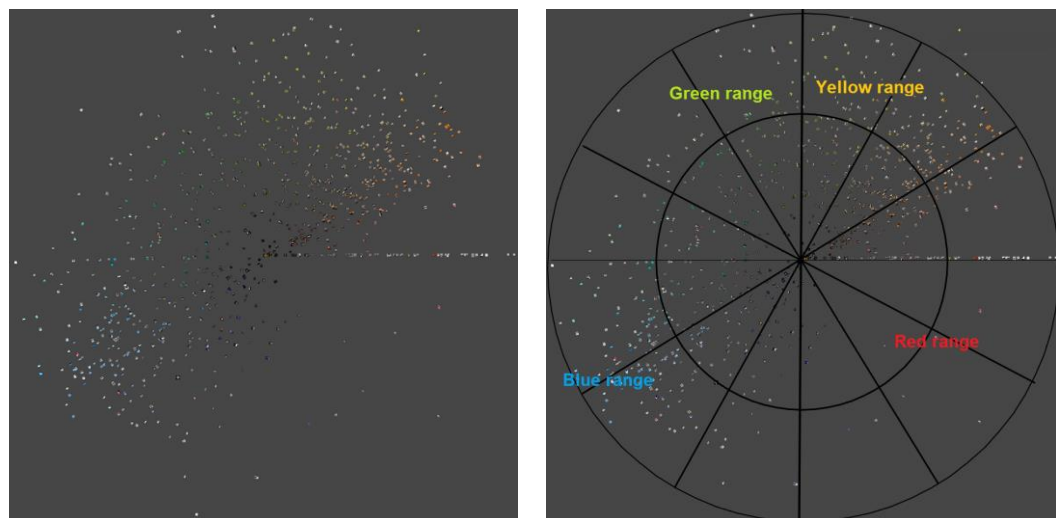
Kuppers's colour sun (Source: Van Leeuwen, 2011)

In the colour star, each pure colour is tinted in two steps to white from the centre and tinted two steps black outwards to arrive at these colour combinations (four steps on each side in the colour sun). (Note: Both models organised colours in the same order. However, though the starting point of both models is orange ( $0^{\circ}$ - $30^{\circ}$ ), the Colour Star has organised colours clockwise starting from yellow at the top, while Colour Sun is organised anti-clockwise).

Accordingly, Imageplot visualisations were obtained for each sample by taking the hue median as the angles and the brightness median as the distance to the centre. The resulting visualisations were then applied to Itten's (1961) colour star to reveal the dominant hue-brightness of each sample (Figure 3.9). While relating to Itten's

colour circle allows only to capture insights of a colour base on hue data, applying Itten's colour star allows to capture both the hue and brightness data and enrich the results. Since ImagePlot takes brightness as distance to the centre, in contrast to the Colour Star or Colour Sun, these maps take darker shades to the centre and lighter shades to the outer layers.

**Figure 3.9: Interpreting Visualisation Using Itten's (1961) Colour Star - Example**



UGC sample sorted by hue median  
(angle) and brightness median  
(distance to the centre)



Application to Itten's (1961) colour star  
(Note: dark shades to the centre and  
white shades to the outer)

Dominant hue-brightness combinations identified were then interpreted to identify the dominant emotions expressed by the images, which is discussed in Chapter 5. Next, the third data analysis method used to analyse in-depth interviews is explained.

### 3.7 The Interviewing Procedure

Interviewing both the international travellers to Bangladesh and DMO officials is expected to provide additional insights into the social modality of the site of image production. Interviewing as the most commonly used data collection method in qualitative research is not specifically grounded in any philosophical belief. Personal

reflexivity is an important consideration since the social constructionist position of this study considers the researcher as a contributor to the meaning construction (King et al., 2019). The following sections explain the interview process and the analysis of the collected data.

### **3.7.1 Sampling Process of International Tourists**

As discussed under the content analysis, the sample should be drawn in a systematic manner (King et al., 2019) and sampling should be purposeful (Creswell and Poth, 2018). Accordingly, a purposeful sample of “a group of people that can best inform the researcher about the research problem under examination” was obtained intentionally (Creswell and Poth, 2018:148). Maximum variation was the sampling strategy. This facilitates descriptions from multiple perspectives by representing diverse variations of individuals (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The researcher will be able to capture more insights and differences from a sample of respondents with different personal characteristics (see King et al., 2019). Moreover, the participants should best represent and be knowledgeable about the research topic (Bowen, 2008). Accordingly, several criteria were adopted to select a purposeful sample of international tourists. First, it was ensured that the participants in the sample represent different age groups, gender, and employment. Nationality was not a criterion, because the required data was not available<sup>6</sup>. Any international tourist, who is neither a Bangladeshi national nor a decedent from Bangladesh, and who can fluently communicate in English, was allowed to be in the sample.

International tourists to Bangladesh were initially traced from publicly available online data (e.g., Lonely Planet, Facebook groups, and Instagram) and interview requests were sent. In addition, a flyer and a 30-second video were published in two Facebook groups namely Dhaka Desperate and Bangladeshi living in the UK

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<sup>6</sup> In the UNWTO Tourism Handbook 2018, Bangladesh tourism statistics were only available up to 2014. Updated statistics re appear only in UNWTO Tourism Handbook of the 2021. But, by the that time, data collection was already designed, started and in the last stages. The 2021 report included a complete data set up to 2019, including the missing years (from 2015 to 2019).

(Appendix 5a and 5b). The same flyer was posted on the researcher's personal Facebook and LinkedIn accounts. These were re-shared by many contacts in my friend lists living in different parts of the world. A notice and a request email were shared via the email distribution list of the international tourism research and education community (TriNet). The snowball strategy was also utilised to through other interviewees. Though some form of bias is inevitable when using the snowball strategy, it is appropriate when the population to obtain the sample is especially hard to access and is tightly defined (King et al., 2019).

Finding suitable participants meeting the criteria was an extremely difficult task. On the one hand, Bangladesh is not a popular or common tourist attraction and, on the other, hand due to the adverse effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic outbreak on the travel industry from early 2020. For example, a giant travel forum the Lonely Planet thorn tree was made read-only in April 2020, by preventing the introduction of new topics and replying (Lonely Planet, Thorn Tree forum, 2020). Hence, the search for participants had to be further expanded. Accordingly, support was requested from some identified travel organisations located in the UK, and individual tour guides based in Bangladesh to trace down international tourists to Bangladesh. Unfortunately, no travel organisations responded. However, responses from tour guides in contacting the travellers to act as respondents of this thesis were very positive. Tour guides acted as insiders and participant responses to them were high since the request come from a known person (King, et al., 2019). Another round of interview requests was sent directly as personal messages to people who participated in the Lonely Planet thorn tree travel forum topics relating to Bangladesh. Finally, the participants were drawn from a wide scope by making the sample stronger.

There are no rules for sample size in qualitative studies and it depends on the purpose of the inquiry, what is considered useful and credible, and also resource availability of the researcher (Patton, 1990). The number of interviews was decided based on the concept of data saturation (Bowen, 2008). Data saturation "is reached when the researcher gathers data to the point of diminishing returns when nothing new is being added" (Bowen, 2008: 140). Though not always necessary, sometimes the



researcher may increase the sample size during the coding process to collect additional data. Accordingly, data saturation was reached with 10 to 12 interviews. However, six more interviews were conducted to assure data saturation being reached. Altogether, 18 interviews were conducted from May 2020 to January 2021. The sample consists of participants representing different age groups, nationalities, employments, and both gender groups (Appendix 6: Sample profile). All these participants shared common characteristics of allocentric or near-allocentric travellers. For example, some of the participants have backpacked to Bangladesh (e.g., Simon, Imran, Kate, Ritchie, and Cathy), while others referred to themselves as travellers and/or argued their purpose of travel is not for leisure but to explore (e.g., Ritchie, Jack, Eddie, Pete, Kate, Mercy, Christina, Alice, and Andy). The wide majority have stayed with the locals contacted through the Couchsurfing application. Participants' profile fits into the characteristics of being allocentric where they take travel decisions quickly and easily by accepting the risks and are willing and prepared to accept inadequate or unconventional kinds of accommodations as it is an integral part of gaining a unique vacation experience (Plog, 2001). Participants' allocentric characteristics are further discussed in Chapter 4, with data analysis and findings.

### **3.7.2. International Tourists Interviewing Process**

Two separate interview guides were designed for international tourists and DMO officials. Qualitative interview guides should be flexible in phrasing the questions and the questions have no predetermined order but should only outline the topics the researcher wants to cover (King et al., 2019). The interview guide for international tourists was prepared in a way to uncover the travel experience as well as the engagement information at the pre-, during, and post-travel stages. The interview guide for DMO officials was designed to reveal the promotional efforts of DMOs and their engagement with UGC. Full questions were formulated but the questions were more open-ended and were asked in a non-leading manner (King et al., 2019). To assure flexibility, participants were allowed to lead the interaction in unanticipated directions. Probing questions were used as necessary during the interview. Based on

the insights gained from the previous interviews, questions for the next interviews were adapted accordingly. The interviews were expected to be conducted either online or in person (face-to-face). However, adapting to the circumstances of the COVID-19 outbreak, all the interviews were conducted through online platforms, such as Zoom, MS Teams, Skype, WhatsApp, or Messenger, based on the participant's convenience and preference.

All the interview data were audio-recorded with the participant's consent. Automated transcription services were used to transcribe the data. However, the audio records were replayed, and transcripts were edited to assure accuracy. Participants' contact data were separated from the study data to protect privacy. Then the study data were anonymised by assigning a pseudonym to refer to the participant. To assure the validity of the data, five selected interview transcripts were sent back to the participants for their feedback (Creswell and Poth, 2018). Participants were allowed to suggest corrections and elaborations in the script or withdraw from participating. However, withdrawals were allowed only within a month from the date they were asked for feedback. This prevented difficulties should the data already be used in the PhD thesis or any publication.

### **3.7.3 Interviewing a DMO Official**

The purpose of interviewing DMO officials is to uncover their efforts towards attracting international tourists and their engagement with online visual media towards the development of the Bangladesh tourism industry. An interview request was sent to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of BTB via email. He was given the option to nominate senior officials who could best contribute to providing data required for the study instead. Accordingly, CEO-BTB nominated the Director- of Marketing and Planning to undertake the interview. The aforementioned Director could not be contacted, despite the extensive efforts made by the researcher since February 2020. It was extremely difficult to reach officials of BTB. None of the officials at BTB, including the aforementioned Director or the CEO, responded to emails or

phone calls made to their landlines or mobiles. LinkedIn requests, also, were not accepted.

This may have been due to the unexpected challenges posed by the COVID-19 global pandemic outbreak, or any other reason. However, it was understood that BTB officials' priorities and responsibilities in such a situation may not have allowed them to reserve time for a research interview. Finally, BTB officials were contacted with the help of the Assistant Director (Indian Market) of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority. Accordingly, Assistant Director- Coordination and general services at the BTB was contacted and an interview was scheduled on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Assistant Director Marketing and Branding participated in the interview via the Zoom meetings application. The interview was audio recorded and transcribed. The script was sent to suggest corrections and elaborations within a month of sending the script. Thematic analysis was used to analyse interview data.

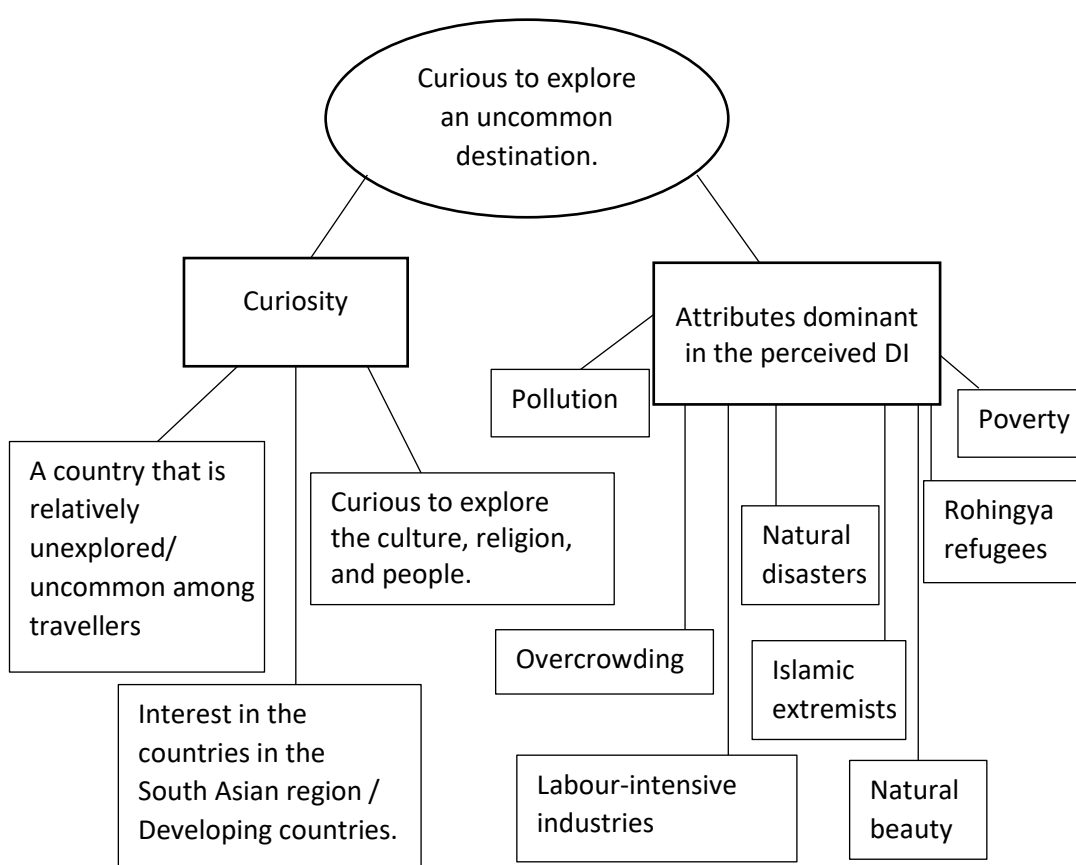
#### **3.7.4 Analysing Interview Data: Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis can provide a rich, detailed, and complex interpretation of data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (p.79). Though thematic analysis is a method derived from grounded theory, it is compatible with different theoretical frameworks since it is not tied to any pre-existing theoretical framework (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It complies with social constructionism as well (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The process of thematic analysis involves analysing interview transcripts to identify initial coding and then identifying common categories from the codes and, finally, aggregating categories to identify common themes. Six steps of the recursive process to thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) were used as the basic guide to analysis. The steps are namely, familiarising with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes and, finally, producing the report.

A code is a researcher-generated construct to “represent and capture datum’s primary content and essence” (Saldana, 2013:4). A theme is “an outcome of coding,

categorising and analytic reflection” (Saldana, 2013:175). Coding and theme development were performed by consulting processes utilised in other studies (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Gioia et al., 2013; Saldana, 2013; Cong et al., 2014; Mitas et al., 2012). All the interview scripts were read and listened to many times for further understanding and familiarisation. Then as many codes as possible were identified through the open coding process. NVivo 12, a qualitative analysis tool with a strong coding (Code) function was used for the purpose (Cong, et al., 2014). These initial codes were revised by listening to the audio records and reading the transcripts several time. Finally, 93 codes were generated. Then, codes were categorised into 20 categories and eight themes were derived from the categories. Both thematic mind maps (example in Figure 3.10) and tables (Appendix 7) were used as visual representations to sort the codes into themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

**Figure 3.10: Example of a Thematic Mind Map**



**Source: Thematic mind map for the theme ‘Curious to explore a less-known destination’ compiled by the researcher.**

The findings derived from the thematic analysis are presented and interpreted to address the research objectives, which are discussed in chapters 4 and 5. Data triangulation was used to assure the validity and reliability of the data, in addition to the measures taken under each data analytical method as discussed in the above sections.

### **3.8 Data Triangulation**

Validating qualitative data is not as straightforward as quantitative techniques. According to Angen (2000), validation within interpretive research is “a judgment of the trustworthiness or goodness of a piece of research” (p.387). Interpretive researchers are to assure both ethical validation and substantive validation (Angen, 2000). To assure ethical validation, the researcher must be self-reflective, and the research agenda must question researchers’ underlining moral assumptions, and political and ethical implications, and pay concern to the equitable treatment of diverse voices (Creswell and Poth, 2018). To assure substantive validation, researchers should understand their topics, should derive understandings from other sources and should write such an understanding process in the report (Angen, 2000). Utilising a combination of multiple qualitative methods with a triangulated approach is commonly recommended to enhance research and improve validity (Creswell and Poth, 2018; Hall and Rist, 1999; Jick, 1979).

Triangulation is “the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon” (Denzin, 1978:291 cited in Jick, 1979:602). Four types of triangulations comprise data, investigator, theory, and methodological triangulation (Patton, 2015). Data triangulation (or between-method triangulation) is the cross-validation, or the convergence of evidence obtained from multiple sources to examine the same dimension (Jick, 1979; Yin, 2018). This will ensure the external validity and construct validity of the research (Jick, 1979; Yin, 2018). Hence, both the interview and photographic data collected from all sources under this case study was triangulated to ensure validity. Within-method triangulation happens when data under a given

data collection method is collected from multiple techniques and interpreted (Jick, 1979). Within-method assures the reliability of the research (Jick, 1979). Two separate within-method comparisons will be performed in this research, i.e., triangulating interview data collected from both parties and triangulating photographic data collected from both sources. Leaving space to address the possibility of receiving dissimilar results from triangulation is an important consideration. According to Jick (1979), such “divergence can often turn out to be an opportunity for enriching explanation” (p.607). Such dissimilar results will expose previously hidden and unconsidered contextual factors (Jick, 1979).

### **3.9 Summary**

The chapter discussed the methodological choices of the research in detail. The researcher approaches a social constructionism epistemology with relativist ontology. The DI of Bangladesh was studied with a critical visual methodology. Firstly, Bangladesh was verified as a suitable context for the thesis. Data were collected from multiple sources, namely, Instagram photographs, DMO online visual content, as well as interviews with international tourists and DMO authorities. Samples were obtained based on purposive sampling. Qualitative content analysis and cultural analytics were used to analyse images and thematic analysis was used to analyse in-depth interviews. Data were triangulated to converge the evidence obtained from multiple sources.

## **CHAPTER 4: THE IMPACT OF NEGATIVE DI IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE TALC**

## **CHAPTER 4 : THE IMPACT OF NEGATIVE DI IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE TALC**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter consists of two-fold objectives. The first is to address the first research objective of the thesis, namely, to examine the impact of negative DI on the early stages of the TALC. This phenomenon is examined in the context of developing countries with negative DI and Bangladesh was selected as a suitable destination for the thesis. Secondly, the chapter validates Bangladesh as a destination with a negative DI in the early stages of the TALC, thus making it an appropriate research context for the study. This thesis employs multiple methods in combination to address research objectives. Accordingly, apart from data obtained from various reports and statistical records, primary data collected from the interviews with a BTB official and international tourists who have been to Bangladesh were also used to address the first research objective in this chapter.

Firstly, this chapter provides an overview of the tourism sector in Bangladesh, relating it to the economic indicators of Bangladesh where necessary. Secondly, the chapter derives the shape and stage of Bangladesh's TALC using a quantitative approach and a qualitative approach respectively. The present TALC stage and the previous TALC stages Bangladesh underwent were identified mainly using a qualitative approach. Thirdly, while examining Bangladesh's DI, this chapter confirms that it has a negative DI and explores the nature of this negative DI (i.e., short-term versus prolonged DI). Finally, the chapter explains the impact of prolonged negative DI in the early stages of the TALC by addressing the first research objective.

### **4.2 Overview of Bangladesh's Tourism Sector and Economy**

The People's Republic of Bangladesh is a South Asian country that is classified under the lower-middle-income category according to the World Bank (2022). It is one of the most densely populated and poverty-stricken countries in the world, which faces continuous political turmoil, natural disasters and terrorism damaging its DI and creating a negative DI (Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Kotler et al., 2002). Nonetheless,



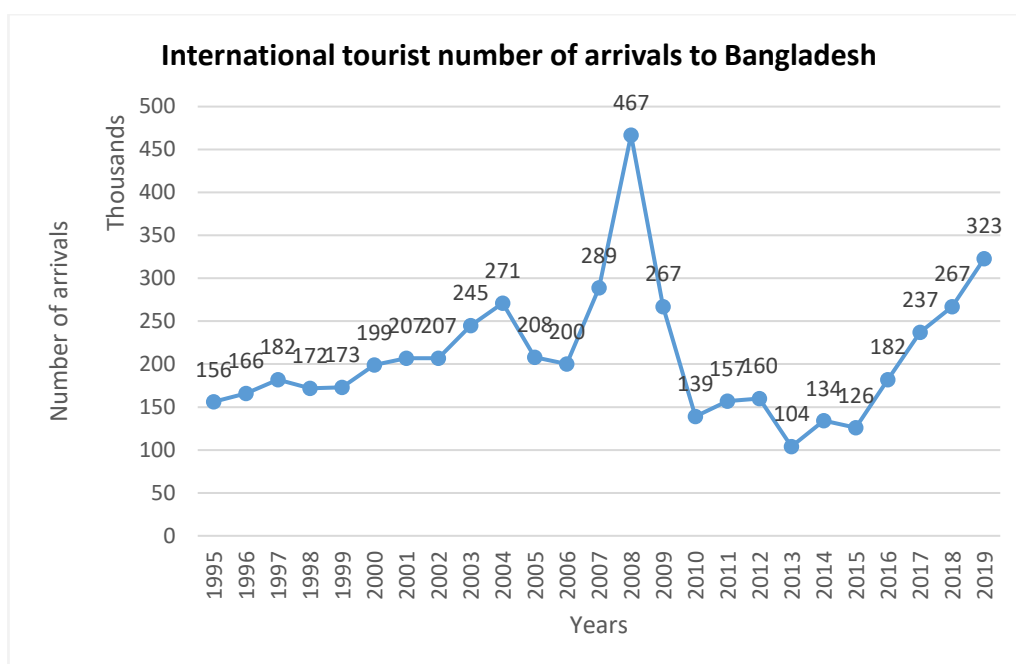
amid the volatile political situation, Bangladesh has shown continuous economic growth throughout its 50 years of existence, which is commonly referred to as a “development puzzle” or “Bangladesh Paradox” (Riaz, 2016). The World Bank Country Overview of Bangladesh (2022) identifies Bangladesh as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world over the past decade and a country with stable macroeconomic conditions. With an 8.2% growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019, Bangladesh has turned out to be the fastest growing economy in South Asia (World Bank, 2022). The country has shown significant improvements in other social development indicators such as access to education, life expectancy at birth and low maternal and infant mortality (Riaz, 2016) and poverty reduction (World Bank, 2022) over past years.

In addition to the economic indicators, Bangladesh has many positive tourist destination attributes, which have been overshadowed by the dominant negative image associated with the destination. It is a country rich with natural beauty, and home to a unique historical and cultural heritage including five UNESCO World Heritage sites (Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB), 2021). Bangladesh has the world’s longest natural unbroken sea beach, and world-renowned mangrove formations in Sundarbans, which is a habitat of Bengal Tigers. According to WEF (2019), in 2019 Bangladesh moved five places ahead (to 120<sup>th</sup> from 125<sup>th</sup> out of 140 countries) in the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index rankings by demonstrating the greatest percentage increase under index in the world for the year. The report states:

“While much of the growth is due to a low starting base (the country still ranks 120th globally) it also indicates the nation’s high potential for upward mobility. The country ranks just above average for the total number of known species (49th) and oral and intangible cultural heritage (43rd), which indicates potential for natural and cultural tourism and might explain the rapid rise in international arrivals” (WEF, 2019:32).

Providing more evidence for the potential upward mobility in the tourism sector, international tourist arrivals to Bangladesh show an upward trend, rising gradually but continuously from 2015 to 2019 (Figure 4.1)<sup>7</sup>.

**Figure 4.1: International Tourism Arrivals**



**Graphed by the researcher. Data source: UNWTO (2021a, 2016, 2011b, 2008, 2000)**

The figures show an increase in tourism numbers which doubled over the period from 126,000 in 2015 to 323,000 in 2019. Bangladesh's tourism sector mainly consists of leisure travel which accounts for 88% of total traveller spending, whereas 12% is recognised as business traveller spending (World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), 2021). The total contribution of tourism to (both international and domestic tourism) to the GDP of Bangladesh in 2019 is USD 9.419 billion, which is a significant 2.7% portion of the GDP. The tourism sector contributes to 2.9% of the total employment (1.859 million employments) as well (WTTC, 2021). Nonetheless, Bangladesh's

<sup>7</sup> Due to the adverse impact of global the Covid-19 pandemic on the travel and tourism sector tourism data from 2020 is not taken for the analysis.

tourism sector is dominated by domestic tourism. International tourists' contribution to the export earnings as a percentage of the total export income is at an insignificant level of 0.86% in 2019 (UNWTO, 2021a). The international tourists contribute only USD 354.5 million, which is only 4% of the total tourist spending, whereas a significant portion of USD 8.038 billion accounts for 96% of tourist spending generated by domestic tourism (WTTC, 2021). However, it is international tourism that attracts foreign exchange earnings into an economy while domestic tourism only facilitates the circulation of money within the economy. So, international tourism improves a country's balance of payment, enhances trade among countries and attracts foreign direct investments to a country (Brida et al., 2016).

The main tourism source markets to Bangladesh are from its neighbouring countries (WTTC, 2021). 77% of the international tourists who visited Bangladesh are from India, Pakistan, and China in 2019 (53% from India, 16% from China, and 8% from Pakistan). Being the only country representing the western world at the top list, the United States generates 7% of tourists to Bangladesh. While South Korea generates 5% of the balance, the rest of the world generated 11% of international tourists to Bangladesh in 2019 (WTTC, 2021). Interestingly, China, the world's largest tourism spending nation (UNWTO, 2021b), is also the second largest international tourism source market of Bangladesh. Nevertheless, while Europe is generating the largest number of outbound tourists (48% in 2019) (UNWTO, 2021b), Bangladesh has failed to attract many tourists from Europe. Bangladesh's context confirms the UNWTO's (2021b) claim that four out of every five tourists are from the same region of the country.

Moreover, Bangladesh's competitive position in the tourism sector is weak compared to its direct competitors. Based on the similarities between the tourism product offered and their target markets (or tourist origin markets), WTTC (2021) identified China, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Nepal as direct competitors of Bangladesh. In 2019 South Asia achieved the fastest tourism growth in the Asia-Pacific region (UNWTO, 2021b) demonstrating a high tourism growth potential. However, for the past 25 years, Bangladesh recorded the lowest

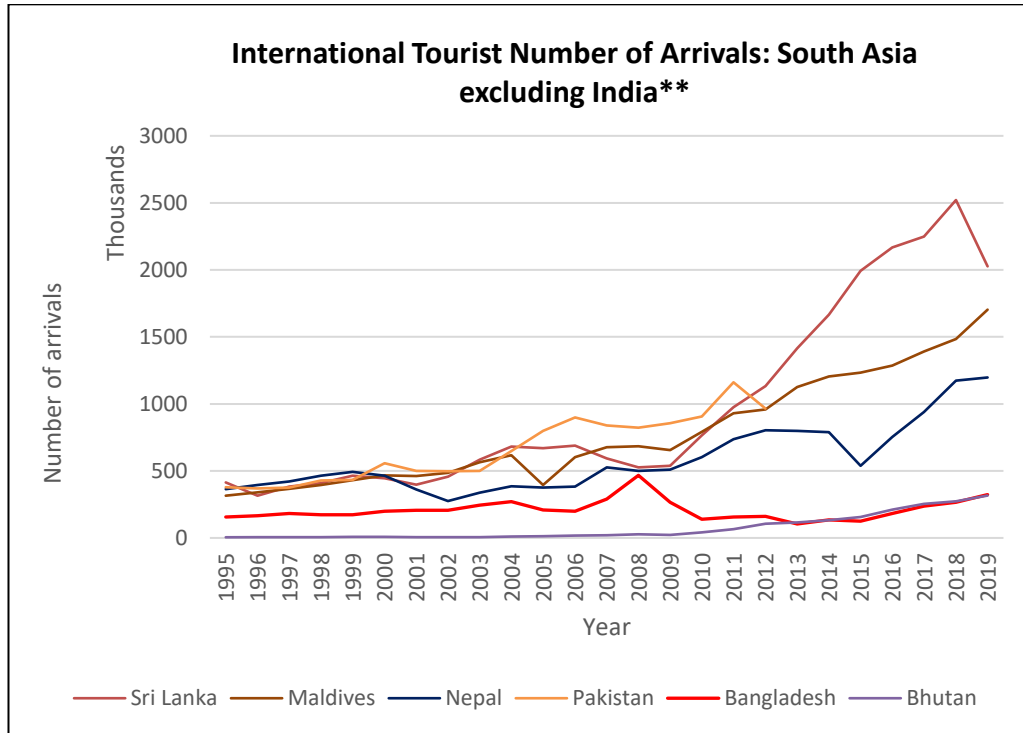
number of international tourist arrivals in the south Asian region apart from Bhutan and Afghanistan (Figure 4.2 a & b).

**Figure 4.2: International Tourist Arrivals in the South Asia Region\***

**a.**



b.



\* Data for Pakistan are only up to 2012

\*\* India was excluded to provide a clear picture of other countries.

**Graphed by the researcher. Data source: UNWTO (2021a, 2016, 2011b, 2008, 2000)**

In 2019, Bangladesh reported USD 391 million which is the lowest international tourism receipts in the South Asian region, except for Bhutan (USD 120 million) and Afghanistan (USD 80 million) (UNWTO, 2021a). Bangladesh's contribution from international tourism receipts to total exports (0.86% in 2019) is the lowest in South Asia, which is below both Bhutan and Afghanistan (UNWTO, 2021a). Moreover, the relative contribution of travel and tourism to GDP, employment, as well as the total capital investment of Bangladesh, is well below the South Asian average (World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), 2021).

Overall, comparison of past tourist arrival records and data show a continuous rise in the tourism numbers to Bangladesh from 2015 to 2019. However, the competitive position of Bangladesh is weak among its direct competitors. Though the country's tourism sector shows potential growth, Bangladesh is still one of the poorest performing countries in the South Asian region. As explained in the Methodology

Chapter, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative measures was used to map Bangladesh's position on the TALC (see Berry, 2006; Gore, et al., 2021). The next section identifies the shape of Bangladesh's TALC using quantitative measures (subheading 4.3). This statistical approach also provided a basic idea about the stage of Bangladesh's TALC (Gore et al., 2021; Haywood, 1986). Subsequently, a qualitative approach was used to identify the stage of Bangladesh's TALC position (subheading 4.4).

### **4.3 TALC Shape of Bangladesh**

As explained in the Methodology Chapter, smoothed data series of international tourist arrivals was used to obtain the shape of Bangladesh's TALC (see Gore et al., 2021; McKercher and Wong, 2021). The annual growth rates were used to quantitatively identify the stages and the current TALC position of Bangladesh (see Gore et al., 2021). Table 4.1 below presents the actual tourist numbers (column 2), the smooth data series of international tourist arrivals (column 3), and the annual growth rates (column 4). Figure 4.3 shows these data mapped in a graph.

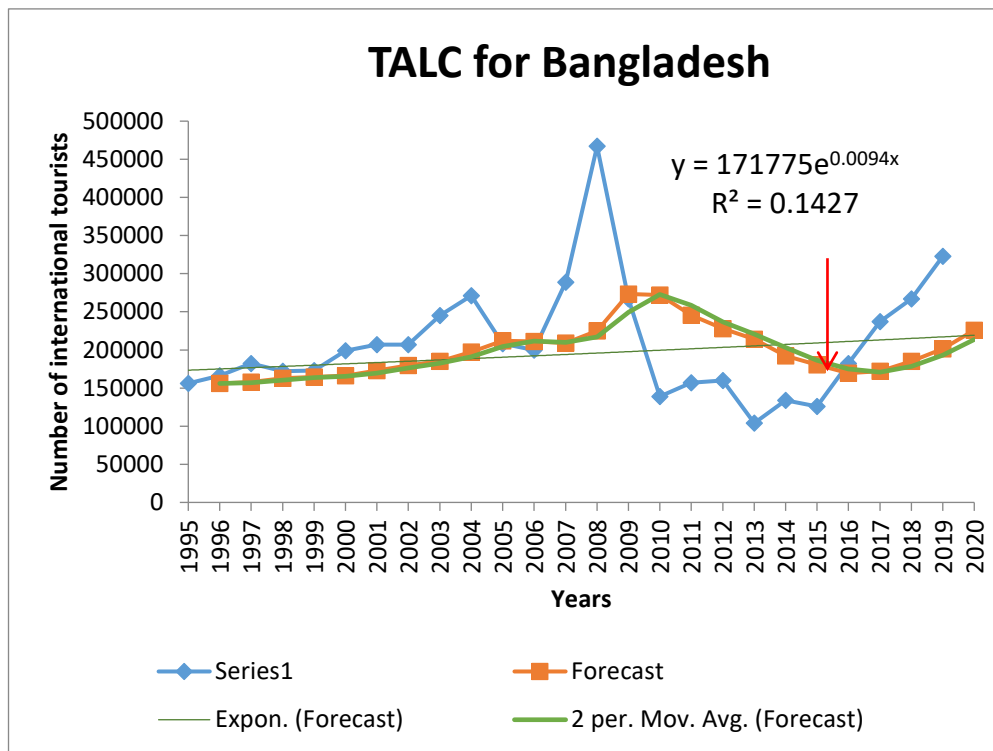
**Table 4.1: Number of International Tourist Arrivals to Bangladesh and Annual Growth Rate**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of international tourist arrivals*</b>	<b>Simple exponential smoothing</b>	<b>Annual growth rates**</b>
1995	156,000		
1996	166,000	156,000.00	175,024.47
1997	182,000	158,000.00	176,672.13
1998	172,000	162,800.00	178,335.29
1999	173,000	164,640.00	180,014.11
2000	199,000	166,312.00	181,708.73
2001	207,000	172,849.60	183,419.30
2002	207,000	179,679.68	185,145.98
2003	245,000	185,143.74	186,888.91
2004	271,000	197,115.00	188,648.26
2005	208,000	211,892.00	190,424.16
2006	200,000	211,113.60	192,216.78
2007	289,000	208,890.88	194,026.28
2008	467,000	224,912.70	195,852.81
2009	267,000	273,330.16	197,696.53
2010	139,000	272,064.13	199,557.61
2011	157,000	245451.30	201,436.22
2012	160,000	227,761.04	203,332.50
2013	104,000	214,208.83	205,246.64
2014	134,000	192,167.07	207,178.80
2015	126,000	180,533.65	209,129.14
2016	182,000	169,626.92	211,097.85
2017	237,000	172,101.54	213,085.09
2018	267,000	185,081.23	215,091.04
2019	323,000	201,464.98	217,115.87
2020		225,771.99	219,159.76

**\*Source: UNWTO (2021a, 2016, 2011b, 2008, 2000)**

**\*\*** The standard deviation of the annual growth rate for the entire period of study is 13530.59.

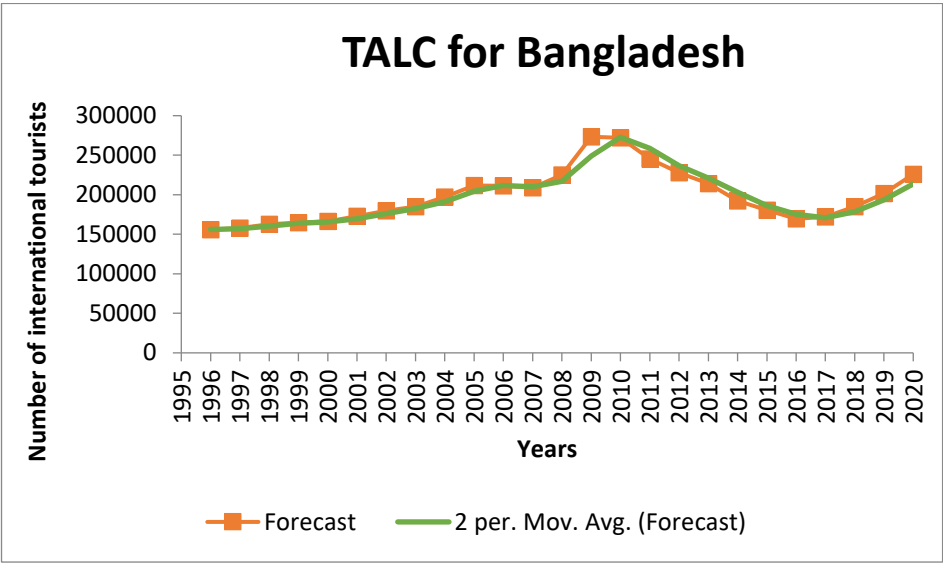
**Figure 4.3: TALC for International Tourists to Bangladesh**



The graph shows the actual tourist numbers (blue line), the forecasted numbers (or smoothed data) (orange line) for 25 years, the trend line (Expon. Forecast) for the forecasted data (black line), as well as the additional smoothed line based on the two-year moving averages technique (line in green). A smoothed line treats for anomalies in the actual data on international tourist arrivals by demonstrating the underlining behaviour of the time series (Gore et al., 2021; McKercher and Wong, 2021). Two smoothed lines were derived from simple exponential smoothing (orange line) (Gore et al., 2021) and two-year moving averages (green line) (McKercher and Wong, 2021), and both techniques resulted in very similar lines. Either of these lines can be taken as the mapped TALC shape of Bangladesh (Figure 4.4).

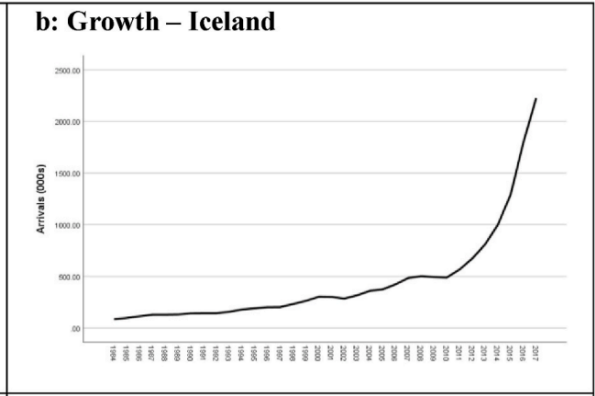


Figure 4.4: TALC for International Tourists to Bangladesh



Both the TALC shape of Bangladesh and statistical records demonstrate that Bangladesh’s TALC is not aligned with the hypothetical S shape proposed by Butler (1980) but has spent a long time in the early stages of the TALC. The shape of the Bangladeshi TALC can be explained with the categories of lifecycles put forward by McKercher and Wong (2021). Though the TALC shape of Bangladesh does not fully correspond with any of the six shapes proposed, it fits more closely with the characteristics they argue to be present in the group of countries that are in the ‘growth’ cycle (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5: Categories of Lifecycle – b. Growth- Iceland



Source: Adopted from McKercher and Wong (2021:3)

Table 4.1 shows that for the full period from 1995 to 2019, the traveller growth rate of Bangladesh has never fallen below the standard deviation of 13530.59, confirming that Bangladesh has a single period of growth with some slowed-down periods. For example, after a sudden increase in tourist arrivals in 2008, they experienced a sharp drop in 2009<sup>8</sup>; yet, again, the numbers started to grow after 2015. The growth rate shows a continuous upward trend since 2016. Congruent with McKercher and Wong's (2021) interpretations of the 'growth' category, Bangladesh's TALC also shows a single period of growth, with growth spurts slowing occasionally. Similar to the group of countries in the 'growth' category, Bangladesh's TALC shows that it has spent long exploration and involvement phases before international visitor numbers started to increase (see McKercher and Wong, 2021). Data showed that the time spent in the exploration and involvement phases is more than two decades from 1995 to around 2016. It can be realistically assumed that Bangladesh had been in the exploration stage during the period from 1971 to 1994 (no statistics available) indicating the time spent in the exploration stage is even longer. Bangladesh's mapped TALC line shows the beginning of an upward trend, demonstrating a move towards the development stage.

The statistical evidence indicate Bangladesh is in its development stage of TALC. None of the annual growth rates (Table 4.1) falling below the standard deviation of 13530.59, agrees with the decision criteria for the development stage of TALC, i.e., "the annual growth rate is more than the standard deviation of annual growth rates for the entire period of study" (Gore et al., 2021:350). Nevertheless, the shape of the TALC does not demonstrate Bangladesh is in the development stage of its TALC. To confirm this identified trend based on statistical evidence, more data from a future period is required. However, the objective of this thesis is not to forecast, and the forecasting ability of the TALC is criticised (Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022; McKercher, 2005). While a quantitative approach is used to operationalise the TALC, a qualitative approach is more commonly employed to identify the stage of TALC

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<sup>8</sup> Due to the global economic crisis in 2008-2009, international tourism numbers and tourism receipts significantly dropped in 2009 around the world (UNWTO, 2010).

(e.g., Berry, 2006; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021). As explained in the methodology chapter (page 87-88) TALC stages are qualitatively identified by examining the degree of presence or absence of criteria or indicators that characterise different stages (Table 2.1 in Literature Review). The following section explains how the TALC stage of Bangladesh is qualitatively identified by comparing tourism-related and other relevant information on Bangladesh against the indicators that characterise different stages (e.g., Agarwal, 1997; Berry, 2006; Butler, 1980; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021).

#### **4.4 Locating Bangladesh's Stage of TALC with Indicators**

Though a variety of tourism-related organisations were established in Bangladesh since its independence, tourism did not receive adequate attention as an industry (see, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh, 2021). The Bangladeshi government officially recognised tourism as an industry in 2010 by establishing a DMO, the Bangladesh Tourism Board, and drafting a National Tourism Policy Document (Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh, 2010). Recognition of the tourism industry as a significant economic and social contributor to the economy of Bangladesh was a gradual and slow process. Examination of the historical data and context provided evidence that endogenous and exogenous factors such as political turmoil, the economic climate, and natural disasters have a critical impact on both the position of the TALC and the DI formation of Bangladesh. Hence, the history of the political turmoil and related economic and social factors are presented next. Subsequently, the later sections present the impact of these factors on the TALC position (Subheading 4.4.3) as well as the DI formation (Subheading 4.5).

##### **4.4.1 History of Political Turmoil**

Established in 1971, Bangladesh was the youngest member state of South Asia. Before the British colonial era, it was a part of greater India. After India gained independence from the British Empire in 1947, Bangladesh was absorbed into the Dominion of Pakistan, a newly formed independent colonial state. The Dominion of

Pakistan comprised two parts; East-Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and West-Pakistan (now Pakistan), which are geographically located on the east and west sides of India, respectively. Apart from the geographical separation, East and West were diverse in their cultural and social context, mainly in the language and religious composition of the population at the time. Further, the economic deprivation and political marginalisation towards East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) were critical concerns of East Pakistan that lead them towards a struggle for independence (Riaz, 2016). Two key milestones of the Bangladeshi independence struggle, the Bengali Language Movement (1952-1956) and the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971 caused genocides within Bangladesh. These incidents received worldwide attention and media coverage during the time and are still widely known and remembered internationally. For, example, the media reported millions of people being killed, thousands of Bengali women being raped, and ten million civilians being internally displaced during the nine months long Bangladeshi liberation war in 1971 (Riaz, 2016).

Though the Republic of Bangladesh was established in 1971, order was not restored for some time after independence, due to the complex economic, administrative, and political challenges the new Bangladeshi government had to deal with. For example, a military coup, in 1975, brought in an era of rule by military-dominant regimes (Riaz, 2016). In 1991, after 16 long years, the parliamentary system was re-established, but the political situation was not completely stabilised throughout (see Riaz, 2016). Until very recently Bangladesh was considered one of the most dangerous countries in the Asia Pacific region (WEF, 2017). Though WEF (2019) recently reported the security conditions of Bangladesh have been drastically improved, some standalone violent incidents were reported. The rise of Islamic extremism has been notably evident since 2014, with a campaign of violence against bloggers, atheists, and secular intellectuals (Riaz, 2016). For example, in 2016 the militant group Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen was accused of murdering 20 people, including 18 foreigners, at a cafe in Dhaka (BBC, 2021). And the United Nations Working Group on Involuntary and Enforced Disappearances (2022) has also reported about extrajudicial killings and enforced

disappearances in Bangladesh and the lack of response from their government to address such issues.

Apart from this volatile political situation, Bangladesh continuously faces natural disasters; mainly floods and cyclones. With 80% of the landmass in a floodplain, Bangladesh suffers severely from repeated floods. The flood in 1998 was considered the worst ever, which devastated two-thirds of the country (BBC, 2021). This regular flooding causes severe damage to the lifestyles and livelihoods of locals causing death and severe water-borne diseases, making millions of people homeless and resulting in severe damage to the general infrastructure. On average, 6188 people die and over 323 million people are affected annually by natural disasters, causing an average annual economic damage of over USD 550 million (Bangladesh Statistics Yearbook, 2021). The most recent flooding disaster was reported in 2022, which also had a severe impact on the livelihoods of locals, including casualties (Dhaka Tribune, 2023). Additionally, apart from the continuous natural disasters and political turmoil, stand-alone disasters are also frequent in Bangladesh. For example, in 2013 the collapse of the Rana Plaza building, which housed five garment factories in Dhaka, caused 1100 deaths (BBC, 2021).

These changes in the exogenous environment have a direct impact on the evolution of the tourism industry in Bangladesh. Examining these exogenous factors together with the changes in the tourism industry enabled the identification of three main phases of the Bangladesh tourism industry, which are then used to identify the TALC stages of Bangladesh. The next section identifies the TALC stages of Bangladesh through a cross-examination of the observable and measurable indicators that define each stage of TALC with the presence or absence of such indicators in the context of Bangladesh (e.g., Agarwal, 1997; Berry, 2006; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021). These are the indicators presented in Table 2.1 (page 37) in chapter 2: Literature Review, which includes the type of tourists visiting the destination, the emergence of tourist seasons, the level of focus and funding of destination marketing organisations towards promoting tourism and infrastructure development, the economic, and social impact of tourism on the destination, locals' reaction towards tourists and

contribution of the private sector to the tourism industry and so on (Butler, 1980; Berry, 2006; Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021).

#### **4.4.2 Three Main Phases of the Bangladesh Tourism Industry**

Three phases of the evolution of Bangladesh's tourism industry were identified from 1971 to early 2022 as the life-cycle stages of Bangladesh. These phases are based on significant changes that occurred in or were made to the tourism industry with the changes in the political environment of Bangladesh. Phase 1 (from 1971 to 1985) was identified as the exploration stage of the TALC. Phase 2 (1986- 2009) was identified as the period in which Bangladesh gradually moved towards the involvement stage of its TALC. Phase 3 (from 2010-2022) started while Bangladesh is at the involvement stage and made a gradual move towards the development stage of its TALC. These three phases are as follows.

**Phase 1 (from 1971 to 1985) Exploration stage:** At the beginning (1971-85), tourism was not recognised or organised as a separate industry. Tourism-related matters were handled by many independent organisations (e.g., Department of Tourism, Bangladesh Services Limited, etc.) and under the responsibility of various Ministries that were changed frequently during this phase (Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh, 2021). According to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh (2021), tourism-related issues were first placed under the Ministry of Commerce (1971) and then transferred to the Ministry of Shipping, Inland Transport, and Tourism (1972-76) and next to the Ministry of Communication (1976-77). Then, in 1977, a new ministry, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, was established and was soon abolished in 1982. Finally, tourism was taken under the Ministry of Defence from 1982 to 1986 (Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh, 2021). During this first phase, tourism was not recognised as an important economic or social activity in Bangladesh but was treated as part of the transportation industry with border control concerns.

The political environment during this phase was highly volatile. This phase began soon after independence and, during this phase, Bangladesh was either under civil (under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: 1971-1975) or military authoritarianism (under Ziaur Rahman: 1975–81 and Hussain Muhammad Ershad: 1982–90) (Riaz, 2016). So, Bangladesh was not in a proper condition to promote tourism or ensure a safe environment for tourists. No tourism statistics are available for this period although there may have been some foreign leisure travellers comprised of adventure-oriented (allocentric) visitors. Economic and social impacts made by tourism on Bangladesh may also have been significantly less to attract government attention towards tourism. The government economic policy was nationalisation during this period (Riaz, 2016). So, there is little reason to assume that there has been any private sector involvement in tourism. These results indicate that Bangladesh was in the exploration stage of its TALC in this first phase (1971-1985). Berry (2006) argues that the demarcation line between the exploration and involvement stages is not vital because the tourism industry was barely noticed to exist at this level. Hence, the destination will not have any adverse economic impacts even if tourism never gets off the ground.

**Phase 2 (from 1986 to 2009) Involvement stage:** This phase began while Bangladesh was still under military authorisation, which was there until 1990. The economic policy was changed to privatisation from nationalisation (Riaz, 2016). However, the first gesture of the tourism industry to obtain proper recognition was received in 1986. In 1986, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism was re-established, and all the tourism-related institutions and authorities of the government were absorbed under it (Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh, 2021). At present, there are six main organisations related to tourism, operating in Bangladesh under the ministry. Two of them are related to air transportation. They are: i.) the national airline, Biman Bangladesh (Est. 1972); and, ii.) Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (Est. 1985) that acts as the aviation regulatory body, airport operator, and air navigation service provider. The next, two are public-owned limited companies dealing with the accommodation sector, namely: iii.) Bangladesh Services Limited

(Est. 1973) that mainly deals with five-star standard hotels operating under management agreements with world-reputed hotel groups (e.g., InterContinental, and Sheraton) as well as managing the international conference centre; and, iv.) Hotels International Limited (Est. 2012) that maintains a five-star hotel (Pan Pacific Sonargoan Hotel, Dhaka managed by a company in Singapore). Operations of these two organisations are limited to handling management agreements with a few five-star hotels and conference facilities located in the capital city of Dhaka.

The next two organisations are directly responsible for tourism development in Bangladesh, and both are recognised as National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). The first, v.) Bangladesh Parjatan (Tourism) Corporation (BPC) (Est. 1972 initially), was established by allocating all the resources of the former Tourism Department. BPC handled all the tourism-related tasks, including commercial service provision and marketing activities until the Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB)<sup>9</sup> was established in 2010. BPC's role is now limited to the creation and operation of various tourism facilities and tourism-related infrastructure across Bangladesh. vi.) The BTB was established under the BTB Act- 2010, by separating tourism marketing and promotions activities from BPC. These changes indicate the beginning of the involvement stage of the destination since the “involvement stage of the cycle began when institutionalised features of the tourism industry were constructed at the locale” (Johnston, 2006:9).

The re-establishment of democracy in the country in 1990 was the most significant political change during this period (Riaz, 2016). Starting from the 1991 parliamentary election, Bangladesh was under three democratically appointed governments for 15 years (i.e., Khalida Zia: 1991-96 and 2001-2006 and Sheik Hasina: 1996-2001) (Riaz, 2016). However, political crisis in 2006 put Bangladesh again under a caretaker government, until a proper government was elected under the leadership of Sheik Hasina in December 2008 (Riaz, 2016).

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<sup>9</sup> BTB was not established during this phase but in the next phase. However, all six organisations operating under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism are presented together to aid the reader.



Bangladesh's political situation was not stable during this phase. Nevertheless, despite the volatile political environment and natural disasters at the time, Bangladesh maintained its economic growth rate, while improving its social development indicators (Riaz, 2016). These positive vibes of the 'Bangladesh development puzzle' (Riaz, 2016), along with its economic growth and development, made a favourable impact on the tourism industry. Firstly, even under limited government-level recognition or a push to support the tourism industry, international tourism numbers slowly but gradually increased up to 2010, though with a growth spurt and an occasional slowdown (see Table 4.1, Figure 4.3). Secondly, the establishment of a separate ministry to handle tourism shows that the government placed a level of importance on tourism in this phase (1986-2009). The only sensible reason found for the sudden boom of tourist numbers in 2008 (nearly doubled in 2008 and reduced back to normal rate in 2009) could probably be owing to the re-appointment of Sheikh Hasina's government in 2008, which brought back political stability to the country after being under a caretaker government for two years. Though this cannot be backed up by proper evidence, the reason for the increased arrival numbers could possibly be the Bangladeshi immigrants visiting home as a result of the positive political change, rather than international tourists. Otherwise, the period from 2008 to 2009 was considered the toughest years for the tourism industry in decades, mainly due to the global economic crisis of 2008 and the A(H1N1) pandemic (UNWTO, 2010). The National Tourism Policy of Bangladesh (2010) documented the position of tourism before 2010 as:

“Tourism of Bangladesh is still in the take-off stage. Despite having huge potential, the tourism of Bangladesh couldn't achieve its expected goal [increase in international tourist numbers]. With [the] increase of purchasing power parity of the mass population, domestic tourism has expanded significantly, but the number of foreign tourists visiting Bangladesh hasn't increased as expected” (p.3).

Moreover, the organizations under the ministry such as BPC and Bangladesh Services Limited started to provide at least a few facilities targeting tourists (mainly luxury hotels in the capital city). So, it can be said that between 1986-2009 Bangladesh was

in a transition period moving forward from the exploration stage towards the involvement stage, whereby the end of the period provided evidence to show that Bangladesh had moved to the involvement stage.

**Phase 3 (from 2010- March 2022)<sup>10</sup> Extended involvement stage:** This phase began with Bangladesh still being in the involvement stage of its TALC. The year 2010 can be identified as the beginning of a new era of tourism in Bangladesh with the Bangladesh government officially recognising tourism as a separate industry. In 2010, Bangladesh drafted the National Tourism Policy of Bangladesh, established a DMO, and the Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB). The government-level engagement, as well as investments in the tourism industry, significantly increased during this phase. The National Tourism Policy of Bangladesh (2010) acknowledged that “in order to get more foreign tourists we need to develop infrastructure and other touristic facilities through local and foreign investment and integrated cooperation between government and private sector is a must” (p. 3). However, WEF (2017) reported that Bangladesh’s tourist service infrastructure and air travel infrastructure is at the lowest level when compared with other South Asian countries. And, tourism and travel have also received the lowest level of prioritization in the government policy of Bangladesh compared to other South Asian countries (WEF, 2017). The One Decade of Development: 2009-2018 report published by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh (2021) reviewing the decade of the rule of the present government provides the following facts about the tourism infrastructure development (Table 4.2).

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<sup>10</sup> Due to the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic not only affecting Bangladesh but with negative effects on the tourism industry worldwide, the impacts of the pandemic on tourism numbers in Bangladesh were not specifically included in this analysis.

**Table 4.2: Government Tourism Expenditure and Development Projects After 2009**

Executing government organization	Development projects started and completed or ongoing during the period (2009-2019)	
	Expenditure (in Taka 10 million)	<i>Selected infrastructure development projects</i>
1. Civil Aviation Authority	15643.43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrading Cox's Bazar airport to an international airport to cater for increased tourism numbers in the area.</li> <li>• Upgrading and expanding country-wide airports and facilities (e.g., Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Saidpur, Jashore, Dhaka).</li> <li>• Bilateral service agreements with the USA, Canada, Turkey, and Jordan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Planned projects (from 2018 -2030)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion and upgrading of airports in Chittagong, Bagerhat, Sylhet, Saidpur, Barisal, and Dhaka.</li> <li>• Building parallel taxiways at all airports. Digitalising airports.</li> </ul>
2. BPC	104.91	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 development projects to improve tourism facilities in Dinajpur, Kuakata, Chapainbabganj, Rangamati, Chittagong, Jaflong, Sylhet, Hatia, Nijhum Dweep (e.g., restaurants, hotels, conference halls, children's parks, and picnic sheds).</li> <li>• Connected all facilities through a digital network.</li> <li>• Conducted a feasibility study to identify possible tourism locations to be developed.</li> <li>• Enhancing earnings from duty-free operations.</li> <li>• Building awareness of community-based tourism.</li> </ul>
3. Biman Bangladesh (National airline)	Not given	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resumed domestic operations in 2015, the first time after 2008.</li> <li>• Introduced online seat reservation and automated ticketing.</li> <li>• Seating capacity increased from 2736 total seats in 2010 to 3545 seats in 2018. Expect to increase to 4028 by 2020.</li> </ul>

**Source: Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism (2021)**

The data show that Bangladesh has heavily invested in developing infrastructure and transportation to facilitate tourism, which is an indicator that Bangladesh is in its involvement stage of the TALC. In addition, Bangladesh has also demonstrated some

indicators of the development stage of its TALC, which are identified as the leading factors (Berry, 2006; Gore et al., 2021). For example, the tourist market areas are now well-defined, and the government attention has been drawn towards the development of additional tourist facilities and fabricated attractions (BTB.gov.bd; beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd, 2021). As shown above, BPC is increasingly executing development projects for hotels, restaurants, conference halls, and other facilities targeting tourists in many areas all over the country including areas that have received less attention previously. Further, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh stresses that the goal of Bangladesh is to increase the tourism industry's contribution to the Bangladeshi economy by promoting Bangladesh as a tourist destination among international tourists.

Similarly, Bangladesh DMO's promotional efforts have significantly increased, with a new promotional focus, especially with the increased attention on online promotions. Hossain and Islam (2019) point out that Bangladesh shows a lethargic attitude and has largely failed to adopt new media communications (e.g., social media) in destination promotions. An interview with a BTB official showed that, until recently, Bangladesh was mainly employing traditional offline media to reach the target audience (overt Induced-I information sources such as tourism fairs, trade shows, websites, and social media to share BTB-created content). The DMO online platforms (websites and social media) were also mainly highlighting officials' activities with a focus on profile building of officials rather than destination promotions (these aspects are discussed in chapter 5). However, showing a high potential for using new media for its tourism activities, Bangladesh's Information and Communications Technology readiness level was up to the average rate of the South Asian region (WEF, 2017). In mid-2020, showing a significant change, the BTB, as Bangladesh's DMO, launched a new promotional website called beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd which was named after the official tourism tagline of Bangladesh, 'Beautiful Bangladesh'. This platform is affiliated with its own Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube accounts and is fully focused on promoting tourism rather than other administrative activities. Furthermore, the DMO has taken efforts to accommodate inputs from different outside parties to their promotional

campaigns (e.g., photographic competition and travel webcast with the participation of locals).

Bangladesh has also improved its competitive position towards the latter part of this phase. For example, among many improvements, Bangladesh's country brand strategy ratings, infrastructure developments, and safety and security conditions showed significant improvements in 2019 (Table 4.3).

**Table 4.3: Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index Ranking 2019**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>2019 ranking *</b>	<b>Previous ranking (2017) *</b>	<b>Improvement (in ranks)</b>
Safety and security	105	123	13
Favourable perceptions of government commitment to the T&T industry	109	111	2
Country brand strategy ratings	77	97	20
ICT readiness	111	116	5
T&T prioritization	121	127	6
Price competitiveness	85	89	4
Ground and port infrastructure	60	74	14
Overall infrastructure	109	116	7

\* Bangladesh's rank out of 140 countries that are analysed under the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index by WEF in 2019.

**Source: WEF (2019:33)**

However, while highlighting the recent improvements in Bangladesh's competitive position, the WEF (2019) admits that Bangladesh would need further substantial improvements in areas such as the relaxation of investment barriers and the development of service quantity and quality to assure further tourism growth.

Overall, the above section reveals that Bangladesh is in its Involvement stage of TALC. A few of the indicators of the development stage emerge as leading factors during this extended involvement stage hinting at move towards the development stage. Nevertheless, Bangladesh cannot be placed in the development stage as a

considerable number of indicators that should be present in that stage are still absent in Bangladesh as examined below. Both document analysis and insights gained from primary data obtained via interviews (i.e., international tourists and BTB official) were used in the analysis to obtain the findings.

#### **4.4.3 Development Stage of the TALC: Indicators Not Yet Realised**

As revealed in the above sections, several characteristics that are expected to be present in the development stage of the TALC are found in the context of Bangladesh. They are the leading factors that emerged in the involvement stage. As per the arguments concerning the use of predictability of TALC, destinations may demonstrate some characteristics that are expected to appear in the next stage which are termed as leading indicators (e.g., Berry, 2006). For example, the Bangladeshi government has engaged in the development of additional tourist facilities and fabricated attractions, mainly in major cities. In addition, BTB as the DMO, has recently increased its online promotional activities, including increased social media presence. Even though it is not a rapid increase, the number of travellers is increasing as per the statistics. Moreover, this traveller group is composed of some institutionalised travellers as well. Table 4.4 summarises the leading and laggard indicators of Bangladesh at each stage it presents. Afterwards the laggard indicators are discussed.

**Table 4.4: Summary of the TALC Characteristics of Bangladesh**

Stage of TALC	Indicators	Availability of the indicator
Exploration	Few tourists	Yes
	Adventurous (or allocentric) tourists visiting sites	Yes
	No or less public and tourist facilities	Yes
	Visitors attracted to natural physical features and cultural attractions	Yes
	The physical and social fabric is not disturbed by the tourism industry	Yes
	High level of contact with the locals and making interactions with locals become a significant attraction to visitors	Yes
	The arrival and departure of tourists do not affect the locals	Yes
	Economic and social impacts made by tourism to the destination are relatively less significant	Yes
Involvement	Visitor numbers increase and are regulated	Yes
	Tourist seasons emerge	can assume yes
	A definite market area begins to emerge	Yes
	Locals begin to provide primary or exclusive facilities targeting visitors	Yes
	There is a high level of contact between locals and visitors	Yes
	The lifestyle of locals who engaged in tourism faces changes	can assume yes
	The developing tourism industry leads to the provision of basic services	Yes
	Public investments are made to develop infrastructure and transportation	Yes
	Increased advertising induces a definable pattern of seasonal variation	Yes
Development	Tourists are now mid-centric/institutionalised tourists	Some (allocentric co-exist)
	Visitation grows rapidly	Not rapid growth
	The tourist market area is well-defined	To some extent
	Development of additional tourist facilities and fabricated attractions	Yes, but few
	Increased promotional efforts with heavy advertising	Yes
	Greater control of the tourist trade by outsiders and more facilities are provided by external organizations	No evidence
	Auxiliary facilities for tourism are developed	To some extent
	Migrated labour is utilised in the tourism industry	No evidence
	The number of tourists at peak periods far outweighs the size of the resident population, inducing rising	No
	Antagonism of the resident population towards tourists	No

As shown in Table 4.4, most of the key indicators that are agreed to be present in the development stage of the TALC are absent in the context of Bangladesh. Eight of the key indicators that are missing in the Bangladeshi context are explained below. Here, to identify these missing indicators, both the data obtained from a variety of reports discussed in the above sections, including the analysed statistical data as well as the primary data obtained from the interviews, are used simultaneously.

Firstly, there is not enough evidence to suggest that there is a rapid growth in the number of visitors as indicative of the development stage. As shown in Table 4.1, within two decades, i.e., from 1996 to 2019, the annual growth rates in tourism numbers have increased gradually from 175,024 to 219,159 respectively, and this is not a rapid increase. Secondly, there is no statistical evidence to point out that the number of tourists at peak periods far outweighs the size of the resident population in any specific attractions. Thirdly, though there are some mid-centric/institutionalised tourists, the market still consists of a considerable amount of allocentric tourists. For example, after using a wide variety of sources to draw a sample of international tourists to Bangladesh, all the participants in the interview sample represented only the allocentric group, even though being allocentric was not a screening criterion (Appendix 6: Sample Profile). Inputs from the interview data as primary data collected for the purpose of addressing research objectives of this thesis also confirm this point. The interview participants confirmed that there are very few international tourists at any given tourist attraction within Bangladesh. As revealed from the thematic analysis, (Theme1: Curious to explore a less known destination) the majority of participants choose Bangladesh with the perception that this destination is a relatively uncommon and unexplored destination, which aroused their curiosity to visit (see examples below).

First of all, Bangladesh [has] always been very interesting for me because **it's not a common tourist destination**. It's kind of **off the grid, which for me is attractive**. I wanted to go **somewhere where there's less tourism (...)**. In fact, I'm specialised in Islamic history. So, it's always interesting for me to **visit Muslim countries and see, learn, and understand their history** better. (...)



and see the **differences in architecture and their expressions of religion**. (...). And of course, Bangladesh also has these **unique natural features** like the Sundarbans (...). So that was also interesting for me (...).

(Imran, Israel/USA, Age group 31-40)

You could say it [is] for leisure. (...) But, maybe that's not, that's not the correct word. Because it's more like, **I just want to see, like how it is like**. It was not to have fun. So, I just wanted to see something like that. Because **nobody goes there**. (...) So, I am trying to get to **all the countries that nobody goes to**. I really like exotic places. **The more exotic and different, the more interesting sounds to me**.

(Ritchie, Brazil, Age group 31-40)

As Ritchie and Imran stated, the majority of the participants viewed Bangladesh as an uncommon destination that was relatively unexplored with only a few travellers visiting there (e.g., Andy, Chad, Simon, Pole, Cathy, Ritchie, Mark, Kate, Mercy, and Imran). So, they were curious to explore the culture and people of Bangladesh, which also included the social lifestyles and livelihoods of locals (e.g., "Because there are different reasons why you travel to countries (...) It's all about the culture and the people. And so, I visit Bangladesh to see how it is like to live there" Cathy); their religious beliefs, Islamic history, and religious festivals (e.g., see Imran above), while a few also expected to explore its nature (e.g., see Imran above).

Moreover, Imran and Ritchie exemplify that these participants demonstrate the characteristics of a venturer. Venturers or allocentric tourists take long and frequent travels, prefer visiting unusual, underdeveloped destinations, avoid tourist-crowded places, desire to learn local customs and habits, and wish to visit a new destination over re-visiting the same (Plog, 2001). These characteristics were commonly shared by a majority of the interview participants, confirming the fact that they are allocentric (e.g., Mercy below).

I have a friend who has been to Bangladesh, for example, like he went with his parents. It was kind of **expensive** to arrange for three. So, I'm sure **we had a completely different experience**. Because probably I guess, what he did was going here to the Sundarbans (...). We really wanted to see **everyday life rather than doing this kind of ...[things]**. But you can have really different experiences, I guess. **They are people that have had like high-end tourists in Bangladesh.**

(Mercy, Italy, Age group 41-50)

Like Mercy, the above participants distinguish themselves from the institutionalised tourists and identify themselves as travellers who are more interested in the uninterrupted social fabric of Bangladesh. Further, the participants found that the locals were more welcoming as revealed in the thematic analysis under the theme 'Memorable experiences with locals' (Theme 3). Cathy below illustrates:

(...) And so, most of the time and I'm at the focus, because **I'm white and I have blonde hair**. And so, it's pretty common for me [Laughing]. But I think that **Bangladesh actually was like the next level** [Laughing] (...) So I have been to the beach. And this is not a joke. I stayed there for one and a half hours just taking pictures with one Bangladeshi after the other Bangladeshi [Laughing]. So, yeah, it was not weird. For me, it's common, but I think it was a little bit more extreme than [in] other countries.

(Cathy, Germany, Age group 21-30)

As with Cathy, all the participants found Bangladeshi people to be welcoming, extremely friendly, and very enthusiastic to meet white-skinned tourists. Furthermore, no antagonism was expressed by the public against tourists. This leads to identifying the fourth missing indicator of the development stage of the TALC in the Bangladesh tourism context and i.e., any form of antagonism was not reported against the tourists from the resident population, as it should be present at least to some extent in the development stage of the TALC.

The fifth missing indicator is that there is not enough evidence to confirm that much-migrated labour is utilised in the Bangladeshi tourism industry. According to the Bangladesh Immigration Department, only 85,486 foreign employees (0.001% of the labour force) representing 44 countries legally work in local and multinational companies in Bangladesh (Sarwar, 2018). These employees also mainly work in export processing zones or non-government organizations (NGOs).

As the sixth missing indicator suggests, there is no evidence of developing auxiliary facilities specifically for tourism (e.g., clinics, laundry). For example, WEF (2019) argues that the poor tourist service infrastructure (133<sup>rd</sup> rank out of 140 countries) is Bangladesh's greatest disadvantage relative to the global average. This was confirmed through thematic analysis of the interview data under Theme 4: Risks and challenges experienced. Cynthia and Christina below illustrate:

[The] challenge is **traffic**. In Dhaka, I mean, if you have an appointment and you need to be there [at] a certain time, I think you need time to go there because it's just mad. And also, [as] I said before the **rubbish**. There are loads of them. Obviously, people just don't care about anything. They just throw **waste**. (...). The **language is also a challenge**, because if people really not many people know English. (...) So that is a challenge, to get along if you're a tourist.

(Cynthia, Germany, Age group 41-50)

I think the most challenging experience for me was often the uncertainty around transportation. Sometimes things are just running late, but also, it's very difficult to get the information. **Sometimes there is not a lot of information available in English**, [and] sometimes also people say things in English, but the noise level, everywhere is high and it's difficult to understand if you're in a waiting room just feels...a bit unsure, uncertain (...). **I was very aware that they are not thinking about tourists**. For example, in a bus stop, they just do the announcement in Bangla, and they do a quick announcement in English too. But they are not, you know, actually doing it for tourists (...).

(Christina, Germany, Age group 61-70)

As stated above by Cynthia and Christina, most of the other participants, found Bangladesh's general infrastructure (e.g., roads and transportation network), and tourism infrastructure (e.g., tourist information), are not developed to the expected level to meet the traveller's needs. In Bangladesh, the most challenging experience faced by all the participants was the difficulty in accessing infrastructure, tourism services, and facilities.

Seventh, there is no evidence to suggest that outsiders have greater control over the tourist trade or that more facilities are provided by external organizations. For example, as per a Hospitality Valuation Services (2015) report, Bangladesh only had 3,500 hotel rooms in the organised sector. These hotel rooms also targeted upscale segments but did not target budget and economy segments. Still, most of the tourism services are provided by government organizations. For example, WEF (2019) argues that Bangladesh's average time required to deal with construction permits (129<sup>th</sup>) should be enhanced to encourage investments, which would further improve its business environment (currently moved from 104<sup>th</sup> to 94<sup>th</sup>). In addition, WEF (2019) suggests:

“(...) investment barriers could be reduced, and travel services enhanced by improving human resources and the soundness of the labour market (120<sup>th</sup>), which would need to include increasing female labour participation (128<sup>th</sup>) and further work on labour force qualification (107<sup>th</sup>)” (p. 33).

Though this thesis does not intend to examine separate areas or attractions within the country, it is important to note that there are many rural areas and attractions in Bangladesh that remain in the exploration or involvement stages of the TALC. Areas such as Dhaka, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Sundarbans, and Sri Mangal are more popular among tourists and comparatively more developed facilities are made available for tourists. Most other DMO-identified tourist attractions (e.g., [www.beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://www.beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)), have fewer tourism infrastructure or facilities and are less popular among international tourists. In such areas, it can be assumed that the physical and social fabric is not disturbed by the tourism industry. This also

leads to identifying the eighth missing indicator of the development stage of the TALC in the context of Bangladesh, i.e., tourism has not disturbed the social fabric of the country. Only a few allocentric tourists would visit most of the uncommon attractions and areas, especially away from the main cities and attractions. The locals provide more services to travellers, and tourists have close contact with the locals. For example, most of the participants have stayed with locals (e.g., Couchsurfing<sup>11</sup>) rather than in paid accommodation and contacted locals to obtain more reliable information before and during their visit.

So far, the results have confirmed that Bangladesh is located at a transition period from the involvement stage to the development stage of its TALC with few leading factors of the development stage present in the involvement stage. The period spent in the involvement stage is comparatively longer as suggested in the 'growth' category of the TALC pattern introduced by McKercher and Wong (2021). Bangladesh has recognised tourism as an industry with significant economic and social impact and increased government investment in general and tourist infrastructure to create an enabling environment to promote tourism. This also assures that Bangladesh has expanded its capacity to handle more travellers. Additional to investments in new promotional campaigns, both the NTO and DMO acknowledge the importance of building a positive image (e.g., BPC, 2021). Though Bangladesh demonstrates steady and significant economic growth in the region, it is commonly recorded as a country with negative DI (Kotler et al., 1993; Kotler et al., 2002; Avraham and Ketter, 2016), which hinders its tourism growth. As discussed previously, having to face continuous political turmoil, civil wars, terrorism, and natural disasters has had its impact not only on Bangladesh's TALC position but also negatively impacted Bangladesh's DI as a tourism destination. The following section examines the impact of exogenous factors on the DI formation of Bangladesh.

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<sup>11</sup> *Couchsurfing is a membership-based group online platform. Members can request local members of their target destination to host them. Travellers get to share accommodation and any other service volunteered by the host for free.*

#### 4.5 Implications of the Exogenous Factors for Bangladesh's DI

In academic work, Bangladesh has been commonly cited as a country with a negative DI for a long period (e.g., Kotler et al., 1993; Kotler et al., 2002; Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Zahra, 2012). For example, Zahra (2012) identifies Bangladesh as having a weak, negative, fragmented and, in some cases, distorted DI due to the natural and political turmoil it has faced throughout history.

Interviews carried out with international tourists, as primary data for the thesis, provided extra insights into this phenomenon. To summarise, the pre-travel perceived DI of the participants dominantly contained negative factors, such as the plight of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh (e.g., Jack, Kate), poverty and pollution (e.g., Christina, Chad, Mark, AJ, Mercy), the labour-intensive garment industry (e.g., Mark, Christina, Cathy), natural disasters (e.g., Mark), violence by Islamic extremists (Jack, Imran), and overcrowding (e.g., Alice, Richie). The negative image of Bangladesh, however, is not short-term but shows signs of a prolonged negative DI. Firstly, Bangladesh is found to be negatively stereotyped as a poverty-stricken country with a high rate of corruption and pollution. Christina and Mark, below, illustrate:

I was very nervous before coming for the first time [to Bangladesh] because **there is a lot of bad press**. It's not just the press, but Bangladesh has been **seen as a very poor country**. I **grew up in the '70s** and at that time Bangladesh was a very poor country. I mean, that was the time of the hunger. That was the time after Bangladesh has been established. **The war had left its ravages**. So, Bangladesh for me as a child and grown-up was the country where you have to be aware to give money to feed the children. And then, of course, Germans are **very afraid of Islam nowadays**, so this combination makes... [hesitation] ...one a bit nervous.

(Christina, Germany, Age group 61-70)

(...) **not in a positive way**. So, you heard about Bangladesh about flooding in the news, you heard about Bangladesh about climate change, mmm... You heard about Bangladesh adding a ton of, (...) non-recyclable, non-renewable [waste]. So yeah, it is kind of like **bad news about Bangladesh, so like flooding and very bad waste management**. So, in France, in my country, the only thing we know about Bangladesh is that they have a lot of waste. So yeah, somewhere it is not a positive place.

(Mark, France, Age group 21-30)

It is noted that factors including ravages of war (Christina above), natural disasters, and pollution (Mark above) have created negative stereotypes of Bangladesh as a poverty-stricken country that is dangerous, unhygienic, dirty, polluted, and overcrowded with a high crime rate and violent places. Such stereotypes are said to be commonly found in developing countries with negative DIs (e.g., Avraham and Ketter, 2016).

Secondly, such stereotypes that were generalised to an entire continent or a region found to influence participant's perception on Bangladesh. For example, Christina's statement, above, showed that she has generalised the terrorist attacks in Bangladesh to the Islamic-driven terror attacks in her country of residence ("Germans are very afraid of Islam nowadays, so this combination makes one a bit nervous"- Christina). Further, Alice and Mercy, below, generalise safety conditions and pollution respectively to the South Asian region and developing countries, which has then influenced their perception of Bangladesh.

(...) But I wasn't concerned about safety. I hadn't heard anything about it being very unsafe. I had an idea; **I assumed it would be somewhat similar to India**. So, I didn't look much. If I were travelling from, **not within South Asia already, I probably would look that up**.

(Alice, USA, Age group 21-30)

I was very curious. Because I teach international economics and resolve this debate about pollution happens and the fact that some **very polluting activities are done in lower-income countries**. And so, there is this **example I read the textbook about the ship dismantling in Chittagong** and you know, I thought once in my lifetime I have to see this and so we went also to see that. Amazing, I have to say.

(Mercy, Italy, Age group 41-50)

Thirdly, these negative occurrences were seen as inherent in developing countries. The above four statements of Alice, Mercy, Christina, and Mark confirmed this. Further, Mercy, and Christina stated how negative media reporting has shaped their pre-travel perceived DI of Bangladesh as a polluted, poverty-driven, and unsafe destination. Avraham and Ketter (2016) argue that negative and incomplete media reports contribute to generalizations by convincing residents of developed countries to perceive negative occurrences as inherent parts of developing countries.

Fourthly, these generalizations evolved beyond simple generalizations and developed into us versus them perceptions. For example, Mark above compared Bangladesh to his country of residence (“So in France, in my country, the only thing we know about Bangladesh is that they have a lot of waste”) implying that Bangladesh is portrayed as an unhygienic, dirty, polluted country. Similarly, Christina compared to her country of residence (“Germans are very afraid of Islam nowadays, so this combination makes (...) one a bit nervous”) by sharing her concerns over safety conditions, as argued by Avraham and Ketter (2016). These generalised stereotypes lead to ‘us versus them’ perceptions, where residents of developing countries are perceived fundamentally differently from those in developed countries.

Overall, the results revealed that the exogenous factors heavily contributed to creating a negative DI for Bangladesh, and the DI of Bangladesh further suffers from a prolonged negative image. This negative DI consists of all the components of a negative DI identified by Avraham and Ketter (2016), which are negative stereotypes, generalizations, negative occurrences as part of the nature of developing countries,



and 'us versus them' perceptions. Meanwhile, there is no evidence that the DMO has taken any actions to identify the gravity of negative DI in Bangladesh and to counter these negative perceptions. For example, an interview with the DMO official provides that:

If I analyse it from a tourism perspective, **we are not up to the level**. But apart from this side, we have created lots of images. You know that Bangladesh is regarded as one of the role models of developing countries. And Bangladesh is **regarded as an emerging economy developing country**. So, in this context, we are very much successful, **but in tourism, we are far away**. But **we are trying to create a brand name**. That is like incredible India, in Malaysia truly Asia. (...) we very recently started our band name competition and also an iconic landmark. (...) we are using beautiful Bangladesh that is already [been] used for 6 to 7 years. So, we are trying to upgrade this brand name and initiate a new brand name. And after initiating this brand name **we will try to aggressive marketing policy or promotional policy**. So that this name is circulated [in] every corner of the world and I wish that everyone will know [about] Bangladesh in [a] tourism perspective.

(BTB Official)

As the statement indicates, the DMO has chosen to undertake more intense regular marketing promotions and to work on their brand name rather than addressing the negative DI. However, the literature argues that a destination with a negative DI cannot simply move ahead with regular marketing promotions to attract tourists that are only effective when there are no particular DI issues (Avraham and Ketter, 2016). Rather, destinations with prolonged negative DI, such as Bangladesh are expected to understand and correct their media and public DIs, counter the negative perceptions, and challenge the stereotypes to repair the DI before moving to regular marketing promotions.

The prolonged negative DI has implications for attracting travellers to developing countries. The negative DI is argued as the main reason behind the lack of tourism

growth in developing countries (Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Grosspietsch, 2006; Martinez and Alavares, 2010; Ryu et al., 2013; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b). However, the impact of this prolonged negative DI on the TALC stage is not examined in the literature. This chapter explains the impact of negative DI in the early stages of the TALC, as stated below.

#### **4.6. The Impact of Negative DI in the Early Stages of the TALC**

The findings in the above sections showed that Bangladesh has recognised tourism as an industry with significant economic and social impact and significantly increased government investment in developing general and tourist infrastructure during the past decade to create an enabling environment to promote tourism. In addition to investments Bangladeshi authorities have acknowledged the importance of building a positive image (BPC, 2021). For example, the chairman of the BPC states:

“The foremost objectives of the corporation are to **promote tourism** in Bangladesh, build up a **positive image of the country abroad**, create tourism infrastructure, provide services to the tourists and flourish tourism resources that exist in Bangladesh, (...) contribute to the growth of the national GDP” (BPC, 2021).

Bangladesh has recorded high rates of economic growth and development compared to the developing countries in the world. But, irrespective of the continuous investments made to develop the tourism industry, the traveller numbers to Bangladesh do not show a rapid growth as expected in the development stage of its TALC. The literature suggests the development of tourist facilities and infrastructure and heavy promotions among other indicators will increase traveller numbers to a destination with time and move the destination to the development stage (Butler, 1980; Berry, 2006; Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021). Nevertheless, Bangladesh is spending a considerably longer period in the early stages of its TALC. Particularly, Bangladesh is still trapped in its involvement stage, although it is

equipped with some leading indicators of the development stage. The findings suggest that the prolonged negative DI is a key factor behind Bangladesh having to spend a longer period in the early stages of its TALC. This further hinders Bangladesh transitioning from the involvement to development stage.

In contrast to the argument put forward by Avraham and Ketter (2016) stating that altering the negative DI is crucial to initiate tourists' consumption when a destination is at its exploration stage, the results showed that destinations can initiate consumption and even move to the involvement stage of the TALC with a negative DI. This is due to destinations in the early stages of the TALC attracting more allocentric types of travellers who are not concerned about the negative DIs of destinations. For example, allocentric travellers strongly prefer unusual, underdeveloped destinations that have retained their native charm while avoiding crowded touristy places (Plog, 2001). This finding addressed the first objective of this thesis and contributes to identifying a prolonged negative DI as a trigger, bringing change to destinations in the early stages of the TALC. Moreover, findings suggest incorporating a prolonged negative DI as an indicator in the early stages of the TALC, when destinations are spending extensive periods in those stages irrespective of otherwise favourable conditions. Incorporating this indicator into the early stages of the TALC will also improve its descriptive and predictive ability.

#### **4.7 Summary**

The TALC model has, for decades, been used to describe and understand the process of the development of tourist destinations in a wide variety of settings (Butler, 2011). This thesis uses the TALC to describe the development of tourist destinations under the setting of prolonged negative DI. This chapter addressed its twofold objectives by validating Bangladesh as a destination with a negative DI in the early stages of the TALC, thus providing an appropriate research context for the study, and then addressing the first of three research objectives of this thesis. The results first confirmed that Bangladesh is a destination with a prolonged negative DI in the early stages of its TALC, particularly in a transitional period, from the involvement stage of

the TALC to the development stage. Data analysed showed that: I) Bangladesh's time spent in the involvement stage is comparatively long, despite its increased efforts and investments in infrastructure development and promotions; and, II) The negative DI of Bangladesh was initially formed due to the continuous impacts of exogenous factors, and these negative DIs were retained for a longer period and converted into prolonged negative DIs because the DMO has not attempted to address these negative DI issues. Addressing the first objective, the findings of this thesis suggested that Bangladesh's prolonged negative DI caused it to spend an extended period in the early stages of its TALC (exploration and involvement). The prolonged negative DI was identified as an indicator of the destinations to spend more time in the early stages of the TALC. These findings are discussed with literature in Chapter 6 to identify the contributions made. Before that, the next chapter presents the findings to address the other two research objectives.

## **CHAPTER 5: THE ROLE OF UGC ON BANGLADESH'S DI FORMATION**

## **CHAPTER 5 : THE ROLE OF UGC ON BANGLADESH'S DI FORMATION**

### **5.1 Introduction**

After addressing the first objective in the previous chapter (Chapter 4), this chapter addresses the last two objectives of this thesis. Namely, objective II is to explain the role of DMO and UGC DI projections on the DI of a destination in the early stages of the TALC and objective III is to conceptualise the influence of UGC in the DMO's DI projections in the early stages of a TALC and also in mitigating negative DI. This chapter firstly examines the DI constructions of Bangladesh. Both cognitive and affective DI were examined together for an accurate portrayal of DI (Agusti, 2018; Lindblom et al., 2018; Martin and Bosque, 2008; Zhang et al., 2018). Subsequently, the cognitive and affective DI of Bangladesh is examined from both the supply (DMO projections) and demand-side (tourists' perception), respectively, through the DMO visual media and UGC images. As explained in the previous chapters (chapters 1, 3, and 4) this thesis has been able to observe a DMO in transition and the implications of such transition. Accordingly, two DMO image samples were obtained to represent previous DMO DI projections (DMO-I) and the new online promotional platform introduced (DMO-II). The results of the qualitative content analysis and cultural analysis of three image samples were interpreted to reveal the cognitive and affective DI constructions of Bangladesh respectively (5.2 and 5.4). Further, the level of congruity between the three image samples (DMO-I, DMO-II, and UGC) was examined and interpreted to address the second research objective. Data collected by interviewing the participants (travellers and the DMO official) were analysed and the insights derived are used to support the findings from the image analysis. Examining both the projected and perceived images is essential to understanding DI formation. Nevertheless, DI formation is a complex process where there is no unanimously accepted differentiation between the projected and perceived images (Agusti, 2018). As discussed in the literature review chapter, the circle of representation (CoR) enables us to understand how projected and perceived DI interactively exist and the role of travellers in DI projections as DI co-creators. So, this

thesis understood projected and perceived DI from the lens of CoR. As a result, the contributions were made not only to the TALC and DI but also to the CoR.

This chapter, firstly, presents cognitive DI revealed through qualitative content analysis of the three image samples and the level of congruence between the three image samples were examined and interpreted. Secondly, affective DI expressed through the three image samples is explained. Thirdly, the role of UGC in the DI projections of DMO in the early stages of the TALC is explained.

## **5.2 Cognitive DI Revealed through Images**

The images projected in the DMO online media and the UGC shared on Instagram were analysed to understand the projected DI as explained in the methodology chapter (subheading 3.5). This section presents the cognitive DI<sup>12</sup> that was explored through the denotative signs represented by the UGC and DMO image samples revealed through content analysis (see Hunter, 2016). Five main destination attributes revealing the cognitive DI of Bangladesh that emerged from UGC and DMO samples comprise: History and Culture (HC), Nature (N), Society and Lifestyles (SL), Infrastructure (I) and Portraits of People (PP) (Table 5.1). The sixth category, Officials and Other (OO) does not reveal destination attributes or features but includes such images that do not reveal any destination attribute (e.g., images including government officials, notices, and any other unclassified images). The results revealed the level of congruity between the DMO projected DI, and the tourists' perceived DI shared through UGC.

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<sup>12</sup> *The cognitive image relates to how tourists would describe the physical destination attributes or features (Vaughan and Edwards, 1999).*

**Table 5.1: Destination Attributes: Main Categories**

Categories	UGC			DMO					
				DMO I			DMO II		
	n*	%	Rank	n*	%	Rank	n*	%	Rank
<b>Main Category 1:</b> <i>History and Culture (HC)</i>	97	5.73		111	17.00	3	462	24.64	2
<b>Main Category 2:</b> <i>Nature (N)</i>	776	45.86	1	167	25.57	2	922	49.17	1
<b>Main Category 3:</b> <i>Society and Lifestyles (SL)</i>	349	20.63	2	64	9.80		241	12.85	3
<b>Main Category 4:</b> <i>Infrastructure (I)</i>	177	10.46		21	3.22		134	7.15	
<b>Main Category 5:</b> <i>Portraits of People (PP)</i>	251	14.83	3	32	4.90		84	4.48	
<b>Main Category 6:</b> <i>Officials and Other (OO)</i>	42	2.48		258	39.51	1	32	1.71	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1692</b>	<b>100.00</b>		<b>653</b>	<b>100.00</b>		<b>1875</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

\*n = frequency counts obtained from the content analysis. The adjoining columns show the respective percentage representation of each category as a percentage of the totals of each sample.

As shown in the table, the highest representative categories in UGC data are *Nature* (45.86%), *Society and Lifestyles* (20.63%), and *Portraits of People* (14.83%) respectively. *Nature* includes images of the sky and land sceneries; oceans, beaches, and rivers; forests, trees, plants, and flowers; wild animals, birds, reptiles, and marine animals. *Society and Lifestyles* illustrates the social life and livelihoods of local people in rural and urban Bangladesh. This includes images of religious observances, food, literature and literacy, livelihoods such as agriculture, fishing, and even domesticated



animals. *Portraits of People* includes images of local people and international and domestic tourists. This indicates that the tourists' image projections emphasise Bangladesh's nature, natural resources, its people, and their way of life.

The highest representative categories in DMO-I are *Officials and Other* (39.51%), *Nature* (25.57%), and *History and Culture* (17%). Meanwhile, the highest representative categories in DMO-II are *Nature* (49.17%), *History and Culture* (24.64%), and *Society and Lifestyles* (12.85). *Officials and Others* include images of DMO and other government officials and political heads, events organised by DMO, notices, quotes, and any further unclassified images. *History and Culture* include images of archaeological sites, ruins, museums, and Bangladeshi history as well as cultural festivals, celebrations, and arts and crafts. Results show that DMO-I has placed more prominence on the officials and events but does not promote destination attributes. Apart from both DMO samples more prominently promoting the nature and natural resources of Bangladesh, they give high prominence to feature distinctive Bangladeshi *History and Culture*.

These results are further explained below to examine the congruencies and incongruencies between UGC and two DMO samples. To obtain a comprehensive view, the proportionate importance of the generic categories within the respective main category (Tables 5.2-5.7)<sup>13</sup> is also accommodated where necessary.

The main similarity between the three samples is the prominence given to denote nature and natural resources. The largest numbers of images from both UGC and DMO-II represent *Nature* and that also forms significant percentages of 45.86 and 49.17 respectively of the samples. *Nature* is the second-highest category represented in the DMO-I (25.57%). The representation of *Nature* has increased by nearly 24% in the new promotional infrastructure (DMO-II). When considering the destination attributes (i.e., excluding Category 6), *Nature* is the only category that has received a comparatively similar amount of high emphasis on UGC and both DMO samples,

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<sup>13</sup> Under generic category tables the percentages are calculated as a percentage of respective main category totals. Hence, meanings were extracted by comparing the percentages within the sample itself but not by comparing them with the other samples.

making it the most prominent attribute of Bangladesh DI. Such emphasis on DMO is compatible when compared to the group of direct competitors to Bangladesh as a tourist destination. WTTC (2021) identifies China, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Nepal as competing destinations to Bangladesh based on the similarity of product offers where natural resources (including beaches, greenery, or landscape) are the main component of their product. However, nature as a tourism product of Bangladesh suffers from a lack of differentiation by weakening a destination's competitiveness (Hossain and Islam, 2019). For instance, tourists perceive the Kerala province in India as a substitute for Bangladesh and chose to visit Kerala instead of Bangladesh (Hossain and Islam, 2019). Arguably, tourists can explore a wide variety of attractions, if they visit India, and they can avoid extra travel mileage, visa requirements and other discomforts by visiting Kerala instead of Bangladesh. So, it shows that Bangladesh's failure to differentiate their product from competitors is a major factor in its failure to achieve a competitive advantage over its direct competitors. By examining generic categories under *Nature*, further insights were obtained, as below (Table 5.2).

**Table 5.2: Destination Attributes. Main category 2- Nature (N)**

Generic categories	UGC		DMO			
			DMO- I		DMO-II	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
2.1. Water-based Resources (N-WR)	187	24.10	64	<b>38.32</b>	337	<b>36.55</b>
2.2. Scenery (N-S)	258	33.25	48	28.74	256	27.77
2.3. Forests, Trees, and Flora (N-FF)	284	<b>36.60</b>	26	15.57	266	28.85
2.4. Wildlife (N-WL)	47	6.06	29	17.37	63	6.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<p><b>N Interpretation:</b> <i>Water-based Resources</i> (WR) is the highest denoted in DMO promotions, and it is a comparatively less denoted generic category in the UGC. Nevertheless, both WR and Scenery are among the highest-denoted generic categories in all three samples. Forests, Trees, and Flora is the highest-represented category in UGC, and it is underrepresented in both DMO samples.</p>						

Meanwhile, as the category includes the iconic Bengali Tiger, *Wildlife* is denoted for a significantly high proportion in the DMO-I sample. But *Wildlife* is the least denoted generic category in UGC and DMO-II samples. DMO-II has reduced the over-representation of *Wildlife*. More similarities are noticed between UGC, and DMO-II compared to DMO-I. This indicates the DMO's new promotional platform is more congruent with tourists' DI projections through UGC.

While *Society and Lifestyles* (SL) is the second-highest category represented in the UGC (20.63%), it is less represented in both DMO samples (DMO-I: 9.8% and DMO-II: 12.85%) (Table 5.1). The DMO's attention on SL has only increased slightly (by 3%) in the new promotional infrastructure, despite the important place SL holds in UGC. Similarly, the third-largest category of UGC is *Portraits of People* (PP) with 14.83%. However, PP has a very low presence in DMO-I and II images with only 4.9% and 4.5% respectively. Bangladeshi people and their ways of life seem not to be adequately featured in DMO promotions, although it appears that the travellers heavily feature them in UGC. As discussed in chapter 4 (4.4.3), the interview participants confirmed this view. The participants perceived Bangladesh as an exotic country with interesting people and culture that awaits to be explored (Theme 1: Curious to explore a less-known destination). Participants were mainly interested in exploring the Bangladeshi people and their ways of life, and interactions they had with locals were rated as their most memorable experiences (e.g., Andy below).

There's a lot of them [memorable experiences] I mean, probably, it would **all be concerning people**. I got invited into people's homes quite often. (...) in Bogra [a town in Bangladesh]. I was walking along the railway tracks (...) a young girl, maybe she was 14 or 13, came out and talked to me. (...) It's a **little unusual and you know it's surprising in predominantly Muslim countries, so it's a little unusual for women to approach men on their own** [expressing positive surprise]. **But she did and she wanted me to come and meet her family**, so I went into their place; they are **very poor**. And they just lived in a very small house kind of a **shack built alongside the railway tracks**. And I went in there and

then (...) everybody came over and we had tea. One person brought out a musical instrument and we played and sang and that kind of thing. That was probably the most memorable, just because the family was so poor, you know such simple people, it was unusual to get invited in there. **So that really struck me.**

(Andy, Canada, Age Group 51-60)

Like Andy, the majority of the participants (e.g., Cathy, Mercy, Ritchie, Simon, Pete, Christina, and Alice) were interested in interacting with locals and exploring local lifestyles, livelihoods and culture. The findings are similar to that of Stepchenkova and Zhan (2013), who examined Peru's DI and found that UGC overemphasised locals and their lifestyles, which is underemphasised in DMO projections. Higher representation of the *Society and Lifestyle* category in the context of Bangladesh complies with their present early stage in the TALC as well. In the early stages (exploration and involvement), tourists have high contact with locals and making interactions with locals becomes a significant attraction to visitors (Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Gore et al., 2021). As allocentric tourists are the most common traveller group in the early stages of a TALC, most of the interview participants represented the allocentric segment. So, they preferred more "exploring and learning about the places they visit, rather than soaking up the sun (or tequila)" (Plog, 2001:17). This finding also shows that travellers to Bangladesh have wanderlust rather than sun lust (e.g., Markwick, 2001). Motivated by wanderlust, travellers desire to travel and see different places, people and cultures or relics of the past, whereas sun-lust is associated with leisure travel to engage in activities such as sports and the search for the sun (Markwick, 2001).

When comparing the relative representation of the main categories (Table 5.1), the *Society and Lifestyles* (SL) category has a little representation in the DMO samples, especially in DMO-I, while SL was prioritised in tourists' image projections. This indicates an incongruity of DI projected and perceived. This finding is further

elaborated by examining the generic categories under *Society and Lifestyles*; and *Portraits of People* categories (Table 5.3 and 5.4) below.

**Table 5.3: Destination Attributes. Main Category 3 - Society and Lifestyles (SL)**

Generic categories	UGC		DMO			
			DMO- I		DMO-II	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
3.1. Rural Life and Livelihood (SL-RL)	135	38.68	21	32.81	106	43.98
3.2. Urban Life and Livelihood (SL-UL)	137	39.26	11	17.19	39	16.18
3.3. Domesticated Animals (SL-DA)	16	4.58	0	0.00	1	0.41
3.4. Religious Observances and Buildings (SL-R)	12	3.44	10	15.63	46	19.09
3.5. Food (SL-F)	43	12.32	11	17.19	29	12.03
3.6. Literature and Literacy (SL-LL)	6	1.72	11	17.19	20	8.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<p><b>SL Interpretation:</b> In both DMO samples, <i>Rural Life and Livelihood</i> (SL-RL) is the highest-denoted category. In the UGC sample, both SL-RL and <i>Urban Life and Livelihood</i> (SL-UL) are almost equally and highly denoted categories. The DMO samples have underrated SL-UL, while the urban Bangladeshi lifestyle equally interests tourists. Noticeably, UGC images in the subcategory Urban Streets and Street Life <sup>14</sup>under the generic category SL-UL is reinforcing a negative image of Bangladesh. This contained images depicting poverty, crowdedness, traffic congestion, etc. (e.g., Image 5.1-5.2 below). No such images were found in the DMO samples as it is unlikely that a DMO would reinforce such images in their promotions.</p>						

<sup>14</sup> Frequencies of subcategories are not presented in this thesis. Only the counts under the main category and generic categories under each main category are presented.



Image 5.1 and 5.2 (Source: Instagram, UGC sample)

This indicates that tourists' consider including the negative side of street life as either interesting or important through their image projections. Moreover, both the DMO samples prominently denote *Religious Observances and Buildings* (SL-R), where UGC has given them the least priority. Apart from similarities in denoting SL-RL and Food, UGC representations are very much dissimilar from both DMOs. Conversely, both DMO samples share more similarities. Nevertheless, differently from DMO-I, the new promotional platform, DMO-II has taken some efforts to capture what tourists consider important to project through their UGC.

**Table 5.4: Destination Attributes. Main Category 5 - Portraits of People (PP)**

Generic categories	UGC		DMO			
			DMO- I		DMO-II	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
5.1. Portraits of Local People (PP-L)	169	67.33%	26	81.3%	66	78.57%
5.2. Portraits of International or Domestic Tourists (PP-T)	82	32.67%	6	18.8%	18	21.43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**PP Interpretation:** Though PP is the least depicted main category by both DMO samples (Table 5.1); proportionate importance given to the generic categories is similar in all three samples. If only the totals were considered (Table 5.1), higher representation in the PP category in UGC images can be misinterpreted as tourists' capturing themselves in the images since photographing means collecting

memories. The above results show otherwise. The UGC images prominently featured local people than photographs of tourists themselves.

Next, the DMO gave a considerable amount of priority to *History and Culture* (HC) with a relatively higher percentages of 17 (DMO-I) and 24.64 (DMO-II) (Table 5.1). The representation of HC has even increased by nearly 8% in the new promotional infrastructure (DMO-II), while this is among the least represented categories in UGC (only 5.73%). The DMO is more prominently promoting distinctive Bangladeshi *History and Culture*, where history is the least projected attribute in UGC by tourists. This overrepresentation in the *History and Culture* category in the DMO samples is the main dissimilarity between UGC and DMO DI projections. However, the same category presents the main similarity between DMO-I and DMO-II samples. Further insights were obtained via the frequency counts of generic categories under the *History and Culture* main category (Table 5.5).

**Table 5.5: Destination Attributes. Main Category 1 - History and Culture (HC)**

Generic categories	UGC		DMO			
			DMO-I		DMO-II	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1.1. Archaeological Sites (HC-AS)	25	25.77	26	23.42	342	74.03
1.2. Bangladesh Liberation War and Independence Celebrations (HC-LI)	13	13.40	19	17.12	28	6.06
1.3. Significant Modern Buildings (HC-MB)	1	1.03	7	6.31	11	2.38
1.4. Culture and Festivals (HC-CF)	36	37.11	33	29.73	39	8.44
1.5. Arts and Crafts (HC-AC)	22	22.68	26	23.42	42	9.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>HC Interpretation:</b> Though the <i>Archaeological Sites</i> (HC-AS) category is one of the most denoted in all three samples, DMO-II has put an overemphasis on HC-AS. <i>Significant Modern Buildings</i> (HC-MB) are the least denoted category in all three						

samples, and there is only one HC-MB image in the UGC sample. Apart from HC-MB, both UGC and DMO-I samples have proportionately similar allocations to other generic categories. In contrast, apart from HC-AS, all the other categories are underrepresented in the DMO-II. Most of the landmarks and icons under HC-AS and HC-LI are listed under 'travel essentials' by DMO-II as well. Nevertheless, the UGC sample represents such at a lower level by indicating that tourists do not project them as must-visits. Especially, *Culture and Festivals* and *Arts and Crafts* are with the highest representation in the UGC sample, and it is heavily underrepresented in the DMO-II. Interview data also confirmed that culture is an important attraction of Bangladesh. As Cathy illustrates:

(...) So, the reason why I travelled to Bangladesh is **the cultural** part. Most things that I photograph, as well were cultural parts, like **how people live, how it looks like they are, how the food looks like, and how people are dressed**. (...) So, I'm not the type who likes to make pictures from the beach or something. So, for me, it was always **more the cultural things**.  
(...)

(Cathy, Germany, Age Group 21-30)

Like Cathy, the majority of the participants confirmed that their interest in Bangladeshi culture enabled them to capture culturally significant icons more in their photographs. Though some participants were interested in the history of Bangladesh, as discussed earlier, the majority of the interview participants were interested in the culture, people and lifestyle of Bangladesh rather than in historical sites.

The findings indicate that there are more similarities between UGC and DMO-I, while DMO-II has more dissimilarity with UGC and DMO-I samples. Hence, the DMO's new promotional platform has failed to capture what tourists consider important to emphasise in their DI projections. Nevertheless, DMO-II has reduced the presence of images of the *Bangladesh Liberation War and Independence Celebrations*, compared to the other samples. This may help to disassociate



Bangladesh's DI from the negative occurrences, as overly highlighting the independence struggle will reinforce the negative memories associated with that period.

The next two main categories, namely *Infrastructure* and *Officials and Other*, showed more congruencies between UGC and DMO-II samples, while DMO-I is incongruent with the other two samples (Table 5.1). Both UGC and DMO-II (10.46% and 7.15%) have highly represented the *Infrastructure* category, while it is the least represented category in DMO-I (3.22%). Infrastructure such as transportation and accommodation are the main elements of supporting customer services for tourism (Quan and Wang, 2004). Though the presence of supporting customer services does not add to the consumer experience, the absence of them would create dissatisfaction (Quan and Wang, 2004). A higher number of UGC images on infrastructure indicates that tourists perceive infrastructure as a fact that is interesting and worth mentioning (e.g., Mak, 2017). Tourists intend to provide destination knowledge and expert advice to other travellers through such UGC (Mak, 2017). As discussed in chapter 4, Bangladesh is increasingly investing in infrastructure and tourist facility development projects. Such increased infrastructure development is identified as a leading indicator in the early stage of Bangladesh's TALC showing its move towards the development stage. This increased representation of infrastructure in DMO-II compared to DMO-I has filled a gap in the DMO image projections. Proportional representations of the generic categories within this main category are given in Table 5.6.

**Table 5.6: Destination Attributes: Main Category 4 Infrastructure (I)**

Generic categories	UGC		DMO			
			DMO- I		DMO-II	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
4.1. Transportation and General Infrastructure (I-TG)	142	80.23	11	52.38	83	61.94
4.2. Tourism Facilities (I-TF)	7	3.95	2	9.52	19	14.18
4.3. Sports, Recreation and Leisure (I -SR)	28	15.82	8	38.10	32	23.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<p><b>I Interpretation:</b> Though <i>Infrastructure</i> is an underrepresented main category in DMO samples (Table 5.1), all three samples have proportionately similar allocations to the generic categories within the main category. I-TG is the highest-denoted generic category in all three samples. It accounts for 80% of the UGC sample and more than half of the DMO samples. However, I-TF and I-SR are denoted higher in DMO samples than in UGC, indicating that engaging in leisure and recreational activities is not the top priority of tourists who visit Bangladesh as discussed previously under the <i>Society and Lifestyles</i> main category.</p>						

The frequency of *Officials and Other* (OO) representation is the most significant difference between DMO-I and the other two samples. The number of images with the presence of officials of Bangladeshi tourism authorities and political heads as well as those of official events organised by them is significant in DMO-I. However, OO is the least represented category in UGC and DMO-II (2.48% and 1.71%). Having a larger number of images in the *Officials and Other* category, which does not represent destination attributes is an indication of noise or the inclusion of irrelevant material. Agreeing with the arguments of Stepchenkova and Zhan (2013), such noise indicates that the DMO images are unstructured and unplanned. Under *Officials and Other*, DMO-I has given a noteworthy representation of the officials of the DMO and political

figures. This may be due to the pressure on the DMO promotions to comply with a certain policy or protocol dictated by certain political and economic interests (Hunter, 2016). Further, this could be reflective of the lead-up to the recent decision to separate the functions of the BTB and Beautiful Bangladesh platform. Accordingly, DMO-II is more focused on tourism promotions than officials and events. This is depicted by the frequency counts of generic categories under the *Officials and Other* main category (Table 5.7).

**Table 5.7: Main Category 6 Officials and other (OO)**

	UGC		DMO			
			DMO- I		DMO-II	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
6.1. Officials and Events (OO-OE)	0	0.00	211	81.78	12	37.50
6.2. COVID-19 Awareness (OO-Cov)	2	4.76	2	0.78	3	9.38
6.3. Notices, Greetings and Quotes (OO-NGQ)	25	59.52	40	15.50	14	43.75
6.4. Unclassified (OO-U)	15	35.71	5	1.94	3	9.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<p><b>OO Interpretation:</b> <i>Officials and Events</i> (OO-OE) was prominent in both DMO samples, while it is nil in the UGC sample. However, DMO-II has given less emphasis to OO-OE compared to DMO-I and NGQ is the most denoted generic category under DMO-II and UGC. Considering <i>Officials and Other</i> does not denote any destination attributes, promotional space given to <i>Officials and Other</i> by the DMO indicates a lost opportunity and resource wastage.</p>						

Overall, significant incongruencies were identified between DMO-I and UGC in projecting destination attributes. DMO-II shares additional similarities with UGC in the emphasis given to the categories, *Society and Lifestyles*; *Infrastructure*; and

*Officials and Other*. Since a correspondence map can show these congruency levels in a clear picture, a correspondence analysis was conducted, as discussed below.

### 5.3 Correspondence Analysis

A two-dimensional correspondence map (or positioning map) was used to investigate the association of UGC and DMO (e.g., Choi et al., 2007). SPSS the statistical application was used to perform the correspondence analysis. Six main categories of images and the three sources of samples (UGC and two DMO samples) were considered as the two variables. The frequency counts of six main categories under each of the three sources of samples (Table 5.1) were used as a distance measure for the correspondence map. Results (Table 5.8) indicate the two variables (main categories and three sources of samples) are significantly related with a chi square value of 1454.530 at  $P=.000$ . However, there is a weak relationship between the variables with an Eigenvalue (i.e., variance referred to as inertia) of only 34.5%. Dimension 1 explains 75.5% of the variance out of the 34.5% variance explained by the model.

**Table 5.8: Summary of Correspondence Analysis**

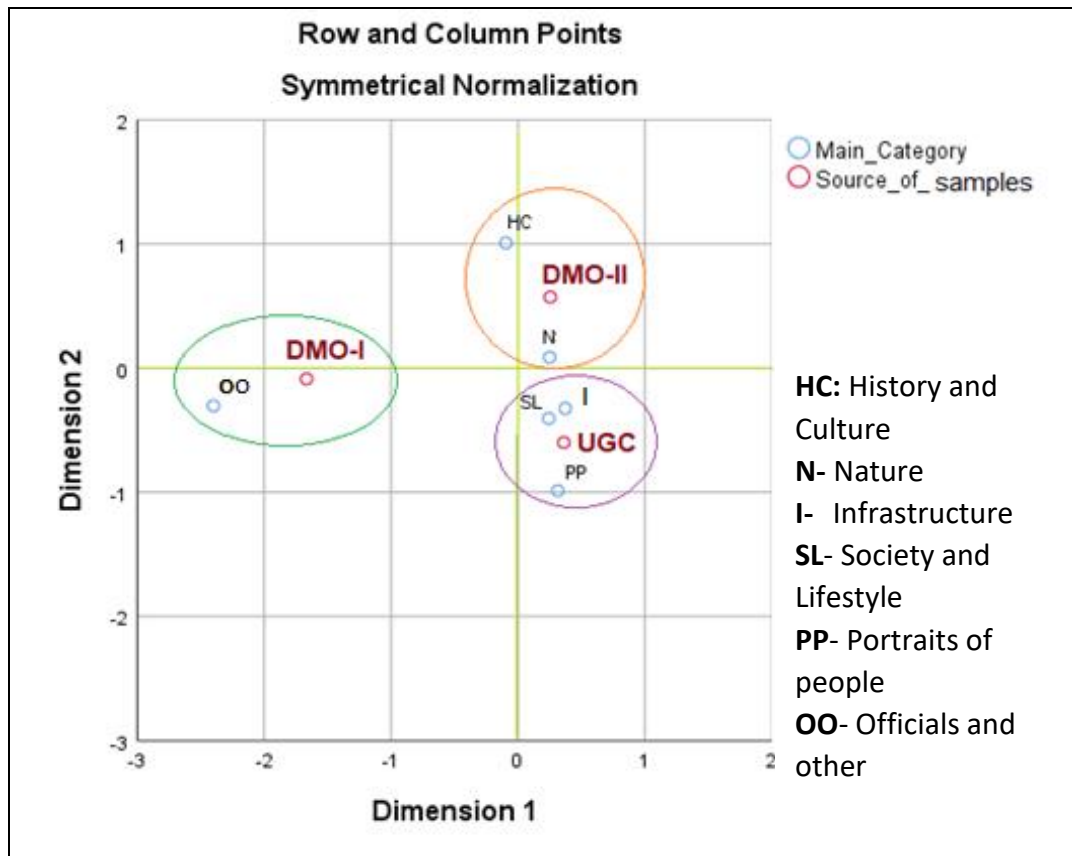
Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi-Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Singular Value	
					Accounted for	Cumulative	Std. Deviation	Correlation 2
1	<b>.510</b>	.260			.755	<b>.755</b>	.019	.032
2	.291	.084			.245	1.000	.014	
Total		<b>.345</b>	1454.53	.000 <sup>a</sup>	1.000	1.000		

a. 10 degrees of freedom

Only the singular values greater than 0.2 are accepted as a viable dimension (Hair et al., 1998 cited in Choi et al., 2007). The analysis resulted in a unidimensional solution with a 0.51 value for Dimension 1. The associations between the variables are fully

explained by Dimensions 1 and 2 (100%). The map (Figure 5.1) shows the relative proximities of the main categories and three sources of samples. The closer proximity means greater perceived similarity (Whitlark & Smith, 2001 cited in Choi, et al., 2007).

**Figure 5.1: Correspondence Map**



**Source: Generated through SPSS statistical application**

The correspondence map confirms the results obtained through the content analysis. The map shows the UGC, DMO-I and DMO-II samples are positioned relatively distant from each other by confirming the incongruities between the three samples. Especially, DMO-I stands separately from UGC and DMO-II. Categories located near a source of a sample are considered closely associated with the respective sample and formed a cluster. UGC is more closely associated with the main categories *Society and Lifestyles* (SL), *Portraits of People* (PP), and *Infrastructure* (I). DMO-I is closely

associated with *Officials and Other* (OO), which is not a category representing the attributes of the destination. Hence, DMO-I image projections are significantly different from the images projected by UGC. This again confirms that DMO-I has failed to capture the perceived images of tourists as they are depicted through their UGC image projections. DMO-II, on the other hand, is not located at a significant distance from UGC and is closely associated with the *History and Culture* and *Nature* main categories. This shows that DMO-II could replicate the perceived image of tourists to some extent and significantly ahead of DMO-I. Thus, the DMO's new promotional platform seems to be more effectively projecting images that align with tourists' perceptions, compared to previous DMO promotions.

The two axes drawn on the map further reveal the relationships between the variables (Choi et al., 2007). Dimension 1 divides the three sources of samples into two based on destination attributes depicted by the main categories. All the categories depicting destination attributes are on the right-hand side associated with UGC and DMO-II. Only the *Officials and Other* category is associated with DMO-I, which is on the left-hand side of the map. None of the categories depicting destination attributes is associated with DMO-I showing a key weakness of the promotional efforts of the DMO before the introduction of the new platform.

Next, Dimension 2 divides the three sources of samples into two based on the shift of the general stock of projected images of Bangladesh with the introduction of DMO-II. Four main categories (I, SL, PP and OO) are in the bottom quadrants with DMO-I and UGC, while HC and N are in the top quadrants with DMO-II. This indicates that the projected image, in general, has shifted from I, SL, PP and OO to HC and N with the introduction of the new promotional platform.

Overall, the content analysis results showed that cognitive DI projected by both the DMO samples and UGC are incongruent. Specifically, the nature and emphasis of the images projected by DMO-I and UGC share only a few similarities, while DMO-II and UGC share additional similarities. Of the six content categories identified, *Nature* is the prominently projected destination attribute by both UGC and the DMO. *Official and Other* category, which is not representing any destination attribute is

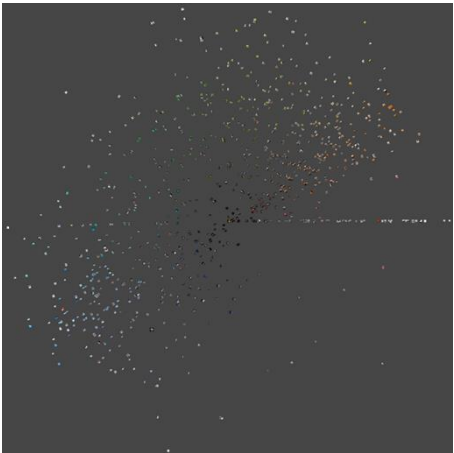
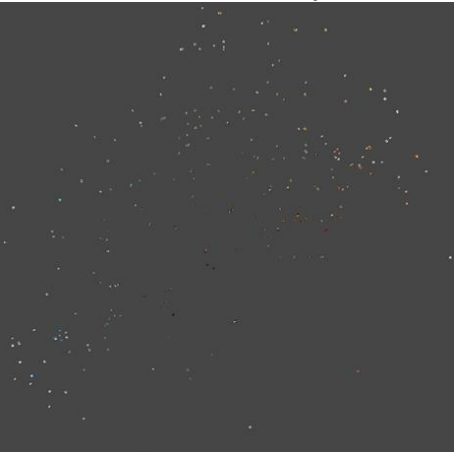
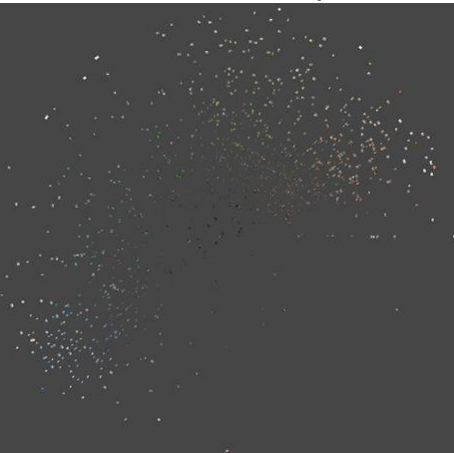
overrepresented in the DMO-I sample. The DMO samples overrepresented the history of Bangladesh, which is not an attribute of the tourists' UGC image projections. Conversely, Bangladeshi people and their lifestyles were prominently projected by UGC but were underrepresented by the DMOs. Especially, urban lifestyles were underrepresented in DMO projections. However, in contrast to previous research, this thesis was able to analyse two DMO samples, which represent previous and newly introduced DMO online platforms as DMO-I and II. The newly introduced online promotions platform DMO-II shared significant similarities with UGC, indicating that the DMO is aligning more closely with traveller projections. The results confirm the literature that argues how some important and meaningful destination attributes to travellers are underrepresented in the DMO images (e.g., Choi et al., 2007; Hunter, 2016; Mak, 2017; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013). Such an incongruity indicates the DMO's failure to convey their projections to the tourists (e.g., Mackay and Fesenmaier, 1997 cited in Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). This shift shows that the DMO has significantly changed its focus on promotions from profile building of government officials to project destination attributes. For example, as per the interview with the BTB official, the new promotional platform (DMO-II) was introduced to fully focus on destination promotions and reserved the DMO's official website (DMO-I) for the use of administrative purposes. Other official documents also demonstrated that the DMO has recently acknowledged the importance of developing a positive DI for Bangladesh (e.g., the BPC website). So, this shift from DMO-I to II shows that the DMO has identified the importance of aligning with traveller projections rather than projecting what the authorities desire to project through their promotions. As discussed in chapter 4, (subheadings 4.4.2 and 4.4.3) the recent changes in promotional focus pushed Bangladesh to a transitional period from the involvement stage towards the development stage of the TALC. With the cognitive DI revealed, next, the affective representations expressed by the UGC and DMO images are explored and interpreted using colour psychology.

#### **5.4 Affective DI Revealed through Images**

Derived from the discipline of psychology, colour psychology is a tool to examine human emotions expressed through colours (Yu and Egger, 2021). As explained in the Methodology chapter (subheadings 3.6.3-3.6.5), Image Plot visualisations were used to extract colour representations from each of the samples (Table 5.9). These colour representations were then interpreted to reveal the affective DI constructions projected through DMO and UGC image samples. Colours can be interpreted differently by associating different meanings with the same colour (Pastoreau, 2008; Van Leeuwen, 2011). Hence, the insights from the data collected from the interview participants were also used to identify dominant emotions they experienced in Bangladesh.



**Table 5.9: Comparison Between Three Samples - ImagePlot Visualisations\***

Sample	Dominant hue-brightness** combinations
<p><b>Total UGC sample</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Yellow range</b> (Orange-yellow, yellow) <b>low brightness</b></li> <li>• <b>Blue range</b> (blue, blue-violet) <b>high brightness</b></li> <li>• <b>Green range</b> (green and yellow-green) <b>low brightness</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Total DMO-I sample</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Yellow range</b> (Orange-yellow) <b>high brightness</b></li> <li>• <b>Blue range</b> (blue-violet) <b>high brightness</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Total DMO-II sample</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Yellow range</b> (Orange, Orange-yellow, yellow) <b>low brightness</b></li> <li>• <b>Blue range</b> (blue, blue-violet) <b>high brightness</b></li> </ul>

\*Images sorted by hue median (angle) and brightness median (distance to the centre)

\*\* High brightness refers to lighter shares of hues (/colours) (where more images are concentrated towards the outer layer). Low brightness refers to darker shades of hues (colours) (where more images are concentrated in the centre).

The findings indicate that UGC and DMO-II perform in a similar pattern. Both the UGC and DMO-II images represent the darker shades of the yellow range and lighter shades of the blue range. Other than yellow and blue, UGC significantly represents the green range, while DMO-II represents more orange. Conversely, the DMO-I represents lighter shades in both yellow and blue ranges but very few images in darker shades of any colour.

The dominance of lighter shades (high brightness) in the blue range is common to all three samples. Blue is regarded as the most universal and preferred colour that hardly receives any negative reactions irrespective of the cultural background of people (Singh, 2006; Yu and Egger, 2021). The blue colour range expresses peace, competence, relaxation, spirituality, and serenity (Hsieh et al., 2018; Labrecque and Milne, 2012; Bakshi and Gilbert, 2015). Brightness provides additional insights into these interpretations (see Van Leeuwen, 2011). High brightness (lighter shades) improves the calming effect and lessens the arousing effect of any hue (colour) (Bakshi and Gilbert, 2015; Labrecque and Milne, 2012). So, the high brightness in the blue range improves the calming effect further.

The yellow colour range expresses arousing, cheerfulness, relaxation, and harmony (Yu and Egger, 2021). Though dominance in yellow is also common to all samples, DMO-I's yellow images are more towards high brightness, while the other two samples have more yellow images towards low in brightness. So, the yellow range with low brightness of DMO-II and UGC reduces the calming effect and improves the arousing effect of yellow. Conversely, DMO-I with high brightness in the yellow range improves the calming effect and reduces its arousing effect.

None of the samples adequately represents the red range. Red connotes arousing, exciting, cheerful, vivid, high quality and luxurious feelings (Labrecque and Milne, 2012; Yu and Egger, 2021). This indicates that neither the tourists (through UGC) nor the DMO, project Bangladesh as a vivid, high quality and luxurious destination. Additionally, the UGC sample significantly connate calmness and security, through high representation in the green colour range (Labrecque and Milne, 2012).

The results showed that there is relatively high congruency between all three samples (DMO-I, DMO-II and UGC). Some incongruencies were found between DMO-I and the other two samples. This thesis uses emotions revealed through colour representations to understand the affective DI. All three samples connate Bangladesh as an arousing, cheerful, relaxing, harmonious, peaceful, competent, spiritual, and serene destination with their representations in yellow and blue ranges. The affective DI relates to the feelings of positive or negative responses (Tasci et al., 2007a). Bipolar dimensions to measure affective DI quantitatively also use pleasant, arousing, exciting, and relaxing to represent positive affective DI (e.g., Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997, Garay, 2019; Mak, 2017; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002). So, the samples generally connate Bangladesh positively as a joyful destination, where literature argues cheerfulness, pleasure, enthusiasm, and delight are the characteristics of joyful destinations (e.g., Hosany and Gilbert, 2010; Hosany and Prayag, 2013).

Next, the dominant colours depicted in each category (five content categories discussed in section 5.2, Table 5.1 on page 171 which delineate destination attributes) under UGC, DMO-I, and DMO-II samples were examined to further elaborate the congruency levels (Table 5.10). The sample sizes under the three categories (SL, I, and PP) of DMO-I were very small and, hence, the plot is scattered by not allowing the identification of dominant colours. They were excluded from the analysis.

**Table 5.10: Affective DI Revealed under Main Categories**

Category	Sample	Dominant colour ranges	Implications
<b>1: History and Culture (HC)</b>	UGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orange (LB)</li> <li>• blue violet (HB)</li> </ul>	Both DMO samples dominantly show a yellow colour range, while UGC and DMO-I have orange as well. Yellow range and orange when used in an art-related context indicate arousing, cheerful (Labrecque, et al., 2013), relaxed and harmonious (Cyr, et al., 2010). Orange also represents socialisation (Labrecque, et al., 2012). Blue used in the context of the culture in the UGC sample depicts spirituality and serenity (He et. al., 2015).
	DMO-I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orange</li> <li>• yellow (HB)</li> </ul>	
	DMO-II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow range (HB and LB)</li> </ul>	
<b>2: Nature (N)</b>	UGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue</li> <li>• green (LB)</li> <li>• yellow ranges (LB)</li> <li>• very few in red-orange and violet</li> </ul>	All three samples dominantly depict shades of blue and green. Green, in the context of nature, gives the feeling of calmness and security (Labrecque and Milne, 2012). Blue range including violet in the context of nature indicates peacefulness (Hsieh et al., 2018), competence (Labrecque and Milne, 2012) and relaxation (Bakshi and Gilbert, 2015). UGC sample has shades of red and orange as well.
	DMO-I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue-violet (HB)</li> <li>• yellow-green (LB)</li> </ul>	
	DMO-II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue (HB),</li> <li>• green (LB)</li> <li>• yellow-range (LB)</li> </ul>	
<b>3: Society and Lifestyles (SL)</b>	UGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow range (HB)</li> <li>• blue range (HB)</li> </ul>	Both the UGC and DMO-II dominantly depict yellow and blue ranges. Yellow in this context indicates extraversion (Labrecque, and Milne, 2012), while blue indicates peacefulness (Hsieh et al., 2018), competence (Labrecque, and Milne, 2012) and relaxation (Bakshi and Gilbert, 2015).
	DMO-I	Scattered (HB area)	
	DMO-II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow range (HB)</li> <li>• blue-violet (HB)</li> </ul>	
<b>4: Infrastructure (I)</b>	UGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• yellow-orange (HB)</li> <li>• Blue-violet (HB)</li> </ul>	
	DMO-I	Scattered	

	DMO-II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• yellow-orange</li> <li>• yellow</li> <li>• Violet</li> <li>• red-violet (HB)</li> <li>• yellow-green (LB)</li> </ul>	UGC and DMO-II represent yellow-orange and violet ranges in common. Red-violet is a dominant denotation in the DMO-II sample. Red-violet generally indicates high quality and luxury (Labrecqe and Milne, 2012) and specifically under urban and cityscapes indicates visual, vivid, and recognisable (Zhang, 2016). DMO-II emphasises the quality and luxury of infrastructure by expecting positive responses from travellers, while travellers do not share the same view since red-violet is not denoted in the UGC sample.
<b>5: Portraits of People (PP)</b>	UGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow,</li> <li>• yellow-orange (HB)</li> <li>• blue</li> <li>• blue-violet (HB)</li> </ul>	Here also the UGC and DMO-II samples are more congruent, while DMO-II represents the green range in addition.
	DMO-I	Scattered	
	DMO-II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow</li> <li>• yellow-orange (HB)</li> <li>• Red-violet (HB)</li> <li>• Green</li> <li>• yellow-green,</li> </ul>	

\*(LB- Low brightness, HB- High brightness)

Table 5.10 shows that the emotions expressed by image samples under each cognitive category of UGC and DMO share more congruencies. Further, the emotions expressed under each cognitive category reveal which tourism destination's attributes correspond to a given affective reaction (Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997). The above results showed that emotions such as arousing, cheerful, relaxed, harmonious, spiritual and serenity correspond to the history and culture of the destination. Nature stimulated emotions such as calmness, security, peacefulness, competence, and relaxation. Peacefulness, competence, and relaxation also correspond with Society and Lifestyles. And only the DMO-II sample related to emotions such as quality and luxury, as well as visual, vivid, and recognisable to the infrastructure, while the UGC sample does not associate such emotions with the infrastructure.

As mentioned previously, since the same colour can express different meanings and colours can be interpreted differently, the insights from the thematic analysis of interviews with travellers is also used to identify dominant emotions they experienced in Bangladesh. The interview participants' post-travel affective DI confirmed the affective DI revealed through the image samples. For example, the following are the travel emotions of Alice, Christina, and Imran:

It's **exciting**. **Relaxing sometimes...** depending on where you are. But exciting because there are so many people, and someone always shows up [laughing]. **Totally relaxing landscapes**, I will tell you that too.

(Alice, USA, Age group 21-30)

It's **exciting**. It is **pleasure**. It is also a **bit exhausting**. **It's very fulfilling**.

(Christina, Germany, Age group 51-60)

(...) It's a **kind of country of extremes**. These are in two polar. On the one hand, it could be very distressing and...and **potentially scary for people who are not used to this amount of people to traffic again to the pollution, the congestion**. So, it can be **very distressing for people who are used to [a] more calm setting**. But then again, (...) [this is when] I think about Dhaka and the other big cities, Sylhet and Khulna. I guess if you go to **nature of course they feel somewhat different**. **Arousing** because you know there are **many interesting things that are arousing and pique your curiosity and are very interesting to explore (...)**.

(Imran, USA, Age group 31-40)

Like Alice, a majority of participants associated their experience in Bangladesh mainly with positive emotions such as excitement, arousing, relaxation, pleasure, and peace (e.g., AJ, Kate, Pete, Todd, Cynthia, Andy, Cathy, Simon, Mercy, Pole, and Ritchie). Positive emotions are mainly linked with nature and landscapes (e.g., Alice and Imran above) and locals (e.g., Simon, and Pete). The thematic analysis theme 3: 'Memorable experiences with locals' also revealed that the participants relate encounters with locals with positive emotions.

Meanwhile, like Imran and Christina above, some of the participants had some negative travel experiences (i.e., distress and exhaustion), raised due to the negative attributes they encountered in Bangladesh, by posing threats and challenges as revealed in the thematic analysis (Theme 4: Risks and challenges experienced). As Imran stated, above, participants faced three main challenges in Bangladesh: I. the less developed infrastructure (e.g., “Transportation was insane”- Kate); II. pollution (e.g., severe atmospheric pollution compelled Chad to take the best photographic shots of his trip); and, III. underdeveloped tourism services (e.g., lack of tourist information disappointed Mercy, while Andy, Christina and Simon felt nervous and uncertain due to the difficulty of getting directions and bus/train time schedules). Nevertheless, these experiences did not make participants’ overall affective DI evaluation of Bangladesh negative. Andy illustrates:

(...) That is a pleasure. (...) distressing, and exciting. But **I don’t mean distressing it in a negative way**. When travelling in Dhaka is distressing because of the traffic not because of any other reason.

(Andy, Canada, Age Group 51-60)

When informants were asked to rate their overall travel experience in Bangladesh, a wide majority only selected adjectives with positive meanings, such as excitement, arousing, relaxation, pleasure, and peace (AJ, Kate, Pete, Tod, Cynthia, Cathy, Simon, Mercy, Pole, and Ritchie). Only a few (e.g., Christina and Andy above) used distressing and exhausting among dominant positive emotions. So, as revealed through thematic analysis (Theme 8: post-travel evaluation) participants’ re-evaluated DI (or complex image) was positive. Re-evaluated DI is the after-travel modified DI travellers hold about a certain destination (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991). The participants were willing to recommend Bangladesh to fellow travellers, especially allocentric tourists who are ‘adventurous’ and ‘experienced.’ They have shared only the positive UGC and opinions with potential travellers. And their re-visit intention was found to be high (e.g., Todd, Jack, Simon), with a few of the participants already having been to Bangladesh more than once (e.g., AJ, Pole, Andy, Christina, Eddie).

Further, as discussed in chapter 4, negative attributes were already contained in the participants' pre-visit perceived DI of Bangladesh. So, encountering negative attributes was not unexpected and such negative features themselves attracted some travellers to Bangladesh. For example, Ritchie and Simon stated the following:

I think I got some information from one backpacker that went there. It was, he said it is one of the **most densely populated countries** in the world, and **very very hard to travel. Just plain crazy**, you know. And so, I guess **that's what I liked about it.**

(Ritchie, Brazil, Age group 31-40)

The main city Dhaka is a hard place to be. (...) I mean, **it's part of the spirit of this city**, but if you are sleeping six kilometres away from the Harbour, these six kilometres can be two hours in the car because it's very messy. We were travelling by bus mainly. So, **I reckon that for the citizens of Dhaka, it's a hard condition to live there and also about the contamination.** I mean **for a person that goes two days there, it's okay. It's striking, it's an amazing experience.** (...) Because I mean if you go to **the centre of Dhaka, it's amazing, everyday morning, afternoon, during the day. So, if I think about the people living there, the work, the worst experience would be to live in Dhaka.**

(Simon, Spain, Age group 41-50)

Simon perceived Dhaka as an amazing place because of the extraordinary nature of such negative attributes for a traveller, while admitting such are not enjoyable features for a local to encounter on a daily basis. He was amazed by this experience and, at the same time, expressed empathy towards the locals. Like Ritchie above, these participants as experienced allocentric travellers, relate these negative features to many other developing countries they have been to and even considered such factors as a main part of the experience they seek for.

Overall, the participants have recast their mixed emotions during travel to more positive ones in their re-evaluated DI. None of the negative emotions was dominantly



expressed through the images or the participants. Negative emotions are disappointment, displeasure, regret, sadness, and unhappiness that represent unpleasant travel experiences (Hosany and Prayag, 2013) Aligning with past research (e.g., Hosany and Gilbert, 2010; Hosany and Prayag, 2013) none of the image samples revealed such negative emotions. The DMO projections exclude negative images as their intention is to promote the destination. But UGC, also, did not highlight negative emotions. For Hosany and Gilbert (2010), such an absence of negative emotions in traveller evaluation of destinations can be due to travellers viewing their vacations as rich in positive pleasurable experiences. Further, as DI is a fluid concept, different market segments hold different destination images (Litvin and Mouri, 2009). So, this positive affective evaluation is due to the dominant allocentric traveller group visiting Bangladesh. As Baloglu and Brinberg (1997) argue:

“(...) people with different motives may feel about or value a destination similarly if they perceive that the destination provides the benefits they seek. For example, individuals seeking different motivational experience (knowledge, adventure, prestige, etc.) may feel excited about a destination and they may evaluate it as an exciting place if they perceive that the benefits, they seek are present in the destination” (p.12).

Interestingly, participants do not find exhaustion and distress harm their overall experience. Because of the self-confidence and venturesome character of allocentric travellers, they are comfortable in a wide variety of situations (Plog, 2021). As discussed elsewhere, allocentric travellers “strongly prefer unusual, underdeveloped destinations that have retained their native charm” (Plog, 2021:18).

So, comparing the cognitive DI revealed in the above section (subheading 5.2) to the affective DI revealed in this section shows that, the positive affective DI reduces the DI incongruities and improves congruity between the projected and perceived DI. Furthermore, although the UGC images contained some negative attributes (cognitive DI), the emotions expressed are positive (positive affective DI). This positive affective DI reduces the negative impact of cognitive DI on the destination and makes the overall DI a more positive one.

Further, the above results of both the cognitive (5.2) and affective DI (5.4) expressed that UGC has broken the stereotypes and generalisations that contribute to the prolonged negative DI of Bangladesh. To recap from chapter 4, Bangladesh is negatively stereotyped as a poverty-stricken country and as dangerous, unhygienic, dirty, polluted, over-crowded, with high crime, and a violent place. However, the negative components or emotions were not emphasised in the UGC image sample. For example, only a few UGC images contained under the image categories of society and lifestyle, and infrastructure denoted poverty, pollution, and over-crowdedness. In contrast, the nature, culture, and people of Bangladesh were positively portrayed in the UGC sample. This demonstrates that the UGC sample is neither projecting Bangladesh in a negative light nor is it promoting the negative stereotypes of Bangladesh. Hence, UGC can contribute to changing and challenging the negative stereotypes and generalisations and then address the prolonged negative DI of destinations. While the role of UGC in overcoming negative DI is overlooked in DI literature, this thesis contributes to the knowledge of prolonged negative DI, and that UGC can contribute to changing and challenging popular discourses that create prolonged negative DI. How UGC contributes to the DI projections of the DMOs is discussed further in the following section.

### **5.5 Role of UGC in the DMO DI Projections in the Early Stages of the TALC**

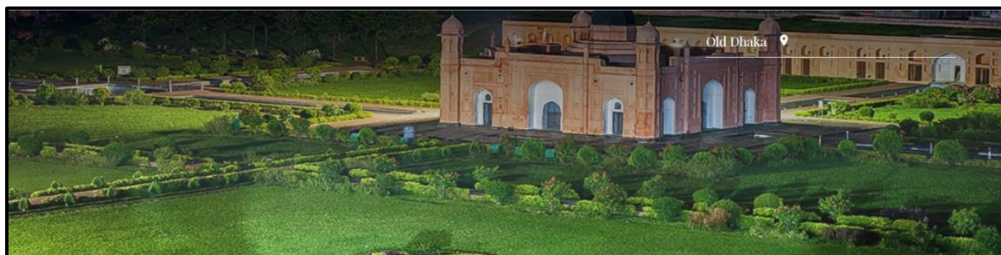
This section moves a step beyond explaining the impact of DI congruity on the TALC, to explain the UGC's contribution to the DI projections of the DMOs. Firstly, how the DI projections and perceptions are occurring interdependently with the image co-creation of travellers in the context of Bangladesh is discussed using the lens of the circle of representation (CoR). Secondly, the potential role of UGC in building DI for destinations at the early stages of their life cycle is discussed.

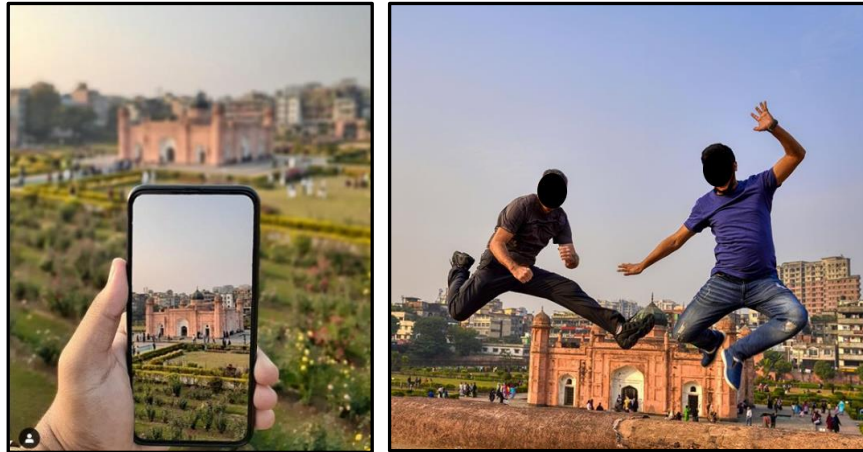
During the content analysis process, the researcher, as the primary coder, noticed that a significant number of similar images are available in these three samples, especially between DMO-II and UGC. For example, some iconic landmarks (images 5.1-5.6), iconic scenery (images 5.7-5.9), iconic animals (5.10-5.12), and iconic people

projected by the DMO were reproduced in UGC images. Many iconic landmarks projected by DMO-I were repeatedly produced in the DMO-I sample itself and the DMO-II sample.



**Image 5.1- 5.2 (top), Image 5.3 (bottom):**  
Central Shaheed Minar (DMO-I, UGC, and DMO-II)





**Image 5.4 (Top), 5.5-5.6 (bottom):** Lalbagh fort (DMO-II and UGC)




**Images 5.7 & 5.8 (Top), 5.9 (Bottom):** Sundarbans (DMO-I, UGC, and DMO-II)



**Images 5.10-12:** Bengal tiger (DMO-I, UGC, DMO-II)

This showed that the destination's icons are repeatedly "produced, projected, perceived, propagated and perpetuated" (Jenkins, 2003: 324) in DMO and UGC by confirming the presence of a circle of representation (CoR) in the context of a destination in an early stage of a TALC. Additionally, the results showed an alternative form of CoR in which UGC is the leading influencer of both other tourists and the DMO. Since the UGC sample was collected well before the introduction of the DMO's new promotional platform (DMO-II) in mid-2020, DMO-II cannot have contributed to UGC re-projections. Instead, this suggests that UGC has contributed to DMO-II images, indicating a re-start of a cycle. So, results showed the UGC shared by travellers has influenced not only other tourists' perceptions but also the image projections of the DMO. To examine this possibility further, a sub-sample of DMO-II images was obtained from the [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd) website and a reverse image search performed with the TinEye online application's Reverse Image Search function. The objective was to see whether the DMO-II re-projects the images already available online before the introduction of DMO-II. TinEye reverse image search was conducted on a purposive sample of 41 images obtained from the link 'About Bangladesh' on [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd) (in the DMO-II sample). The results revealed 36 were published elsewhere online (e.g., in autonomous or organic sources) and published before the introduction of the DMO's new platform (Appendix 8). Two sample TinEye results are given below (images 5.17- 5.18).






**5 results**

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 0.7 seconds for: 2.2abtb1.png


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**twitter.com** (<https://twitter.com/DebbarmaBittu/status/1296679DebbarmaBittu/status/1296679363606...>)  
- First found on Feb 19, 2021  
[view image \(https://pbs.twimg.com/profile\\_banners/913657765037432832/16041\)](https://pbs.twimg.com/profile_banners/913657765037432832/16041)



**www.thedailystar.net** (<https://www.thedailystar.net/country/intl-day-indigenous-peoples-o...>)  
- First found on Jun 23, 2018

Image 5.17: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results



**2,326 results**

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 1.8 seconds for: 2.1abtd7.png

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☐ 21 results found in collections (/faq#image\_collections).

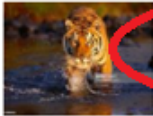
☐ 6 results found in stock (/faq#stock\_images).

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1 of 233




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- First found on Nov 9, 2018


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**www.undp.org** (<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/es/home/ourperspectiv...>)

- First found on Nov 9, 2018


[view image](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/comoros/img/test/UNDP_KM_t) ([http://www.undp.org/content/dam/comoros/img/test/UNDP\\_KM\\_t](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/comoros/img/test/UNDP_KM_t))



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- First found on Jan 30, 2018

[view image](http://lh6.googleusercontent.com/-cXwNFcDFk4/AAAAAAAAAI/A) (<http://lh6.googleusercontent.com/-cXwNFcDFk4/AAAAAAAAAI/A>)




**awardpay.ning.com** (<http://awardpay.ning.com/profile/TRAFFICK>)

[profile/TRAFFICK](http://awardpay.ning.com/profile/TRAFFICK) (<http://awardpay.ning.com/profile/TRAFFICK>)

- First found on Jul 22, 2008


[view image](http://api.ning.com/files/OuBZoeaFLwCG65iGHI45qakabGG2VZpAH) (<http://api.ning.com/files/OuBZoeaFLwCG65iGHI45qakabGG2VZpAH>)



**www.dwallpaperhd.com** (<http://www.dwallpaperhd.com/2013/09/2013/09/national-animal.html>) (<http://www.dwallpaperhd.com/2013/09/2013/09/national-animal.html>)

- First found on Dec 18, 2013

[view image](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-ICyJpLB_v1U/T-htCSaNN_I/AAAAAAAAAw) ([http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-ICyJpLB\\_v1U/T-htCSaNN\\_I/AAAAAAAAAw](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-ICyJpLB_v1U/T-htCSaNN_I/AAAAAAAAAw))



**sydex.net** (<http://sydex.net/page71276>)

[page71276](http://sydex.net/page71276) (<http://sydex.net/page71276>)

- First found on May 28, 2016

Image 5.18: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results

The above TinEye results show that DMO-II has reprojected some images already available on autonomous or organic sources such as social media platforms, newspapers, reports, and other online platforms (e.g., google images). For example, Image 5.17, above, presents the TinEye results obtained on an image of a cultural celebration of Bangladesh that is projected in the DMO-II sample. TinEye revealed that the image was available previously in five places including Twitter, and a newspaper. This indicates DMO-II's DI projections are influenced by the images projected by other online sources including UGC. An interview with the DMO official adds more insights to this:

(...) we arrange **different types of competitions**. Last year we have arranged a **photo competition** (...). In [the] last photo exhibition, we collected 53 photos (...). So **basically, these photos were used to decorate our pavilion** [at the international tourism fair]. (...) **and these photos were used on our social media platforms** (...).

(...) And very recently we started a new program (...) a **travel webcast**. The main participant in this program is a **YouTuber, who basically focus on travelling or travel blog**. We are trying to contact this type of YouTuber or travel blogger and take them to **our studio and take 8 to 10 minutes statement visual regarding his experience in our travel destination**.

(BTB official)

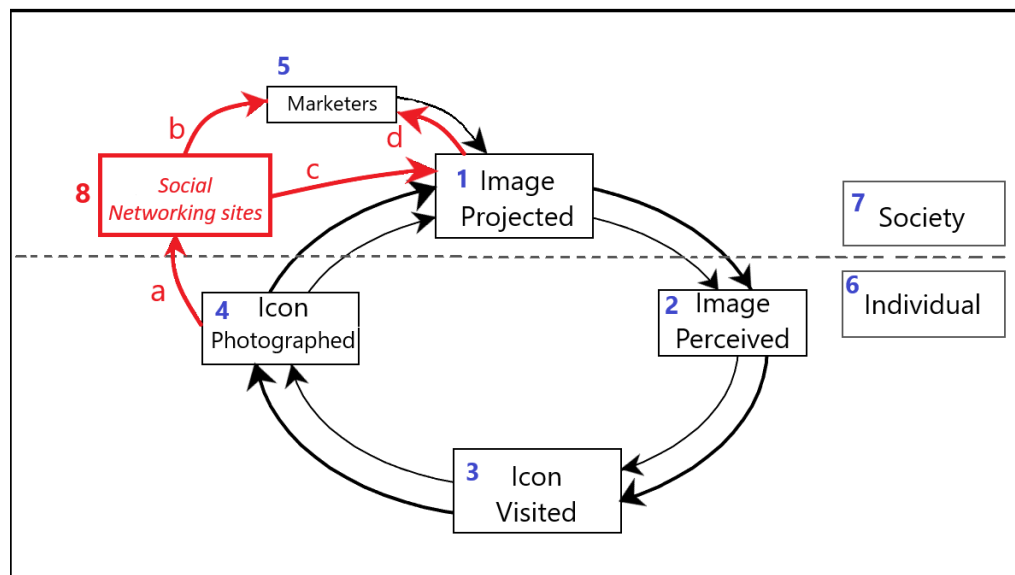
The above statements confirm that the DMO is accommodating UGC and actively seeking images from travellers (e.g., photographic competition and travel webcasts) to accommodate their DI projections. Such participation of travellers in the DMO marketing campaigns encourages the intentional learning of the destination. Such intentional learning increases both the familiarity and expertise of the tourists on the destination at the same time (Gursoy and McCleary, 2004).

This finding that UGC contributes to the DMO DI projections has two implications for the DI. Firstly, it shows that this incorporation of UGC into the DMO has partly



contributed to increasing the congruity between UGC and DMO-II samples, which was discussed in earlier sections (5.2 and 5.4). So, this finding confirmed with Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell (2018) that the DMOs can increase DI congruency by minimising the gap between projected and perceived images by integrating UGC into their official promotional materials. Secondly, the above finding that DMO images are influenced by both organic (e.g., UGC) and other autonomous sources (e.g., newspapers) proposes an alternative form of CoR as presented in Figure 5.2, which has introduced new links to the model.

**Figure 5.2: Amended CoR**



**(The original model by Jenkins, 2003:308)**

According to Jenkins (2003), tourists form a perceived image of the destination through exposure to the images projected (component 1) by both the induced (component 5) and autonomous image formation agents. Then, at the destination, travellers visit the main attractions seen in the projected images and take photographs (component 4) to record their experiences. When taking these photographs, they will try to replicate what they expected to see before the visit. After returning, tourists will show (or share) these photographs to their families and friends. In turn, these images will also contribute to the image projections

(component 1). Accordingly, the images are continuously produced and reproduced as a circle. The results of this thesis suggest new links to the CoR model by contributing to the theory and providing some empirical evidence to the theory as follows.

Firstly, the DMO is using UGC shared in social networking sites (SNS) for their image projections, as shown through component 8 with connecting arrows 'a' and 'b' from components 4 to 8 and then components 8 to 5 respectively. So, this result confirmed the theoretical phenomenon that the DMO's image projections are influenced by the UGC. For example, Rickly (2019), suggests an additional arrow in the CoR model from 'icons photographed' to 'marketers' to show that tourists share images on social media and post reviews to eWOM websites by supporting, challenging, or amending the DMO image projections. This thesis confirmed this theoretical phenomenon with empirical results in the context of a destination with a negative DI in an early stage of the TALC.

The above results shows that not only UGC, but other autonomous sources of information have also contributed to the image projections of DMO-II (e.g., newspapers and magazines). The current CoR model of Jenkins (2003) does not depict this, and it has a one-way arrow drawn from marketers (5) to the image projected (1) but not one in the opposite direction. So, the arrow 'd' was suggested to depict the contribution made by other sources of information to the marketer image projections through a backward arrow from component 1 to Component 5.

Arrow 'c' from 'a' to component 1 shows that UGC shared in SNS directly contributes to image projections. Though component 4 is already linked with component 1 in the original model, arrow 'a' was necessary because UGC shared in SNS was now taken out from component 4. So, UGC shared in SNS directly contributes to the image projections (4 to 1 Component) and indirectly contributes to the image projections through the DMO (4 to 1 through 8).

Accordingly, this thesis theoretically contributes to enhancing the CoR model by introducing new links to the model. Further, it empirically shows that the DMO images are influenced by the UGC shared online as well as that incorporating UGC

into the DMO projections can increase the congruity between projected and perceived DI. A congruent DI would help to correct the negative DIs of the destination.

These findings through confirming the presence of CoR in the context of a destination with negative DI in the early stages of its TALC, as well as UGC contributing to DMO DI projections, has the following implications on the TALC. That is, UGC acts as a trigger or as an enabler attracting travellers to destinations in the early stages of a TALC. In the exploration stage of the TALC, with very few allocentric travellers to the destination, the amount of UGC circulated online can be assumed to be much less. With an increasing number of travellers to the destination the amount of UGC accumulated also increases but, importantly at this stage of the TALC, there is no, or weak, governmental agency dedicated to tourism promotion. So, with moving ahead from involvement to the development stage, UGC accumulated and shared on a destination will increase, as will the development of DMO-like organizations. Increased UGC, hence, will increase the online presence of the destination in the early stages of the TALC. Results showed that UGC does not contribute to enhance the prolonged negative DI of the destination; rather it helped to challenge and change the stereotypes about the destination. More importantly, UGC is an organic source of information and is a highly credible and trustworthy source of information for travellers (Fotis et al., 2012; Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). Addressing the third research objective, this thesis found UGC is the leading contributor to DI formation and, hence, became an enabler of an increased number of travellers to destinations in the early stages of the TALC. The contributions made to destination life cycle literature through these findings are elaborated in the coming chapters.

## **5.6 Summary**

This chapter has examined the DI constructions of Bangladesh to address the last two objectives of this thesis. The congruity between projected and perceived DI in Bangladesh was examined under both the cognitive and affective components of DI. Three image samples representing the DMO, and travellers' (through UGC) DI

projections were analysed and interpreted. Comparisons were made between each DMO sample with the UGC sample as well as between the two DMO samples. Such, comparisons allowed us to understand how the DMO has increased its congruity with UGC after the introduction of DMO-II. The DMO and UGC DI projections of Bangladesh revealed more incongruities between projected and perceived DI under cognitive DI. Notably, DMO-II shows comparatively fewer incongruences with UGC than DMO-I. However, in the weak presence of the DMO online communications, UGC has become the main contributor of DI formation travellers. UGC was found to be increasing the congruency between projected and perceived DI as well as UGC being the leading influencer of both other tourists and the DMO. This suggests an alternative form of CoR. Additionally, the affective DI was found to be more congruent between DMO and UGC samples. Affective DI was found to be setting off the negative impact of cognitive DI and contributing to overcoming the negative DI of the destination. Overall, the results revealed that prolonged negative DI (in chapter 4) and DI congruity/incongruity (in chapter 5) act as triggers or risk factors in the early stages of the TALC in its transformation. Importantly, UGC was identified as an enabler in the early stages of the TALC that attracts travellers. The findings of this thesis have theoretical implications for the early stages of the TALC, which improves the descriptive and predictive ability of the TALC. The next chapter discusses the key findings of this thesis relating to the literature.

## CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

## **CHAPTER 6 : DISCUSSION**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This thesis aims to examine how UGC contributes to the DI formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. Accordingly, the impact of prolonged negative DI (Research Objective 1), the role of DMO and UGC DI projections (Research Objective 2), and the influence of UGC in the DMO's DI projections and also in mitigating negative DI (Research Objective 3) in the early stages of the TALC were explained. The key findings obtained from different analyses of the thesis are as follows. Firstly, this thesis identified prolonged negative DI and, secondly, the extent of congruity between projected and perceived DI as two forces affecting the transition process of the TALC in its early stages. Thirdly, UGC is identified as the key contributor to DI projections in the early stages of the TALC, where: UGC acts as a demand-side trigger that makes the destination more appealing to other travellers; fills the information gap that arises due to limited DI projections from the DMO; and, hence potentially contributing to attracting travellers to the destination in the early stages. Fourthly, the results revealed that the affective component of DI contributes to reducing negative DI comparatively higher than the cognitive component and improves the congruity between projected and perceived DI. Finally, it is found that UGC contributes to the challenging and changing negative stereotypes. This chapter discusses these five key findings in relation to the literature review to deepen the understanding of the role of UGC in DI formation in the above context: developing countries with prolonged negative DI in the early stages of TALC.

The chapter is organised in the order of the five key findings presented above. Previous researchers have examined the impacts of various exogenous and endogenous factors and forces on the transformation process of the TALC stages. However, the factors particularly affecting the early stages of the TALC or the impact of DI as a force that provokes change especially in the early stages of TALC is not adequately explained. Filling this gap, the first three findings contribute to the TALC literature by identifying three forces affecting the transition process of a destination in the early stages of the TALC. The above three forces are also identified as indicators

that improves the descriptive and predictive ability of the TALC in its early stages. The last two findings discussed contribute to the DI literature, particularly on prolonged negative DIs.

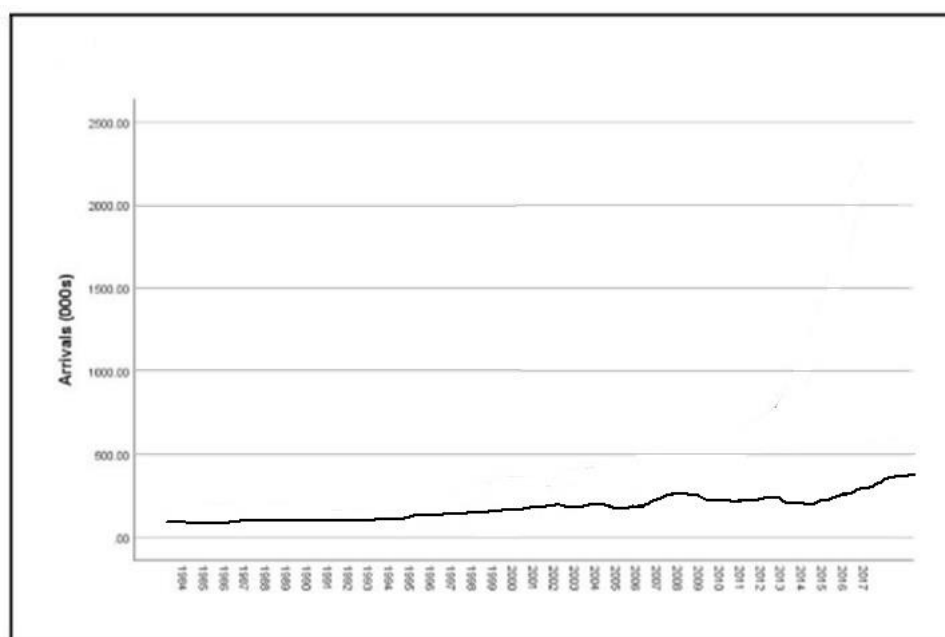
## **6.2 Prolonged Negative DI and Its Influence on the Early Stages of the TALC**

The findings revealed that prolonged negative DI acts as a risk factor forcing destinations to spend long periods in the early stages of the TALC. Contemplating the impact of external factors that affects the changes in destinations is important to enhance the use of the TALC (Agarwal, 2002; Lagiewski, 2006). Literature exploring the impact of various internal and external forces on the TALC stages are well received (e.g., Albaladejo et al., 2016; Gale and Botteril, 2005; Garay and Canoves, 2011; Kubickova and Martin, 2020). Nevertheless, Butler and Hart-Robertson (2022) emphasise that in the efforts of tourism management it is vital to explore the wide variety of forces and events, which act as triggers of development and bringing change to the destination, but they are not yet adequately explored. They particularly emphasised the need for much more research on “the causes of change and how they interact with each other and the destinations and their markets” (Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022:259).

Responding to this call for research, this thesis examines the impact of prolonged negative DI in the early stages of a TALC. The results identified that Bangladesh is in the involvement stage of its TALC with the presence of a few leading factors from the development stage, indicating its movement towards the development stage. For example, Bangladesh has invested considerably in developing infrastructure, advertising, and promotions in recent years. However, international tourist arrival numbers do not show the rapid growth expected in the development stage. The market still consists of a majority of allocentric types of travellers. Findings revealed the shape of Bangladesh’s TALC does not fully fit into an S-shape curve since the destination is still in its early stages of development (see Berry, 2006). Bangladesh’s TALC shape is more aligned with an alternative category proposed by McKercher and Wong (2021), where such destinations have spent significantly long periods in their

early stages (See Figure 4.5 in page 137). In fact, with respect to such countries spending extensive periods in the early stages of TALC, with prolonged negative DI, a new alternative TALC shape can be suggested as ‘constrained growth’ as shown in Figure 6.1.

**Figure 6.1: Constrained Growth**



(Designed by the researcher)

The suggested alternative TALC shape ‘constrained growth’ depicts the slow growth of such destinations over the period, which is caused by the unattended prolonged negative DI distracting the potential tourism growth in such destinations. So, they are spending a considerably longer time (in this case five decades) in the early stages of TALC, though they show gradual growth in tourism numbers over the period. As per the arguments of the TALC, the development of infrastructure and tourist facilities with aggressive advertising and promotions would make the destination appealing for institutionalised travellers (Mid-centric and Dependable/Psychocentric) and assure a rapid growth in traveller numbers making the destinations move ahead to the development stage (Butler, 1980; Getz, 1992; Haywood, 1986). However, differently, the results of the thesis revealed that it is difficult for a destination with



a prolonged negative DI to achieve the rapid growth of traveller numbers and move from the involvement to the development stage. The results generated through the analysis of a historical overview of political, economic, and social environments as well as insights from the primary data analysed (from participant interviews) empirically showed that the exogenous factors, as well as the messages, conveyed through mass media have instilled a negative DI in Bangladesh. This finding is in line with the literature, which argues that exogenous factors such as the political situation, economic condition, technological advancements, and legal and social changes (Govers et al., 2007; Tasci and Gartner, 2007), as well as the type and amount of information sources tourists are exposed to, have a direct impact on DI formation (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli and Martin, 2004). In line with the extant literature, unattended negative DI created by exogenous factors and circulated through media has more severe and long-term effects than stand-alone disasters (Fourie et al., 2020; Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Novelli et al., 2012). Our results confirmed this point as the lack of attention and focus of Bangladesh's tourism authorities to identify as well as counter their negative DI, which allowed these long-lasting issues to accumulate over many years by fostering a prolonged negative image of the destination.

Nevertheless, the impact of prolonged negative DI on the early stages of the TALC has not been adequately explored in the literature. For example, the following literature has examined different triggers, as indicated below, which has brought change to the destination lifecycle development stages; the impact of economic crisis (Berry, 2006); the impact of environmental factors such as climate and geographic location (Singh, 2021); the level of government involvement and market competitiveness on the TALC stages (Kubickova and Martin, 2020); and the impact of a major restructuring process on TALC stage transformation (Garay and Canoves, 2011). Further, the impact of standalone crises such as bombing and terrorism on the TALC (Putra and Hitchcock, 2006; Moss et al., 2008) and a global pandemic (COVID-19 by Butler, 2022) have been studied. Nevertheless, the impact of DI as a trigger for the transition from early to later stages of the TALC has not been adequately examined. This thesis found that the prolonged negative DI causes the destination to

spend a longer period in the early stages of the TALC, even though most other factors required are favourable (e.g., developed infrastructure, available carrying capacity etc). Thus, prolonged negative DI is a trigger affecting the destination's transition into the development stage.

The results of this thesis also showed negative DI was not a barrier for allocentric type of travellers to initiate consumption of a destination and, thus, not a barrier for the destination to move from the exploration stage to the involvement stage. This thesis explored a destination with a prolonged negative DI that has long passed initiating tourists' consumption (exploration stage), and which spends a long time in the involvement stage of the TALC. Avraham and Ketter (2016), by providing one of the few remarks that links negative DI to TALC, mentioned that altering the negative DI is crucial to initiate tourists' consumption when a destination is at its exploration stage (the very first stage of its TALC). Contradictorily, this thesis found evidence that destinations can initiate tourists' consumption despite having a negative DI. Furthermore, the results found that this is due to the allocentric type of travellers attracted to destinations in the early stages of a TALC. For example, according to the results derived from the thematic analysis, after interviewing, travellers to Bangladesh have provided additional insights to support this claim, as below.

The participant profile identified that the majority of the participants are experienced travellers, who have been to many similar destinations in the developing world and are displaying venturesome characteristics. The results showed that the participants' pre-travel-perceived DI dominantly contained negative factors. But such negative factors aroused the curiosity of these participants who are allocentric travellers and influenced them to choose Bangladesh to visit. For example, as discussed in chapter 4, some negative features (e.g., poverty for Chad, Rohingya refugee camps for Jack, and overcrowded and chaotic capital city Dhaka for Ritchie) specifically attracted some participants to visit Bangladesh. In congruence with the arguments in the literature on the characteristics of the allocentric traveller type (e.g., Plog, 2001), these participants preferred to visit Bangladesh as an unusual, underdeveloped destination that has retained its native character by avoiding commercial 'touristy' places. Also, the participants were willing and prepared to accept inadequate or

unconventional kinds of accommodations (e.g., staying with locals who are Couchsurfing hosts), which they considered to be integral parts of gaining a unique experience. Moreover, while the literature commonly argues negative DI is the main barrier in the attraction of travellers to a destination (e.g., Ahmed, 1991; Ayikoru, 2015; Morakabati et al., 2014; Uysal et al., 2011), the results showed that allocentric type of travellers would be an exception. Allocentric travellers, rather, recognise and accept the negative DI. Furthermore, negative DI stimulates the purchase as allocentric travellers identify such destinations as challenging, untouristy and authentic destinations. Thus, this thesis contributes to the DI literature by evidencing that destinations that have a negative DI can also attract allocentric types of travellers in the exploration stage of the TALC. Also, it contributes to the TALC model by showing that the negative DI is not a barrier to initiate tourists' consumption since allocentric travellers are attracted to a destination in the exploration stage even though it has a negative DI. This also shows why the destinations in the early stage of a TALC can attract travellers while having a negative DI. So, the type of DI, whether positive or negative, is not a crucial factor for a destinations in its exploration stage of the TALC.

In this sense, this thesis also contributes by revealing an additional characteristic of allocentric travellers. This is that an allocentric traveller's choice of destination is not negatively influenced by negative DIs of destinations and, sometimes, such a negative DI may act as a factor encouraging the allocentric to visit such destinations. However, this finding does not devalue the importance of building a favourable DI for destinations. Allocentric travellers comprise a small segment of travellers, while the mid-centric group contains the largest segment of travellers (Plog, 2021). Hence, appealing to allocentric travellers alone is not enough for a destination to reach higher growth in traveller numbers.

### 6.3 Congruity between Projected and Perceived DI and Its Impact on the Early Stages of the TALC

The findings of this thesis next demonstrated that incongruities between the DMO projected DI and travellers perceived DI act as a risk factor in the transition process from one stage to the next of the TALC in its early stages. Results showed that DMO projected DI (through DMO-I image sample<sup>15</sup>) at the beginning of the involvement stage is incongruent with the UGC, especially under the cognitive DI. The main dissimilarity between the DMO-I sample and the other two samples was the DMO-I's over-representation of the Official and Other category; a category which does not represent any destination attribute. DI incongruities arise when the travellers' perceived images do not closely align with the destination's image projected by the DMO (Mak, 2017; Selby and Morgan, 1996; Vaughan and Edwards, 1999; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell (2018) suggest that a congruent projected and perceived DI shows that DMO DI projections have been conveyed to the travellers and that travellers, in turn, have assimilated the DMO projections into their DI perceptions.

In contrast to previous research, this thesis was able to analyse two DMO samples, which represent previous and newly introduced DMO online platforms as DMO-I and II. This finding is discussed in two aspects. Firstly, the introduction of DMO-II reflected the DMO's significantly increased attention and investments in tourism promotions. As per the literature, this introduction of DMO-II signifies a step taken from the involvement stage towards the development stage where the TALC literature identifies increased advertising efforts as an indicator of the development stage (Butler, 1980; Berry, 2006; Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Goncalves and Aguas, 1997; Gore et al., 2021). Notably, what indicates the increased advertising is not explained in many papers (e.g., Berry, 2006; Zhong et al., 2008). For example, Zhong et al. (2008) argue that in the involvement stage, destination administrators began to use covert

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<sup>15</sup> As explained in early chapters this thesis analysed three image samples to examine DMO and traveller image projections. Two DMO samples were obtained representing the previous and newly introduced online promotional platforms of the DMO and a sample from Instagram to represent UGC shared by travellers.

induced agents (e.g., journalists and celebrities invited to the destination and to seek recommendations and publicity through their writing) to promote the destination, but they failed to mention promotions in the development stage. Berry (2006) also mentions the publication of a pictorial handbook by the destination initiating the advertising but fails to explain how this was converted to 'heavy advertising' in the development stage. Gore et al. (2021) refer to 'some advertising' in the involvement stage converted to 'heavy advertising' when the DMO started participating in trade fairs and travel marts. Nevertheless, this view of considering the DMO's increased advertising as an indicator of moving from exploration to involvement stage, and then onto the development stage of the TALC, is limited. The incapability to evaluate the different effects or the extent of marketing (sales volume and traveller satisfaction), or the type of marketing strategy, on different types of destinations, is a major criticism of the TALC (Singh, 2011; 2021). Tourism life cycle models generically argue that the increase of the advertising efforts and expenditure assures a smooth move through the early stages to the development stage of the TALC (e.g., Gore et al., 2021; Berry, 2006). However, such an argument importantly ignores the requirement of setting different promotional objectives and priorities under different situations. According to Avraham and Ketter (2016), the promotional focus of a destination with negative DI first lies in identifying and correcting the negative DI. Their claim is invalid in some scenarios such as when destinations promote negative occurrences to attract travellers (e.g., Ahmed, 1991) and in the exploration stage (e.g., discussed in subheading 6.2 above). However, it is true in many other contexts (e.g., the thesis in the same section argues the prolonged negative DI acts as a barrier in the transition from the involvement to the development stage). In addition, Ayikoru (2015) found that extensive marketing is incapable of overriding the causes and consequences of negative DI in the context of Uganda. Thus, this thesis suggests that simply increasing advertising or promotions with unaddressed prolonged negative DI does not assure the movement from the early stages to the development stage of the TALC.

Secondly, the results revealed that the newly introduced online promotions platform, DMO-II, shared significant similarities with UGC. So, the introduction of DMO-II has

increased DI congruity between the DMO and UGC DI projections. The DMOs are no longer the only party that widely circulates curated images (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019; Hunter, 2016) and contributes to the perceived image of potential travellers. Autonomous agents and organic agents including UGC have a strong influence on the DI formation process (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019; Hunter, 2016). Travellers are actively engaging in image co-creations and contribute to image projections through creating and sharing UGC. Travellers consider UGC to be more credible than marketer-controlled sources as UGC stems from organic agents (Jacobsen and Munar, 2012; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018; Statista, 2019). UGC plays a dominant role in the formation of perceived images in potential travellers' minds (Munar, 2011). When the travellers' perceived images do not closely align with the destination's image as projected by the DMO, DI incongruities arise (Mak, 2017; Selby and Morgan, 1996; Vaughan and Edwards, 1999; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). In contrast, a congruent DI strengthens the DMO image projections by increasing the perceived trustworthiness of DMO promotions (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). Hence, this thesis suggests that, instead of considering increased promotions or heavy advertising as an indicator of moving from the early to the development stage of the TALC, increased congruity between projected and perceived images is a better indicator for the purpose. Furthermore, the degree of DI congruity acts as a trigger affecting the transition in the early stages of the TALC.

#### **6.4 UGC's Role in the Early Stages of the TALC**

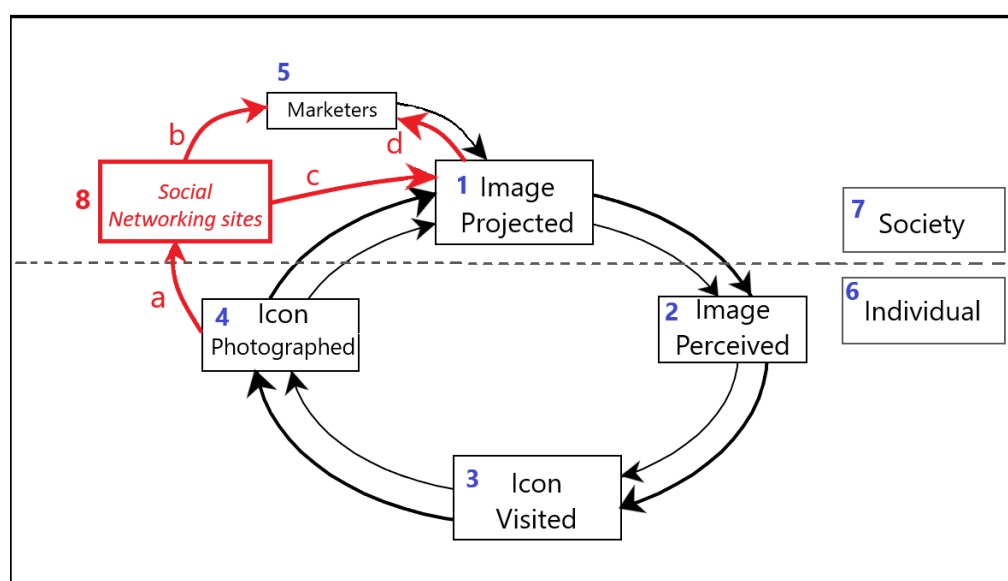
The findings of this thesis suggest UGC is the key contributor to DI projections in the early stages of the TALC, where the role played by DMO image projections is minimal. Hence, UGC acts as a demand-side trigger that makes the destination more appealing for other travellers and contributes to attract travellers to the destination in the early stages. According to TALC literature, there are fewer promotional efforts from the supplier side in the early stages of the TALC compared to the development stage (Butler, 1980; Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Goncalves and Aguas, 1997; Gore et al., 2021; Kubickova and Martine, 2020). In the context of Bangladesh, also, the DMO

promotions were minimal until the recent introduction of the new promotional platform (DMO-II). The interview with the DMO official confirmed that they were more focused on conventional promotions such as advertising and participation in supply-side travel fairs and trade shows. The DMO-I sample contained few images and those mainly focused on non-destination attributes (e.g., profile building of officials), while the UGC sample had wide coverage of destination attributes. Li et al. (2022) argue that UGC is a main contributor in DI formation that depict tourists' experiences and appraisal of the destinations and, hence, is rich in cognitive and emotional information. While agreeing with the literature that tourists themselves act as tourist destination promoters (Caton and Santos, 2008; Jenkins, 2003; Mak, 2017); furthermore, the results suggested in this context that UGC is the leading influencer of other tourists, in situations where the DMO image projections are less focused and inadequate. So, in the early stages of the TALC, UGC contributes to initiate tourists' consumption and pushes the destination towards the involvement stage, while the DMO's role is limited. Next, DMO-II is not only more congruent with UGC but, as identified through the TinEye Reverse Image Search analysis (subheading 5.5, pages 200-202), the DMO has incorporated UGC into its projections, showing DMO-II was, itself, influenced by UGC. This finding provided empirical evidence to confirm that incorporating UGC into DMO DI projections increases the congruity between DMO and UGC DI projections (Munar, 2011; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). The finding implies that UGC is the leading influencer of both other tourists and the DMO, which have implications on the circle of representation (CoR) as well. Firstly, the results showed that destination icons are repeatedly "produced, projected, perceived, propagated and perpetuated" (Jenkins, 2003:324) in DMO and UGC samples, especially between UGC and DMO-II. The findings supported the presence of a CoR in the context of a destination in an early stage of its TALC with prolonged negative DI. CoR is a model useful to explain tourists' behaviour with relating to the interactions between projected and perceived images, where image representations circulate in a continuous circle (Jenkins, 2003). The results confirming the CoR for a destination in an early stage of TALC, where DMO image projections are limited, show that the traveller engagement of DI co-creation through UGC has facilitated the wide circulation of images of the destination. UGC reaching a wide

audience of potential travellers and influencing their perceived DI would assure a start of another circle and facilitate continuous circulation of images. So, the results suggest CoR as a valid model to understand traveller behaviour in the early stages of TALC in addition to the image co-creation contribution of the UGC.

Secondly, the results empirically confirmed that tourists share images on social media and post reviews to eWOM websites by supporting, challenging, or amending the DMO image projections (Rickly, 2019). By extending this line of argument, the results of this thesis propose an alternative form of CoR (Figure 5.2 page 201 restated below) by identifying UGC being the leading influencer of both other tourists and the DMO as fully described and explained in Chapter 5 (section 5.5, pages 201-202).

**Restated Figure 5.2: Amended CoR in p.201**



**(The original model by Jenkins, 2003:308)**

The suggested alternative model fills gaps in the literature by taking the DMOs (component 5 'Marketers') into the loop of continuous circulation of DIs. Literature (e.g., Balomenou and Garrod, 2019; Jenkins, 2003) isolates DMOs and depict DMO projections in CoR as they occur independently without any external influence. The suggested model acknowledges not only the fact that DMO DI projections are influenced by UGC but by autonomous sources as well (arrows b and d). UGC, being



the leading influencer of both other tourists and the DMO, made it possible to identify UGC as an enabler in increasing traveller numbers to the destination in the early stage of its TALC. The results of this thesis extend the knowledge on tourism life cycle models by incorporating UGC into the early stages of the TALC as a factor enabling initiation of tourists' consumption (at the exploration stage) and making the destination appealing for more allocentric travellers (at the involvement stage) as well as making the destination appealing for higher categories of travellers (i.e., from allocentric to mid-centric) in the transformation from early stage to the development stage of the TALC. This thesis particularly extends the knowledge by conceptualising the UGC's role in the early stages of TALC for destinations suffering from prolonged negative DI. As discussed in detail under section 6.2 above, results reveal that Bangladesh has been able to attract allocentric type travellers irrespective of their negative DI. Allocentric type travellers are trendsetters in destination selection by visiting uncommon destinations and acting as a source of influence to persuade the next groups of travellers into the destinations. Here UGC has played a vital role in promoting this destination in a way that appeals to these travellers. Further, UGC has the potential to facilitate overcoming the negative DI, which is discussed in 6.6. This conceptualisation of the role of UGC for the destinations with prolonged negative DI, in the early stages of their TALC, broadens our understanding of the role of UGC in DI formation and contributes to the general DI literature. This discussion is summarised in Table 6.1 below.

**Table 6.1 Role of UGC in the Early Stages of the TALC**

Stage	Role of UGC identified in the destination
Exploration	Although, there is less UGC, such would contribute to initiate consumption by building awareness among potential travellers, while the DMO communications are absent or inadequate.
Involvement	UGC contributes to attract more travellers, by making the destination more appealing to the same types of travellers (allocentric) as those who post. The DMO DI projections started to increase at this stage. However, in agreement with the literature, travellers consider UGC as a non-marketer-controlled source and, thus, more trustworthy than the DMO promotions (Chu and Kim, 2011; Fotis et al., 2012; Gretzel and Yoo, 2008; Han et al., 2018). The DMO is more focused on conventional promotions such as advertising, trade shows and fairs, which may not directly reach the market (allocentric type of travellers) who are the dominant group attracted in the early stages. The DMO's online image projections are less focused and inadequate to induce more travellers (e.g., DMO-I sample). Importantly, UGC has contributed to make Bangladesh appealing for the potential travellers (i.e., allocentric types of travellers) irrespective of their prolonged negative DI. This shows the ability of UGC to promote destinations with negative DIs in their early stages of TALC, irrespective of the limited promotional efforts from the DMOs.
Transition towards Development	UGC generation and sharing of travellers' experiences are expected to be increasing with the increasing number of travellers. With the wide availability of UGC online the destination can potentially reach a wide audience. These communications would start appealing to the higher categories of travellers (i.e., from allocentric to mid-centric), while the DMO messaging is more congruent with the UGC. For example, the results showed that the online presence of the DMO has increased with the introduction of a new promotional platform (DMO-II sample). At the same time, UGC found to be contributing to alleviate the prolonged negative DI of this destination through correcting the negative stereotypes (this is further explained in the section 6.6)

Overall, the above three findings (subheadings 6.2; 6.3; and 6.4) of this thesis challenge the generic claim that the destinations follow a similar path in their early stages and are less significant to examine (e.g., Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022; Berry, 2006). For instance, Butler and Hart-Robertson (2022) state:

“(...) tourism destinations follow a generally similar path until they reach their carrying capacity, after which the destinations’ direction depends on a number of factors, such as the speed, nature and dimension of tourism, their natural attributes, and their management, as well as exogenous factors beyond their control” (p.257).

Moreover, Agarwal (2002) by examining the later stages of the TALC, argues that “decline is the outcome of the interaction of internal and external forces” (p. 48). Nevertheless, this thesis evidenced that the destination’s direction in the early stages is also affected by internal and external factors, their interactions and destination management. The results particularly showed that prolonged negative DI, congruity between projected and perceived DI and the role of UGC as a DI-cocreator, act as triggers affecting the destination’s transition from the involvement to the development stage. This further demonstrates that, rather than concentrating research on the later stages of the TALC when a destination has reached its carrying capacity, it is important to examine the early stages of the TALC. The above discussion of results has identified theoretical contributions to the TALC literature, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

### **6.5 Affective DI Increases the Congruity between Projected and Perceived DI**

Cognitive DI is “how the tourist would describe the physical attributes or features of the area” (Vaughan and Edwards, 1999:358), and affective DI relates to the feelings of positive or negative responses (Tasci et al., 2007a). The cognitive and affective DI are the interrelating components of DI and work in a hierarchical fashion, where cognitive DI that is formed first is evaluated in the affect stage. The results found that affective DI reduces the negative effects of cognitive DI and contributes to easing the

negative DI of a destination. Hence, a positive affective DI diminishes the degree of DI incongruities between the projected and perceived DI and improves the DI of the destination. This thesis examined both the cognitive and affective DI constructions of Bangladesh and explained the degree of congruency between projected and perceived DI of both DI components (cognitive and affective) separately. The results revealed that cognitive DI projected by the DMO and UGC are incongruent and affective DI projected by the DMO and UGC are congruent. Meanwhile, although cognitive DI expressed through UGC contained some negative attributes, affective DI expressed through UGC images were found to be consistently positive. Interview participants also agreed with this position. Participants expressed they have experienced a combination of negative and positive emotions during travel, where negative emotions are aroused mainly due to the many negative attributes present in Bangladesh. This finding agrees with Bosangit et al., (2015), that travellers not only recall positive emotions but express an array of emotions about their tourism experiences. Nevertheless, the participants have recast their post-travel evaluation of emotions towards Bangladesh positively.

In accordance with the literature, cognitive and affective DI components are hierarchically interrelated where destination images are developed during the cognitive stage and then evaluated in the affective stage (Gartner, 1994). Affective DI relates to the feelings of positive or negative responses (Tasci et al., 2007a). The results showed that cognitive DI has been evaluated at the affective stage and, in doing so, the DI attributes were positively evaluated at the affective stage. However, the interactions between cognitive and affective DI and how they affect DI congruity, and their role in negative DIs have yet to be studied. For example, researchers broadly examined the relationship between cognitive and affective DI such as what cognitive attributes correspond to a given affective reaction (e.g., Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997; Garay, 2019; Mak, 2017; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002). Firstly, this thesis suggests that more congruencies between the projected and perceived DI constructions under affective DI have offset the incongruencies found in cognitive DI constructions. This made the projected and perceived DI more congruent when both components are combined (cognitive + affective). Accordingly, this thesis showed

that affective DI significantly contributes to increase the congruity between the projected and perceived DI.

Secondly, the findings revealed that Bangladesh is a destination with prolonged negative DI, but the travellers ascribe positive affective evaluation to it. For instance, the cultural analytics results of the UGC sample expressed a positive affective DI and these results were confirmed by the interview participants as well. This result complies with the literature that argues that content sharers are more likely to help in building the affective DI and be able to generate empathy towards the destinations through their content (e.g., Tucker, 2016; Wang, 2012). For example, Filieri et al. (2021) argue that “Individuals who love a destination will spontaneously attempt to minimise the negative impact of major crises, such as a terrorist attack, through declaring their emotional attachment, support, empathy, and closeness in their SNS posts of the destination” (p.17). Nevertheless, though literature argues that capturing both cognitive and affective DI components together assures a more accurate picture (Agusti, 2018; Lindblom et al., 2018; Martin and Bosque, 2008; Zhang et al. 2018), none have examined how cognitive and affective components interact in overcoming negative DI.

Literature on negative DI mainly revolves around examining the causes of negative DI and strategies for overcoming it (Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Grosspietsch, 2006; Lee et al, 2022; Martinez and Alavares, 2010; Ryu et al., 2013; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007b). For example, designing promotional campaigns either ignores or acknowledges negative DI (Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2013, 2016) and hosting mega events (Ahmed, 1991; Lee et al., 2022) were discussed as a strategy to address negative DI. Additionally, Baloglu and Brinberg (1997) found that the distinct affective images of tourism destinations can be used to position the destinations. Accordingly, based on dominant affective reactions Baloglu and Brinberg (1997) have positioned destinations into destinations with positive DI and negative DI. However, none of this literature has examined how affective DI acts in reducing the negative effects of cognitive DI and producing a more positive DI for the destination. By filling this knowledge gap, this thesis found that affective DI plays a dual role by increasing the

congruity between DMO and UGC-projected DI and by reducing the negative impact of DI.

## **6.6 UGC Contributes to the Resistance to Negative Stereotypes**

The results of the thesis showed that the UGC not only circulates representations about a destination but also contributes to challenging and changing negative stereotypes and negative generalisations and, thus, helping to overcome prolonged negative DIs. Kotler et al. (2002) claim that a stereotype is more than an image where a stereotype is a widely held image that carries a favourable or unfavourable bias that is highly distorted and simplistic. The findings showed that Bangladesh has a prolonged negative DI established due to negative stereotypes (e.g., poverty-stricken, dangerous, unhygienic, dirty, polluted, over-crowded, with high crime and violent places). Nevertheless, UGC has not generally represented Bangladesh negatively apart from a few images portraying some negative features (poverty, pollution, traffic congestion, and over-crowdedness) of Bangladesh under the content categories (chapter 4) of Society and Lifestyle, Portraits of People, and Infrastructure. Rather, the UGC sample portrayed Bangladesh positively in the nature, culture, and people related attributes in Bangladesh and the affective DI was found to be favourable.

There are only a few studies on prolonged negative DI (e.g., Ahmed, 1991; Avraham and Ketter, 2013, 2016; Ayikoru, 2015) and on the negative stereotypes of developing destinations (e.g., Ahmed, 1991; Avraham, 2004; Avraham and Ketter, 2013, 2016; Chen et. al., 2016). The stereotypes have a direct impact on cognitive and affective DI and travel intention (Chen et al., 2016). It is a difficult task to change a stereotype and embed a new, different image in the mind of target consumers (Ahmed, 1991; Avraham, 2004). Avraham (2004) argues that opinion leaders, which include journalists, can play a vital role in encouraging visitation by nullifying negative stereotypes. He states that:

“Visiting a city makes its image more complete, and thus it may change from a poor image to a rich image. The main advantage of visiting a city is that the

image-holder has a chance to personally experience the objective reality within the city, without being dependent on mediators or secondary agents. When this happens in cities associated with negative stereotypes, it may be easy for visitors to see that these stereotypes are false” (p.474).

Additionally, Chen et al. (2013) argue that images and videos help to ‘reshape’ travellers’ negative perceptions of unfamiliar cultures. As UGC is a more trustworthy source for travellers (Chu and Kim, 2011; Fotis et al., 2012; Gretzel and Yoo, 2008; Han et al., 2018), potential travellers more likely perceive the images shared in the UGC sample as providing a more realistic view of the destination. The findings of this thesis showed that UGC, as an organic source, can contribute to shattering and changing negative stereotypes and overcoming the prolonged negative DI of a destination. Accordingly, this finding furthers the understanding of DI literature on overcoming the prolonged negative DI of a destination.

## **6.7 Summary**

Five key findings of the thesis are discussed in this chapter. The first two findings discussed prolonged negative DI and the degree of congruity between projected and perceived DI as two factors that affect the transition process of the TALC in its early stages. The third finding discussed UGC as a demand-side trigger that makes the destination more appealing to other travellers and contributes to attract travellers to the destination in the early stages of the TALC. The fourth finding discussed was how affective DI reduced the negative DI and increased the DI congruity. Finally, how UGC contributes to overcoming prolonged negative DI through shattering and changing negative stereotypes and generalisations were discussed. These findings represent theoretical contributions to the TALC literature and the knowledge on prolonged negative DI. Contribution to the TALC literature was made mainly by extending the descriptive ability and predictive ability of the model by incorporating the identified triggers and factors into the TALC stages of development. The next chapter summarises the importance of these findings, contributions made to theory,

methodology, and practice and, finally, the limitations and the future research potential.



## **CHAPTER 7: CONTRIBUTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

## **CHAPTER 7 : CONTRIBUTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the contributions and conclusions of this thesis. Firstly, the aim and objectives of the thesis are summarised. Secondly, the contribution to theory, methodology, and practice is explained. Thirdly, the limitations of the study and the recommendation for future research are presented. Finally, a personal reflection and concluding remarks are offered.

### **7.2 Aim and Objectives of the Thesis**

This thesis aimed to examine how UGC contributes to the DI formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. The TALC literature largely focuses on examining mature tourist destinations and the later stages of the TALC, with special emphasis on the potential route destinations take at the post-stagnation stage of the TALC. There is a dearth of research on the early stages of the TALC, although there are many destinations that are still in the early stages of their TALC for a variety of reasons. The interest of this thesis is limited to developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. While tourism can be a key contributor to the economic development of a developing country, most of the developing destinations are failing to succeed in tourism due to their prolonged negative DIs. Not all destinations that are in the early stages of their TALC are developing countries, nor do all developing countries located in the early stages of their TALC have negative DIs. This thesis explored the DI of Bangladesh, a developing country that continues to suffer from a prolonged negative DI. Negative DI is widely considered an important factor that hinders the attraction of tourists to a destination and leads to a failure to reach expected tourism growth. However, despite the DI and negative DI being widely examined concepts in tourism literature, there is a lack of TALC literature examining the impact of a negative image in its early stages. Accordingly, the aim of the thesis was framed as below.

**To explore how user-generated content (UGC) contributes to the DI formation of developing countries with negative destination image (DI) in the early stages of the tourism area life cycle (TALC).**

This overall aim guided the thesis to focus on the three research objectives given below.

- I. To examine the impact of negative DI in the early stages of the TALC
- II. To explain the role of DMO and UGC DI projections on the DI of a destination in the early stages of the TALC
- III. To conceptualise the influence of UGC in the DMO's DI projections in the early stages of the TALC and also in mitigating negative DI

In addressing the above research objectives, this thesis adopted a qualitative methodology, specifically using critical visual methodologies. According to Rose (2016), a critical visual methodology allows us to consider the agency of the image, social practices, and effects of the circulation and viewing of images as well as reflect on the variability of the views of the audience and academic criticism. By addressing the first (in chapter 4) and second (in chapter 5) research objectives, the findings of this thesis showed that prolonged negative DI and incongruity between projected and perceived DI act as risk factors in the exploration and involvement stages of the TALC. By addressing the third objective (chapter 5), this thesis identified UGC as a demand-side trigger that acts as a key contributor in image projections, increases the destination's appeal for other travellers and, hence, contributes to attracting travellers to the destination in the early stages. Additionally, the thesis derived two more key findings relating to the DI and UGC. Namely, that affective DI can alleviate the negative DI expressed in cognitive DI, and affective DI increases the congruity between DI projections and perceptions. Secondly, the study established that UGC can contribute to challenging and changing negative stereotypes in addressing prolonged negative DI. These key findings were discussed in chapter 6 to deepen the understanding of the early stages of the TALC and prolonged negative DI. The contributions made are discussed in the following sections.

### **7.3 Contributions**

Theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions made in this thesis are discussed in this section. Theoretical contributions are made to two concepts of literature, namely the tourism lifecycle, and destination image (DI). Methodological contributions are made to extend the methods in measuring both cognitive and affective DI constructions through visual components of online images. Practical contributions are made suggesting strategies for DMOs concerning altering negative DIs to ensure growth in the tourism industry and successfully facing the transition from the early stages to the development stage of the TALC.

#### **7.3.1 Theoretical Contributions: TALC Literature**

Firstly, this thesis theoretically furthers the understanding of the impact of three interacting endogenous and exogenous factors and forces on the stages of development of the TALC: particularly by identifying prolonged negative DI, the degree of congruity between projected and perceived DI, and the role of UGC, as triggers affecting the transition from the early to development stage of the TALC. As discussed in other chapters, except for a few studies that have at least some minor coverage of DI (e.g., Avraham and Ketter, 2016; Buhalis, 2000; Butler, 1980; Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022; Berry, 2006; Dyk et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2012; Yilmaz, 2021), the impact of DI on different stages of the TALC has not been adequately examined in the literature, especially in the early stages. Addressing this gap this thesis examined the impact of DI in the early stages of the TALC in the context of a destination with prolonged negative DI. TALC literature empirically examines the triggers bringing change to destination development stages (e.g., Albaladejo et al., 2016; Gale and Botteril, 2005; Garay and Canoves, 2011; Kubickova and Martin, 2020). However, none examines the impact of DI as a force enacting change in the early stages of the TALC. Through identifying the impact of the above three forces in the early stages of the TALC, this thesis improves the understanding of the impact of DI at this stage. Additionally, these findings challenge the view that destinations

generally follow a similar path in the early stages (e.g., Berry, 2006; Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022) and suggest that the transition from the early to the development stage is not a smooth transition process that happens automatically. Rather, the internal and external factors influence this transition, and the identification of such triggers of change enhances the TALC model.

Additionally, the above explained theoretical implications enabled to address the following concerns raised by Butler (2011): a) Whether a consistent or a different set of triggers are influential at different stages of TALC; and, b) whether the impact of such triggers can be controlled and managed in advance. The results of this thesis showed that different triggers are more influential at different stages. For instance, at the exploration stage, the prolonged negative DI or the incongruencies between the DMO projected and UGC perceived DI do not obstruct initiating the tourists' consumption of the destination but both triggers act as barriers in the transition from the early to development stage. Nevertheless, some of these triggers can be controlled and managed. For example, both the prolonged negative DI and incongruities between projected and perceived DI can be controlled and managed to some degree. Extending beyond Butler's (2011) concerns, this thesis suggests that the same triggers may affect differently at different stages. For example, this thesis suggests that, in the early stage of the TALC, UGC contributes positively as a demand-side trigger, making a destination more appealing for other travellers and contributing to attracting travellers to the destination, while a study by Dodds and Butler (2019) by focusing on the later stages of the TALC, argue UGC is an enabler of over-tourism.

Secondly, this thesis furthers the understanding of the descriptive ability of the early stages of the TALC by understanding the impact of prolonged negative DI, the degree of congruency between projected and perceived DI, and the role of UGC, in the early stages of the TALC. The TALC is recognised as a "useful descriptive tool for analysing the development of destinations and the evolution of their markets" (Cooper and Jackson, 1989:377). In this sense, the TALC can be used to identify potential risk factors that may drive otherwise healthy destinations onto a path of unsustainability (McKercher, 2005). As discussed above, the early stages of the TALC are neglected;

specifically, triggers that affect the early stages of the TALC have been overlooked. Filling this gap, this thesis suggests improving the descriptive ability of the early stages of the TALC by identifying that the prolonged negative DI and the incongruity between projected and perceived DI indicates a risk factor delaying destinations to move from the early to development stage. Furthermore, UGC acts as a demand-side trigger facilitating this transition from the early to development stage.

Thirdly, this thesis theoretically improves the predictive ability of the TALC in its early stages, especially when the time spent in the early stages is extensive. The predictability of the TALC is its ability to use a set of indicators to suggest the general direction of a tourist area, or the stage a destination is moving towards (Berry, 2006; Butler, 2011; Butler and Hart-Robertson, 2022). This thesis found that the prolonged negative DI and incongruent DI made the destination spend a longer period in the involvement stage of the TALC while having otherwise favourable conditions (e.g., developing infrastructure, improved economic and social conditions, etc.) failed to aid transition to the development stage. In other words, prolonged negative DI and incongruent DI are identified as triggers hindering destinations' transformation into the development stage from the involvement stage. Consequently, these two factors are useful indicators suggesting the general direction of a tourist area in its early stages. In this line of argument, this thesis contributes to further understanding the early stages of development.

Fourthly, through these theoretical implications, which improve the descriptive and predictive ability of the early stages of the TALC model, this thesis suggests incorporating two new indicators to the checklist of indicators (Table 2.1 in the Literature Review chapter) to the involvement stage of the TALC, especially when the destination is spending an extended period in the involvement stage. Those two indicators are incongruities between the projected and perceived DI and the prolonged negative DI. This also serves Butler's (2011) call for additional work on determining a more complete set of indicators for each stage to clarify the degree of exclusivity of stages.

Fifthly, this thesis contributes to the TALC literature by identifying UGC as the key contributor in DI projections in the early stages of the TALC, which provides

destination appeal for the potential traveller and contributes to increasing traveller numbers to destinations in the early stages. TALC literature limitedly frames the destination promotions to the intensity and the investments in advertising and focuses only on the supply side promotional efforts (e.g., Butler, 1980; Berry, 2006; Agarwal, 1997; Getz, 1992; Goncalves and Aguas, 1997; Gore et al., 2021). In today's digitalised world travellers are more actively engaged in image co-creations and substantially contribute to image projections through UGC, while access to and the credibility of UGC are higher than induced sources (Jacobsen and Munar, 2012; Marine-Roig and Ferrer-Rosell, 2018; Statista, 2019). Yet, tourism life cycle literature has not adequately examined how UGC as a demand-side factor would interact with supply-side factors (e.g., the DMO promotions) in the early stages of the TALC. The finding of this thesis argues that UGC is a trigger initiating tourists' consumption and contributing to increasing the traveller numbers in the early stages of the TALC. Hence, the knowledge of the early stages of the development of the TALC is enhanced by incorporating the demand-side contribution (i.e., UGC) to destination promotions rather than limiting it to supply-side promotional efforts.

Further, this incorporation of demand-side contribution to destination promotions, as well as the other two triggers discussed earlier, provide additional evidence of how internal and external factors interact in bringing change to the early stages of destination development. For example, as discussed in previous chapters, prolonged negative DI is a complex scenario where negative DIs are created by exogenous factors, widely circulated through media, and then accumulated because the DMOs do not appropriately address these negative DIs (internal factor) by causing severe and long-term negative effects. Butler and Hart-Robertson (2022) also call for more research to understand how these internal, external, controllable, and uncontrollable causes of change interact with each other and impact the destinations and their markets. It is acknowledged that the supply and demand side factors have an impact on the progress of a destination in its TALC stages (Butler, 1980; Agarwal, 2002). Nevertheless, again, the impact of the interaction of such forces, particularly in the early stages of the TALC, is limitedly explored. This thesis addresses this gap and contributes to the TALC literature by showing three instances on how internal and

external, supply, and demand-side factors interact with each other in bringing changes to the early stages of the TALC.

### **7.3.2 Theoretical Contributions: DI Literature**

This thesis also has theoretical implications for the literature on negative DI. Firstly, this thesis improves the understanding of how the interrelating components of DI, cognitive and affective, act in increasing the congruity between projected and perceived DI as well as how affective DI contributes to overcoming negative DI in developing countries. To recall from the literature review, examining two interrelating components, cognitive and affective DI together, will yield a more accurate picture of DI (Agusti, 2018; Lindblom et al., 2018; Martin and Bosque, 2008; Zhang et al., 2018). However, DI studies extensively examine the cognitive component, but fail to capture the affective component adequately (Mak, 2017). When both cognitive and affective DIs were examined, most researchers limited their efforts to identify the dominant affective DI of their selected destination and examine the correspondence between cognitive and affective DI dimensions (e.g., what cognitive attributes correspond to a given affective reaction) (e.g., Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997; Garay, 2019; Mak, 2017; Pan et al., 2014; Mak, 2017; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002). Some have even explained the impact of affective DIs on other dimensions such as travel motivations (e.g., Pan, et al., 2014). But neither the role of affective DI in increasing the congruity between projected and perceived DI nor the role of affective DI in overcoming negative DIs of a destination is explained. Thus, this thesis contributes to DI literature by explaining the above dual roles played by the favourable and congruent affective DI (increasing the congruity between projected and perceived DI, and reducing the negative DI of the destination), even in a context where cognitive DI is incongruent.

Secondly, this thesis extends understanding of the role of UGC in countering negative DI. The results showed that UGC contributes to challenging and changing negative stereotypes that create prolonged negative DI and, hence, can play an active role in overcoming prolonged negative DI. As discussed in the literature review chapter, the



UGC's role as an information source contributing to DI formation as well as its role in the marketing communications mix have attracted significant attention in tourism studies in recent times. Negative DI is also an area examined in a similar vein, especially in the developing country context. Negative DI caused by stand-alone crises, and strategies for overcoming negative DI, have received substantial research attention. However, the potential role UGC can play in paving the way to changing negative stereotypes has not been examined to date. This thesis, by demonstrating UGC's ability to alter negative DI leading to the correction of prolonged negative DI extends the understanding of the role of UGC in DI projections.

Thirdly, this thesis empirically furthers the understanding of the CoR by confirming its presence in a destination with a negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. The presence of the CoR in this context showed that, though there are limited image representations circulated online (both from UGC and the DMO), such available DI projections have actively influenced potential travellers. Moreover, the results demonstrated that DMO images are influenced by the UGC shared online and, also, that incorporating UGC into the DMO projections can increase the congruity between projected and perceived DI. Finally, it identified that UGC is the leading influencer of both other tourists and the DMO, in situations where the DMO's online presence is weak and minimal in the early stages of the TALC. Accordingly, as discussed in detail in chapter 6, this thesis has further developed the CoR model in light of the findings and identified UGC as the leading influencer.

### **7.3.3 Methodological Contributions**

Firstly, this thesis methodologically contributes by developing a comprehensive process to conduct visual content analysis with online visual data. Content analysis is a common method used to interpret visual data online to reveal DI constructions (e.g., Agusti, 2018; Caton and Santos, 2008; Hunter, 2016; Jenkins, 2003; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013; Mak, 2017; Munar, 2011; Zhang et al., 2019). Nevertheless, there is no standardised or detailed procedure to conduct a content analysis (Krippendorff, 2019; Elo and Kyngas, 2008) especially in analysing visual data. As this thesis intended to use qualitative content analysis to extract DI constructions

through online images shared in UGC and the DMO media, the researcher required a detailed process to guide her in conducting the analysis. Hence, by consulting the literature (Bell, 2004; Elo and Kyngas, 2008; Krippendorff, 2019; Rose, 2016; Marine-Roig and Clave, 2015; 2016), a comprehensive process guiding the content analysis was formulated (Figure 3.2 in pages 90-91). Accordingly, this thesis makes a methodological contribution by proposing a detailed content analysis process that contains five consequent phases. The procedure and guidelines used in conducting the content analysis with a clear breakdown of phases and steps, explanations, and linkages between the phases and steps are given in the Methodology chapter. This process is expected to guide researchers conducting content analysis, especially in uncovering the DI constructions through images.

Secondly, this thesis contributes to methodology by extracting both the cognitive and affective DI constructions from visual data. Images are more effective in revealing affective DIs and images reveal more insights into affective DI (Mak, 2017). Nevertheless, with few exceptions (e.g., Mak, 2017; Yu et al., 2020; Yu and Egger, 2021) most of the DI studies that examine travel photography either reveal only the cognitive DI (e.g., Hunter, 2016; Stepchenkova and Zhan, 2013) or, when examining both components, the affective DI is revealed through accompanied text and captions but not from the photographs (e.g., Filieri et al., 2021; Pan et al., 2014). Meanwhile, limited studies make comparisons between projected (e.g., the DMO projections) and perceived DI (e.g., UGC) using visual data. Those which do, also use offline DMO communications (projected DI) such as printed brochures and travel guides, to compare with online travel photographs (perceived DI) (e.g., Agusti, 2018; Hunter, 2016). By addressing this gap, this thesis contributes by being one of the few studies to explore both the cognitive and affective DI constructions from both projected and perceived sources through online visual images.

Particularly, this thesis demonstrates that the affective DIs in images can be captured through colours by applying the colour psychology concept. Applying colour psychology to reveal traveller emotions from travel photographs is receiving increasing attention from tourism scholars (e.g., Rose and Wills, 2019; Yu, et al., 2020; Yu and Egger, 2021). In this line of thought, this thesis used the cultural analytics

technique to extract the dominant colours of three large image samples; these were interpreted based on literature to reveal the emotions depicted by the colours and then linked to affective DI. This process is explained in detail in the Methodology chapter. So, this thesis is amongst the very few tourism studies that to examine both cognitive and affective DI through images and, especially, which reveals affective DI through colour psychology using a large sample of online images.

#### **7.3.4 Contribution to Practice**

Practically, the results of this thesis are useful to DMOs, policymakers, and other tourism service providers in a destination. This thesis particularly provides insights into managing and planning destinations in the early stages of the TALC, while handling and overcoming the consequences of negative DI.

This thesis suggests DMOs in the early stages of the TALC with negative DI to focus on overcoming the destination's prolonged negative DI and in bringing down the image incongruity between the projected and perceived DI in their promotional objectives. These would make the destination appealing for traveller groups beyond allocentric travellers and increase their tourism numbers by enabling the destination to move from the involvement to the development stage of the TALC. The results of this thesis found that Bangladesh, the context of this study, is heavily investing in developing infrastructure and new promotional platforms, while their prolonged negative DI remains unaddressed, which acts as a barrier in moving from the involvement stage to the development stage of the TALC. In this light, this thesis argues that the destination marketer's role goes beyond the role of the aggressive promoter of the destination at the early stages of the TALC. Rather, the marketer's role for destinations in the early stages of the TALC with negative DI is suggested to be seen as a DI projector which uses appropriate strategies to minimise the incongruities between projected and perceived DI, in order to address the negative DI and assure growth in traveller numbers by appealing to the desired target market.

By revealing UGC as the key contributor of DI projections in this context, this thesis suggests that the DMOs of the destinations in the early stages of the TALC can yield

better results through their DI projections by paying more attention to new media. The inherent challenges such as the economic, socio-political, and cognitive (knowledge, skills, and confidence to use by businesses) barriers when implementing e-commerce in developing countries (Kshetri, 2007) are well understood. However, under such circumstances, the use of new media can be argued to be the best solution potentially available for DMOs of developing countries in building their DI. Especially, when considering the substantial investments demanded by DI recovery, the potential role of UGC cannot be overlooked. UGC is freely available through different SM platforms and spreads eWOM by providing free promotion to destinations. Such incorporation would reduce the gap between DMO projected image and tourist perceived image by assuring more congruent DI. For example, the image analysis revealed that some key components tourists consider important to project through UGC are underrepresented (e.g., people and their daily lives) even in Bangladesh's new DMO promotional platform. In this sense, the DMOs are suggested to improve their official communication by performing a timely analysis of UGC shared online to grasp important insights such as: What attributes are dominantly projected; how many UGC are created and shared; how is such shared UGC received by other travellers based on the number of views, likes, comments and re-shares; etc. This would guide DMO marketing campaigns to be more aligned with the tourists perceived DI and improve the reliability of the DMO promotions.

Further, DMOs can amalgamate UGC into their promotions while also implementing different strategies to encourage travellers to circulate these valuable voluntary data. Destinations can engage travellers in content creation to be shared in the DMO social media and encourage them to share UGC in collaboration with the DMO media. For example, encouraging travellers to use hashtags that links with DMO profiles can be effective in increasing the social media presence of the destination. Since the results showed the travellers are not projecting negative attributes or emotions through their UGC, such collaborative DI co-creation efforts would even support overcoming the negative DIs for the destinations with negative DIs like Bangladesh. As stated above such traveller engagement is not only highly cost effective but would be more effective in correcting the negative DI as the UGC considered to be more trustworthy

by the travellers than that associated with marketers. Moreover, their UGC would portray a more effective image of these destinations with the content that is suitable to inspire more relevant future traveller group. Results showed that Bangladesh DMO DI projections are influenced by the UGC and autonomous information sources. And so, these UGC are not only supporting, but are challenging, and amending the DMO image projections (see Rickly, 2019). Though UGC is not entirely predictable or controllable, by collaborating with travellers in their UGC creation, the DMOs can gain some control over the UGC as well.

Moreover, the UGC can reach the target market rapidly and in real time. So, in an event of unexpected crisis, DMO's can easily use UGC to overcome the negative images spread through the media reports. As per, Filieri et al. (2021) travellers actively engage with sharing UGC to minimise the negative impacts of crisis on the destination due to their emotional attachment and empathy towards the destination. Results revealed that the travellers are empathetically attached to Bangladesh as a well. Hence, the DMO can effectively protect their DI from damage after crisis if they are actively engaging with and encouraging UGC. The following section presents the limitations and numerous avenues for future research.

#### **7.4 Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Studies**

Firstly, this thesis examined a single destination with a prolonged negative DI in its early TALC stages. The findings are assumed to be applicable in general terms to other destinations with similar conditions. Importantly, this thesis makes contributions to the early stages of TALC, which is a less studied area in the TALC literature. However, future studies could usefully conduct a comparative analysis of multiple destinations with prolonged negative DI in the early stages of the TALC.

Secondly, the scope of this thesis is limited to explaining the impact of the prolonged negative DI, the congruity between projected and perceived DI, and the role of UGC in DI projections in the early stages of the TALC. By addressing Butler's (2011) call for additional work on determining a more complete set of indicators of each stage to clarify their degree of exclusivity, this thesis suggests adding: a) The type of DI (e.g.,

prolonged negative DI in this context); and, b) the degree of congruity between projected and perceived DI, to the early stages of the TALC and, particularly, to the involvement stage. However, destinations in the early stages of their TALC may possess many other types of DI (e.g., positive, weak, mixed, contradictory, or overtly active (Kotler et. al., 1993)), the impact of which may vary in the early stages. Therefore, future research can examine the impact of other types of DI in the early stages to identify triggers bringing change to the destinations in the early stages of the TALC relating to DI.

Thirdly, the data collection was limited to gaining insights from the DMO and travellers to the destination. However, while the other TALC studies are limited to exploring TALC from the supplier perspective, this thesis captured a broader understanding of TALC and DI in the selected context by obtaining both the consumer's (travellers) and the supplier's (the DMO) perspectives. A wide variety of sources representing both sides was obtained and analysed to derive the findings (e.g., online images and interview data representing both sides, and supplier-side reports and documents). However, resource constraints and the COVID-19 pandemic prevented gaining insights from the local community, a key stakeholder in the tourism industry. Future research can, therefore, gain insights from the local community as well.

Fourthly, the sample of interview participants, who are travellers to Bangladesh, were limited to those who could be contacted online and who have already returned home after their travel. The COVID-19 global pandemic that occurred during the data collection stage prevented the researcher from visiting Bangladesh to collect data in person and made it time-consuming to obtain an adequate sample online. Contacting the DMO officials to be interviewed was also a difficult process, which compelled the researcher to reach them through many different influencers, which would have been avoided if Bangladesh could have been visited in person. Future researchers can visit the destination in person and capture traveller insights on pre-, during- and post-visit DI to provide a richer and wider view of the concept.

Finally, as discussed previously, this thesis used colour psychology to understand affective DI expressed in travel images. However, the interpretations are difficult

when revealing emotions through colours as the causality is unknown (Yu and Egger, 2021). Therefore, to overcome this limitation, this thesis gained insights from the travellers by conducting interviews, to confirm the nature of emotions they associate with their travel to Bangladesh. Future researchers can explore affective DI expressed through images further by using multiple techniques. For example, colour analysis can be amalgamated with analysing accompanied text as well as conducting in-depth interviews with travellers to enhance results through traveller insights and, even as suggested by Yu and Egger (2021), other image variables such as textures and shapes also can be analysed.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

This thesis aimed to examine how UGC contributes to the DI formation of developing countries with negative DI in the early stages of the TALC. Accordingly, a qualitative methodology was used to address the three main objectives identified. The findings of the thesis suggested that prolonged negative DI and incongruities between projected and perceived DI hinder the destination's tourism success in the early stages of its TALC. The findings also showed that UGC acts as a demand-side trigger increasing the destination appeal and, thus, contributing to attracting more tourists to destinations in the early stages. In this sense, this thesis mainly contributed to enhancing the descriptive ability of the TALC, which identified potential risk factors or triggers affecting change in the early stages. Further, the predictability of the model can also be enhanced by identifying these triggers, because such triggers provide an idea of the future direction of a destination. For example, having a prolonged negative DI and incongruent DI hinder transformation from the early stages to the development stage of the TALC, even under the presence of many other factors that facilitate this transformation (e.g., heavy investments in development projects, infrastructure developments, and heavy promotional focus). Nevertheless, UGC acts as a demand-side trigger in the early stages of the TALC that facilitates building destination awareness, potentially attracting more travellers, and providing appeal for the higher level of traveller groups (i.e., mid-centric).

### ***Final Thoughts***

Born and brought up in a developing country in the South Asian region whose economy is heavily dependent upon the tourism industry, the tourism industry always attracted my research interest. As discussed in the literature, developing countries can gain many economic and social benefits from the industry. However, apart from the inherent barriers to developing the tourism industry (e.g., financial, and technological barriers), most are regularly facing either natural or man-made disasters by disrupting the tourism flow to the country. Some such incidents raise safety concerns for travellers and damage the DI of destinations. Some destinations are suffering from prolonged negative DI due to the tourism authorities' or the central government's lack of attention and interest in correcting the damaged DI. More academic research would be highly beneficial to develop the tourism industry of these developing countries to assure gaining the intended economic and social benefits through the industry. Hence, the interest of this thesis was in examining the negative DIs of developing countries. Especially, attention was given to such destinations in the early stages of their TALC, which are struggling to achieve expected success in tourism. While contributions were made to theory and practice, this thesis is calling for more research attention to the early TALC stages. Such research may provide more insights for developing countries, and a way forward in managing their destinations, especially for those who are struggling in its transformation from the early stages to the development stage of TALC.



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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix 1: Categorising SM Platforms

Author	Dimensions used to categorise	Categories of SM platforms
Berthon et al., (2012)	<p>Nature of content that is shared.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text</li> <li>• Picture-sharing websites</li> <li>• Video-sharing websites</li> <li>• Networks</li> </ul>	<p>i. Text- primarily deals with blogs, which allows users to share messages usually limited with the number of characters they can share (e.g., Twitter)</p> <p>ii. Picture-sharing websites such as Flickr allow sharing of pictorial images among users.</p> <p>iii. Video sharing websites- as YouTube facilitates sharing videos.</p> <p>iv. Networks - allowed users to build networks among people by facilitating to add of people to the contact lists, sending messages to each other, and maintaining their own profile</p>
Zhu and Chen (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature of connection (profile based versus content-based) – e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Line, WhatsApp</li> <li>• Level of customisation of messages (broadcast versus customised). – e.g., Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube</li> </ul>	<p>i. Relationship - profile based and customised message. Allow users to connect, reconnect, communicate, and build relationships (p.337). E.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Line, WhatsApp</p> <p>ii. Self-media - profile based and broadcast messages. Allowing users to broadcast their updates and others to follow (p.337). E.g., Twitter, Weibo</p> <p>iii. Creative outlets- content based and customise messages.</p>

### Social media matrix

	Customized Message	Broadcast Message
Profile-based	<b>Relationship</b> Allowing users to connect, reconnect, communicate, and build relationships. (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Line, Whatsapp)	<b>Self-Media</b> Allowing users to broadcast their updates and others to follow. (e.g., Twitter, Weibo)
Content-based	<b>Collaboration</b> Allowing users to collaboratively find answers, advice, help, and reach consensus. (e.g., Quora, Reddit, Yahoo! Answers)	<b>Creative outlets</b> Allowing users to share their interest, creativity, and hobbies with each other. (e.g., YouTube, Flickr, Foodily, Pinterest)

Source: Zhu and Chen (2015:337)

Allowing users to share their interests, creativity, and hobbies with each other (p.337). E.g., YouTube, Flickr, Foodily, Pinterest, Instagram,

iv. Collaboration platforms – content-based and broadcast messages.

Allowing users to collaboratively, find answers, advice, help, and reach condenses (p.337).E.g., Quora, Reddit, Yahoo! answers



## Appendix 2: Ethical Approval

### Information for Participants- (International Tourists)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the project. Your participation is voluntary, and you may change your mind about being involved, or decline to answer a particular question or questions at any time and without giving a reason.

This information sheet is designed to give you full details of the project, its goals, and what you will be asked to do as part of the research. If you have any questions that are not answered by this information sheet, please ask.

#### What is the project title?

The Role of User Generated Content in the Destination Image Formation of Developing Countries.

#### Who is carrying out the project?

Wijethunga Mudiyanseelage **Heshani** Uthpala Wijethunga

#### What is the project about?

The purpose of the study is to examine the potential role of user generated contents (UGC)\* in the destination (DI) formation of developing countries. Bangladesh was identified as a suitable destination for the purpose of the study. Thus, a sample of international tourists visited Bangladesh will be interviewed. Moreover, the photographs shared by the tourists in Instagram as well as photographs available on Bangladesh's destination marketing organisation's (DMO)\*\* visual media will be collected and analysed.

*\* UGC can be identified as posts publicly shared by individuals in social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, ect).*

*\*\* DMOs are nonprofit entities aimed at generating tourist visitation for a given area. For the purpose of the study, national authority/authorities responsible for tourism promotion will be considered. In case of Bangladesh two DMOs are identified as Bangladesh Tourism Board and Bangladesh Parjatan [Tourism] Corporation.*

#### Who is being asked to take part, and why?

International tourists who have been to Bangladesh during the last one-year period are being invited to take part. They were selected because their capability to discuss how they engaged with photographs (available in social media, DMO media as well as photographs taken by them) relating to their trip to Bangladesh.

#### What will participants be asked to do?

Participants are expected to be interviewed online (preferably via Skype) or face-to-face. With their consent, they may be reached more than once if needed. Interviews are conducted individually and their personal information will not be revealed or shared with anyone outside the research team. Researcher expects to hear about participant's recent leisure visit to Bangladesh. They are expected to talk on areas such as, information sources they used in their trip planning stage and their engagement with social media relating their Bangladesh visit (especially via photographs. In addition, they will be requested to share any photographs that they took during their tour to Bangladesh. Providing photographs is voluntary).

**What will happen to the information I provide?**

The information are to be used in the researcher's PhD thesis and consequent publications during or afterwards the award of the degree. The audio recordings of interviews will be transcribed as text. Direct quotes from the interviews and photographs provided by the participants will be referred under a unique code. If any human appears in the photographs provided by the participants, they will be anonymised by pixelating before further processing of the data. Some selected photographs would be used in the thesis and publications as exemplars. Participants' identity will not be revealed to anyone outside the research team and in any report or publication. All information, which is collected about the participant during the course of the research, will be kept strictly confidential, stored in a secure and locked office, and on two password-protected computers. All the other photographs not used in any report/publications and the audio recordings of the interviews will be destroyed after the completion of the degree and publications.

**What will be the outputs or outcomes?**

The information is primarily to be used in the researcher's PhD thesis as data to be analysed and presented. Further, these will be used in consequent publications during or afterwards the award of the degree.

**Contact details**

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**Complaints and governance procedure:**

If you wish to complain about the way in which the research is being conducted or have any concerns about the research then in the first instance please contact the [Principal Investigator or supervisor] or the School's Research Ethics Officer:

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## **Research participant privacy notice**

### **Privacy information for Research Participants**

For information about the University's obligations with respect to your data, who you can get in touch with and your rights as a data subject, please visit:

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/utilities/privacy.aspx>.

### **Why we collect your personal data**

We collect personal data under the terms of the University's Royal Charter in our capacity as a teaching and research body to advance education and learning. Specific purposes for data collection on this occasion is to analyse them in order to answer research questions of the candidate's PhD research..

### **Legal basis for processing your personal data under GDPR**

The legal basis for processing your personal data on this occasion is Article 6(1a) consent of the data subject OR Article 6(1e) processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest OR Article 6 (1b) processing is necessary for the performance of a contract OR Article 6 (1f) processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller main basis.

### **Where the University receives your personal data from**

- Personal data from publicly available sources e.g. via Instagram, official websites
- and data provided by the interviewed participants

### **How long we keep your data**

The University may store your data for up to 25 years and for a period of no less than 7 years after the research project finishes. The researchers who gathered or processed the data may also store the data indefinitely and reuse it in future research. Measures to safeguard your stored data include anonymisation of data.

### **Who we share your data with**

Extracts of your data may be disclosed in published works that are posted online for use by the scientific community. Your data may also be stored indefinitely on external data repositories (e.g., the UK Data Archive) and be further processed for archiving purposes in the public interest, or for historical, scientific or statistical purposes. It may also move with the researcher who collected your data to another institution in the future.

## PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**Project title:** The Role of User Generated Content in the Destination Image Formation of Developing Countries

**Researcher's name:** Wijethunga Mudiyanseelage **Heshani** Uthpala Wijethunga

**Supervisors' names:** Professor Caroline Tynan and Professor Jillian Rickly

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project have been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future. I understand that a notice of withdrawal must be sent within a reasonable time during or after data collection because I am aware that it would not be possible to retract any data obtained once it is reported in publications – for instance in a doctoral thesis or conference proceedings.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, the researcher will take every effort to protect the anonymity of my identity.
- I understand that the interview will be audio recorded.
- I understand that the anonymised photographs I provided of my Bangladesh visit will be used for the research report and publications.
- I understand that the interview data will be stored in the researcher's password-protected computer on the university network and later transcribed for into word form for analysis. These may be provided to the supervisors upon request. However, the personal details of the respondents will be kept anonymous.
- I understand that I can grant permission to the researcher to contact me after the interview with transcripts for validation and clarification of topics discussed.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Business, University of Nottingham if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

**Signed** ..... (Research participant)

**Print name** ..... **Date** .....

### Contact details

Researcher: *Wijethunga Mudiyanseelage Heshani Uthpala Wijethunga, Room B22, Business School- South, Jubilee Campus, University of Nottingham, NG8 1BB.*

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[davide.pero@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:davide.pero@nottingham.ac.uk)

### Appendix 3: Characteristics of Popular Social Networking Sites (SNS)\*

	1. Facebook	2. Instagram	3. Pinterest	4. Twitter	5. YouTube
Type	Can share more elaborative messages with text, photos, and videos (Voorveld et al., 2018)	The main function is photo-sharing. But small videos also can be shared (Statista, 2019)	Photo sharing SNS. This is the main competitor to Instagram (Gilbert et al., 2013)	Microblogging SNS (Papapicco and Mininni, 2019)	Video sharing SNS
How it functions	Users must register before using the social network and are free to create a personal profile to interact with other users whom they can add as friends. (Statista, 2019).	Users can post and share images online, directly with their friends and followers on the social network (Statista, 2019).	Based on the metaphor of a “pinboard”, users “pin” photos and organise them into topical collections, such as hobbies, sports, fashion, etc. users can follow one another and “re-pin”, “like”, and comment on other pins. (Gilbert et al., 2013)	Primarily deals with blogs, which allows users to share messages usually limited to the number of characters (Berthon, et al., 2012), i.e., 140 characters (with hashtags, @ mentions, a photo or video, URLs, or geotags) (Voorveld et al, 2018).	Deals with sharing video. Unlike traditional ads, sharing online ads creates new exposures, as the video reaches new viewers across social media such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Googlep.

Focal point	Individual members (Zhu and Chen, 2015)	Content posted not the profile (Zhu and Chen, 2015)		Individual members (Zhu and Chen, 2015)	Content posted not the profile (Zhu and Chen, 2015)
Nature of information	The topics typically related to the person (Zhu and Chen, 2015)	Discussions and comments are based on contents posted not relating to a person (Zhu and Chen, 2015)		The topics typically related to the person (Zhu and Chen, 2015)	Discussions and comments are based on contents posted not relating to a person (Zhu and Chen, 2015)
The main purpose of users	To make connections mainly because they are interested in the user behind the profile (Zhu and Chen, 2015)	To make connections mainly because they like the content and certain profile providers; but not because they are interested in the user behind the profile. (Zhu and Chen, 2015)		To make connections mainly because they are interested in the user behind the profile (Zhu and Chen, 2015)	To make connections mainly because they like the content and certain profile providers; but not because they are interested in the user behind the profile. (Zhu and Chen, 2015)
Intended audience	Intended for a specific person or a small group/ audience (Zhu and Chen, 2015)	The public (Zhu and Chen, 2015)			
Characteristics and use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used for social interaction (Voorveld et al., 2018)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used for social interaction (Voorveld et al., 2018) like Facebook.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Users can follow one another and “re-pin”, “like”, and comment on other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not exclusive</li> <li>No permission restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertising exposure is free.</li> <li>Advertising is unlimited.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers' experience to remain up to date (Voorveld et al, 2018)</li> <li>• Exclusive (Zhu and Chen, 2015)</li> <li>• Generally, with permission restrictions (Zhu and Chen, 2015)</li> <li>• Users can message each other (Statista, 2019)</li> <li>• Allows communication using more elaborate messages (Voorveld et al., 2018)</li> <li>• Allow creating user groups. E.g., based on workplace, and school (Statista, 2019)</li> <li>• Users can update their status and other content (Statista, 2019)</li> <li>• Users can interact with a wide selection of other applications (e.g., social games,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers experience as a way to remain up to date (Voorveld et al, 2018) similar to Facebook.</li> <li>• Not exclusive (Zhu and Chen, 2015)</li> <li>• No permission restrictions (Zhu and Chen, 2015)</li> <li>• Messages are customised for a specific topic (Zhu and Chen, 2015)</li> </ul>	<p>pins. (Gilbert et.al., 2013)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection requires only one-way initiation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ads are highly cost efficient.</li> <li>• Advertisers can upload as many videos as they wish at minimum cost.</li> <li>• almost no length restriction on YouTube ads</li> <li>• Viewership is voluntary.</li> <li>• Complements TV advertising in new and important ways.</li> <li>• Marketers can publish ads on YouTube as a pre-test before placing them in paid TV channels.</li> <li>• Marketers can use paid TV channels as a seed to influence the sharing of ads that are uploaded to YouTube.</li> </ul>
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	Instagram) (Statista, 2019) • Accessible to mobile web users (Statista, 2019)				(Tellis et al., 2019)
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\*Selected four most popular SNS in the UK (Statista, 2019) namely, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram. In addition, Pinterest was included in the analysis due to the following reasons.

- The focus of the thesis is to analyse photographic content shared on a selected SNS platform.
- Pinterest is a prominent picture-sharing SNS platform and the main competitor for Instagram.
- Thus, Pinterest seems to be a suitable platform to be included in the consideration set as a potential candidate suitable to extract UGC for the thesis.

## Appendix 4: Coding Manual

This manual presents the content categories with examples and hence guidelines for coding the image samples of this thesis.

# Coding Manual

Wijethunga Wijethunga

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## Coding Manual

### **Instructions for the coder and two academic researchers who are coding to assure reliability**

- The following document presents the general guidelines to follow when categorising the photographs in the UGC and DMO samples.
- Each main category, generic category and subcategory was explained with photographic examples, which were extracted from the samples.
- The UGC, DMO-I and DMO-II samples should be classified separately from each other. Any image can be categorised into multiple categories, limited to a maximum of **four categories**.
  - However, an image can be categorised into different multiple generic categories within the same main category, but an image cannot be coded into more than one sub-category within the same generic category. For example, a photo of a sunset on a beach can be categorised into *Ocean and Beaches* sub-category under N-WR as well as the *Sky Scenery* sub-category under N-S, where N-WR and N-S are two generic categories of the main category, *Nature*. However, the same image cannot be coded into *Land Scenery* (S-LS) and *Sky Scenery* (S-SS), which are two subcategories of the generic category, *Scenery* (N-S) under the main category, *Nature* (N).
- The two academic researchers who are coding a subset of the sample, can classify photographs by choosing either one of the following techniques.
  - a.) Using Folders: - Under each sample, a set of empty file folders were created for each subcategory. Then one image was taken at a time and categorised into relevant subcategories (or generic categories in the absence of a subcategory) up to 4 best fitting subcategories.
  - b.) Using Excel spreadsheet: - Excel spreadsheet was created by putting all the subcategories in columns followed by the first column to insert the reference number allocated to the image (e.g., images referred to as UGC\_1 to UGC\_50 and DMO\_1 to DMO\_50 in judges' sample). Judges can take a photo at a time and classify them into the selected categories by typing 1 to 4 in the relevant row according to the order they want to classify.

## **Main Category 1: History and Culture [\(HC\)](#)**

There are five generic categories and nine sub-categories accumulated under the main category HC. HC covers photographs resembling archaeological sites, Bangladesh liberation war and independence celebrations, and the national culture of Bangladesh including festivals, arts, and crafts.

### **1.1 Archaeological sites (HC-AS)**

- 1.1.1 Historical religious buildings (AS-RB)
- 1.1.2 Ruins and archaeological museums (AS -RM)
- 1.1.3 British colonial architecture (AS -BA)
- 1.1.4 Historical non-religious buildings (AS -NR)

### **1.2 Bangladesh liberation war and independence celebrations (HC-LC)**

### **1.3 Significant modern buildings (HC-MB)**

### **1.4 Culture and festivals (HC-CF)**

- 1.4.1. Festivals (CF-F)
- 1.4.2. Traditional dress codes and artifacts (CF-D)

### **1.5 Arts and crafts (HC- AC)**

- 1.5.1 Painting, art photography and exhibitions (AC-PE)
- 1.5.2. Sculptures and handicrafts (AC-SH)
- 1.5.3. Performing arts and performances (AC-PP)

### **1.1 Archaeological Sites [\(HC-AS\)](#)**

This generic category includes four subcategories that include both religious and non-religious historical buildings, sites, and artefacts; buildings belonging to the colonial era and finally ruins with historical value and archaeological museums.

#### **1.1.1 Historical Religious Buildings (AS-RB)**

AS-RB subcategory includes religious buildings, sites, and artefacts with historical and archaeological value that were built before the colonial era. AS-RB may include buildings such as ceremonial centres, temples, and mosques that are in a good condition that use for religious observances even in the present day. Ruins that are not in use for religious observances at the present day are excluded from AS-RB.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

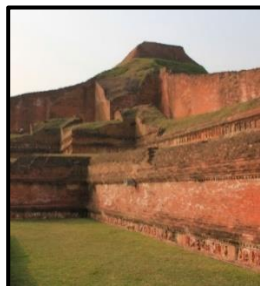
(Photo top: Arifail mosque that was built in the sixteenth century

Photo bottom left: The Shiva temple, the largest temple in Bangladesh.

Photo bottom right: The Sixty Dome Mosque, a UNESCO World Heritage Site)

### 1.1.2 Ruins and Archaeological Museums (AS-RM)

This subcategory includes prehistoric and historic archaeological sites with structures decayed with time, deserting, or ignorance. For example, the Pahapur Buddhist monastery, Temple of King Vorot and Rocks Museum. Museums displaying the remaining such buildings, statues, artefacts, etc. from prehistoric and historic periods are also included. However, ruins belonging to the colonial era or afterwards are excluded from AS-RM.



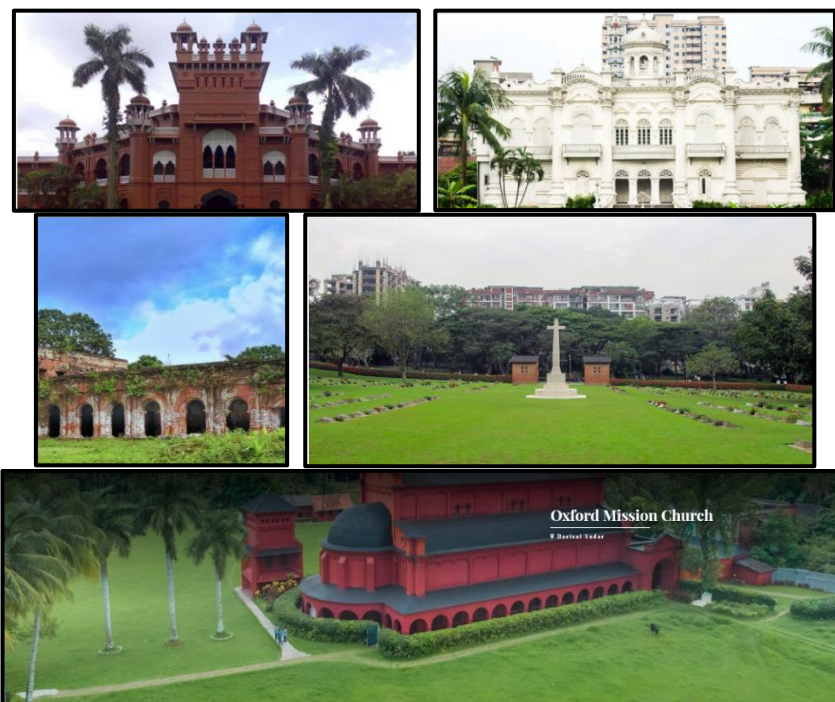


Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

*(Photo top left and right: ruins of the Pahapur Buddhist monastery a Unesco world heritage site; Photo middle: Rocks Museum containing archaeological and traditional artefacts; Photo bottom: Varendra Research Museum containing a collection of ancient artefacts and antiques)*

### 1.1.3 British Colonial Architecture (AS-BA)

Indian sub-continent under British rule between the years 1858-1947 was referred to as the British raj. AS-BA includes buildings with historical value that were built during the British colonial era either by British rulers or natives during that period such as residencies, churches, cemeteries, and fortresses. They are mostly inspired by British and European architectural designs. This may include both religious and non-religious buildings, that are well-standing structures or ruined.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

*(Photo top -left: Curzon Hall of the University of Dhaka, built by the British; Photo top – right: The Rose Garden Palace, a former residence of a native Hindu landlord; Photo middle -left: Ruined structure of Itakumari Jomidar Bari, a residence of a native; Photo middle – right: Chattogram war museum built for armed forces died during the second world war; Photo bottom: Oxford mission church)*



#### 1.1.4 Historical Non-Religious Buildings (AS-NR)

AS-NR includes historical buildings and sites that are not built for religious purposes and that are built before the colonial era. AS-NR may include buildings such as residencies and fortresses and are used for different purposes at present as well. For example, the national museum of Bangladesh is established in *Ahsan Manzil* that was built during 1859-1872 by following Indo-Saracenic Revival architecture. This was the official residential palace and the seat of the ruler of Dhaka by then. If the architectural design is not the foci of the image but an artefact in the museum is the foci of the image, such images are not categorised here.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

(**Photo top:** Ahsan Mansi, the official residential palace and seat of the Nawab of Dhaka; **Photo middle:** Idakpur fort built in 1660AD to protect Dhaka from foreign invasions; **Photo bottom:** Tomb of Bibi Pari, a Part of the Lalbagh fort)

#### 1.2 Bangladesh Liberation War and Independence Celebrations ([HC-LC](#))

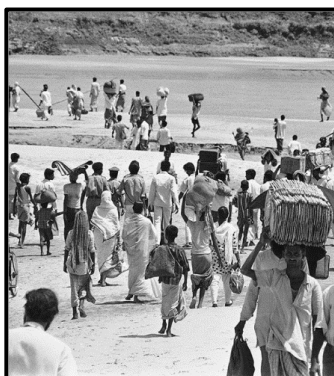
HCA-LC generic category includes images covering two major movements relating to the Bangladeshi independence struggle. Namely, the Bengali language movement in 1952-56, and the Bangladesh liberation war in 1971. So, HC-LC includes historical photographs of the Bangladesh liberation war, present-day celebrations of the Independence Day, a liberation

war museum, and monuments built to commemorate the independence (e.g., ‘Swadeenatha stamba’ and ‘National Martyr’s memorial’). In addition, different types of memorials of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Bengali leader of the independence war and the first prime minister of Bangladesh are also included here. Such memorials have been held as a part of independence day events, remembrance events on his birthdays and museums dedicated to him, etc.



Source: beautifulbangladesh official Instagram page

(Photos: Tributes in front of Central Shaheed Minar)



Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

(Photo top National martyr’s memorial built in remembrance of 1971 independence war heroes.

Photo middle-left: Sheikh Mujibur Rahman memorial museum.

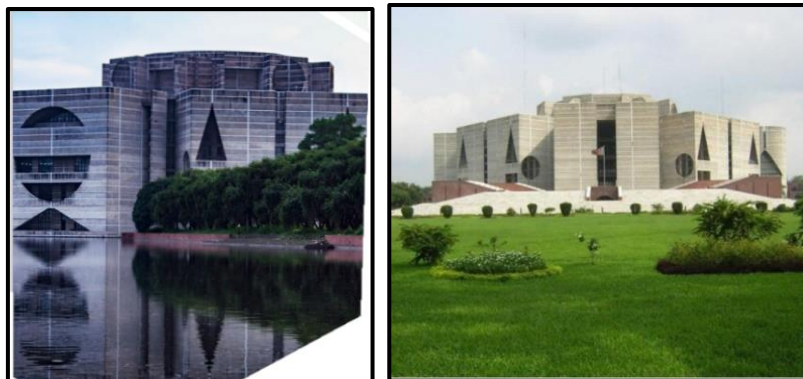
Photo middle-right: Sheikh Mujibur Rahman addressing the nation;

Photo bottom -left: Thousands of people internally displaced during the 1971 genocide in Bangladesh)



### 1.3 Significant Modern Buildings ([HC-MB](#))

HCA-MB includes images of both the interior and exterior of significant buildings with modern architectural styles, such as the national parliament house of Bangladesh.



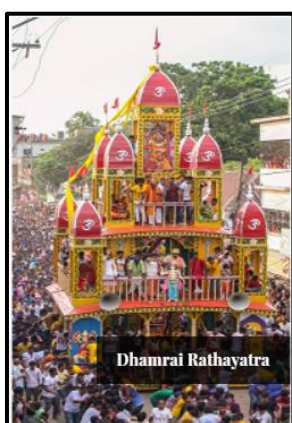
Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)  
(Photos: National parliament house of Bangladesh)

### 1.4 Culture and Festivals ([HC-CF](#))

HCA-CF generic category includes two sub-categories to cover festivals and traditional dress codes of Bengali people.

#### 1.4.1 Festivals (CF-F)

CF-F includes celebrations of different religious or non-religious traditional festivals. Such may include people with or without special costumes or dress codes, as well as different artefacts and festive locations.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)  
(Photos: People celebrating festivals with the structures and artefacts)

#### 1.4.2 Traditional Dress Codes and Artefacts (CF-D)

CF-D includes images containing traditional dresses, traditional festival costumes, and natives in their traditional attire.



*(Photo left: A girl in traditional festive attire, Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd); Photo right: A woman in traditional attire, Source: Instagram)*

### 1.5 Arts and Crafts ([HC- AC](#))

HCA-AC category covers arts and crafts produced by local people such as folk art, museum art, modern art, or street art, reflecting Bangladesh’s ancient or modern culture. This generic category consists of three subcategories that include paintings, exhibitions, sculptures, handicrafts and performing arts.

#### 1.5.1 Paintings, Art Photography, and Exhibitions (AC-PE)

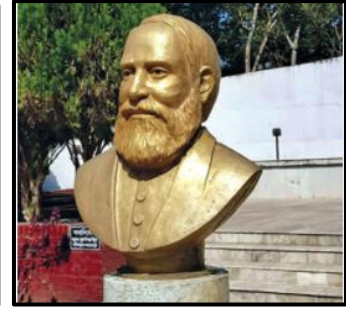
AC-PE includes folk art, modern art, and street art by local people in the forms of paintings, art photography and organized exhibitions reflecting Bangladesh’s ancient or modern culture. Portraits, natural scenery, or landscapes are not to be considered art photography.



*(Photo left: Arts exhibition; Photo middle: Painting) Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)  
(Photo right: Paintings) Source: beautifulbangladesh official Instagram page*

#### 1.5.2 Sculptures and Handicrafts (AC-SH)

AC-SH includes folk art, modern art, and street art by local people in the forms of sculptures, handicrafts and organized fairs/exhibitions reflecting Bangladesh’s ancient or modern culture.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

(**Photo left:** coloured pots; **Photo middle:** handicrafts kept in stoles at a fair, **Photo right:** Bust of Mir Mosharraf Hossain, a renowned Bangladeshi author)

### 1.5.3 Performing Arts and Performances (AC-PP)

AC-PP includes traditional or modern performances in form of dance performances, staged drama, singing and musical shows. AC-PP may include acts or performances with entertainment purposes, religious purposes or other purposes, which were performed at festivals, fairs, concerts, streets, or national events.



(**Photo top:** Traditional dance performance; **Photo bottom:** Traditional music and singing performance) Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

## **Main Category 2: Nature (N)**

The second main category, Nature consists of four generic categories and 12 sub-categories. These include nature and natural scenery, such as rivers, waterfalls, oceans, beaches, land scenery, sky scenery, forests, jungles, trees, plants, flora, as well as animals, birds, insects, and marine life.

- 2.1 Water-Based Natural Resources (N-WR)
  - 2.1.1 Rivers, lakes, and natural ponds (WR-R)
  - 2.1.2 Ocean and beaches (WR-OS)
  - 2.1.3 Waterfalls (WR-W)
- 2.2 Scenery (N-S)
  - 2.2.1 Land and natural scenery (S-LS)
  - 2.2.2 Sky scenery (S-SS)
- 2.3 Forests, Trees, and Flora (N-FF)
  - 2.3.1 Flowers (FF-F)
  - 2.3.2 Trees and plants (NF-TP)
  - 2.3.3 Forests, woodlands, and jungles (FF-FJ)
- 2.3 Wildlife (N-WL)
  - 2.3.1 Wild animals (WL-WA)
  - 2.3.2 Birds (WL-B)
  - 2.3.3 Insects (WL-I)
  - 2.3.4 Marine life (WL-ML)

### **2.1 Water-Based Natural Resources (N-WR)**

N-WR generic category has three subcategories, that includes photographs consisting of water resources such as inland water resources including rivers, waterfalls, and other kinds of natural reservoirs as well as the ocean and beaches.

#### **2.1.1 Rivers, Lakes, and Natural Ponds (WR-R)**

WR-R includes images of any natural source of inland waters, such as rivers, and natural water reservoirs as lakes, ponds, and pools. Images with inland waters resources at their foci but with a minor presence of people or artefacts such as boats are also categorised into this.



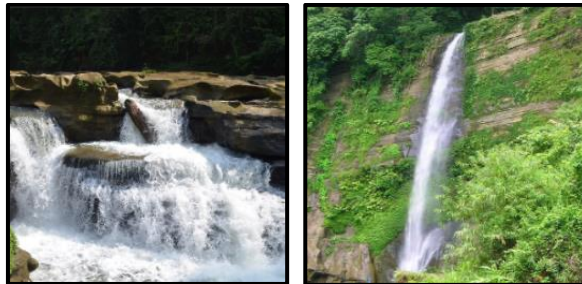


Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

(**Photo top:** A scenery of a river without any human presence; **Photo bottom-left:** A scenery of a river with minor presence of people and artefacts; **Photo bottom-right:** A scenery of a river with the presence of boats)

### 2.1.2 Waterfalls (WR-W)

Photographs with the waterfalls as their foci, even with the minor presence of people and artefacts are categorized under S-W.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

(**Photo top-left and right:** Sceneries of waterfalls without any human presence- close-up and capture from distance; **Photo Bottom:** A scenery of a waterfall with the people)

### 2.1.3 Ocean and Beaches (WR-OS)

WR-OS includes close-ups or distant shots taken of the Indian Ocean and different coastlines and beaches of Bangladesh. Such images can contain the minor presence of people or animals and artefacts such as boats, ships, fishing equipment and umbrellas.



*(Photo top-left: A scenery of the Indian Ocean without any human presence- from distance; Photo top-right: Scenery of a beach with the presence of boats and focused on an Anker; Photo Bottom: Scenery of sunset at a beach with people)*

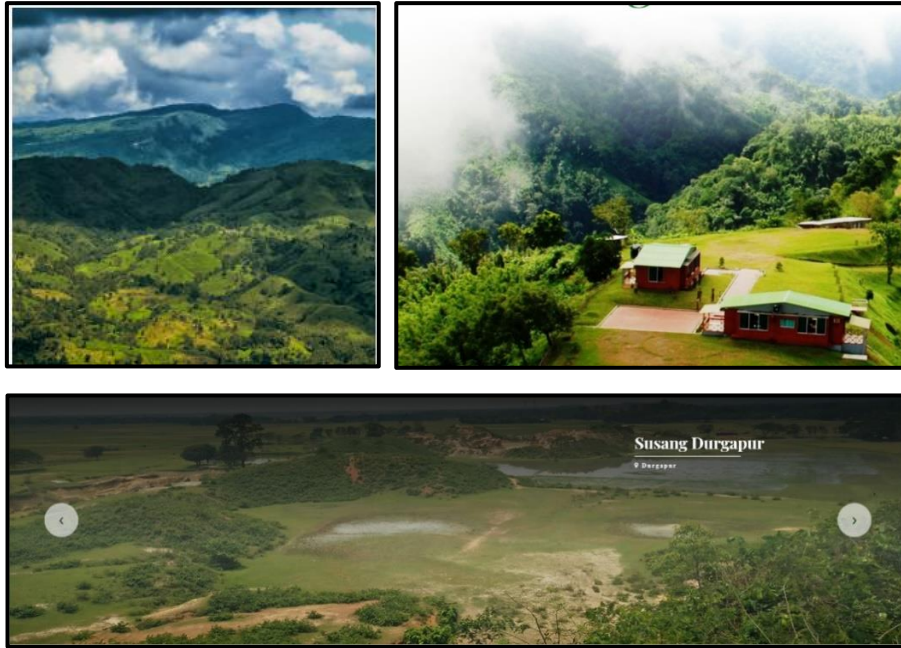
Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

## 2.2 Scenery (N-S)

N-S generic category consists of two 2 sub-categories that refer to pristine nature. Images included here are either panoramic or close-ups of mountains, forests, jungles, sky, sunset, sunrise, clouds, rivers, lakes, beaches, grottos, caves, etc. Minor human-related elements can be present in the photographs.

### 2.2.1 Land and Natural Scenery (S-LS)

Both the land and natural scenery were categorised under S-LS. Some photos are with a minor presence of people or manmade artefacts such as buildings, while the focus is the natural and land scenery. Most of the photos included under S-LS may be panoramic views of land rather than close-ups.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

*(Photo top-left: Panoramic view of a mountain range; Photo top-right: A distant shot of a land scenery with the presence of buildings; Photo Bottom: Panoramic view of land)*

### 2.2.2 Sky Scenery (S-SS)

S-SS includes photographs with sky scenery, where in some cases parts of the land are also accounting for a considerable portion. If the focus of the photograph is the scenery in the sky such as patterns formed by clouds and colours of the sky, they were categorised under S-SS. Minor presence of people and other manmade artefacts can be visible in some of the photos. Most photographs can be panoramic views.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

*(Photo- left: Panoramic view of land and sky with clouds at the foci; Photo- right: Sky scenery at a sunset with a concrete bench)*



## 2.3 Forests, Trees, and Flora (N-FF)

The generic category, N-FF covers photographs of flowers, trees and plants as well as forests, woodlands and jungles.

### 2.3.1 Flowers (FF-F)

FF-F includes close-up or distance shots of flowers. Such may include flowers in trees, ponds, lakes, or grown on the street sides as well as flowers at flower shops, botanical gardens, with florists or street sellers. Images may have the minor presence of people insects, and birds, but the flower/s at the foci of the image.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

(**Photo- left:** A man plucking water lilies in a water lily yard; **Photo- right:** Water Lilies, the national flower of Bangladesh)

### 2.3.2 Trees and Plants (FF-TP)

A single tree or few trees or small plants at the foci of the image are coded under FF-TP. This may include close-ups of parts of a tree such as leaves, or tree trunks. Minor presence of people, insects or birds may present in the picture.

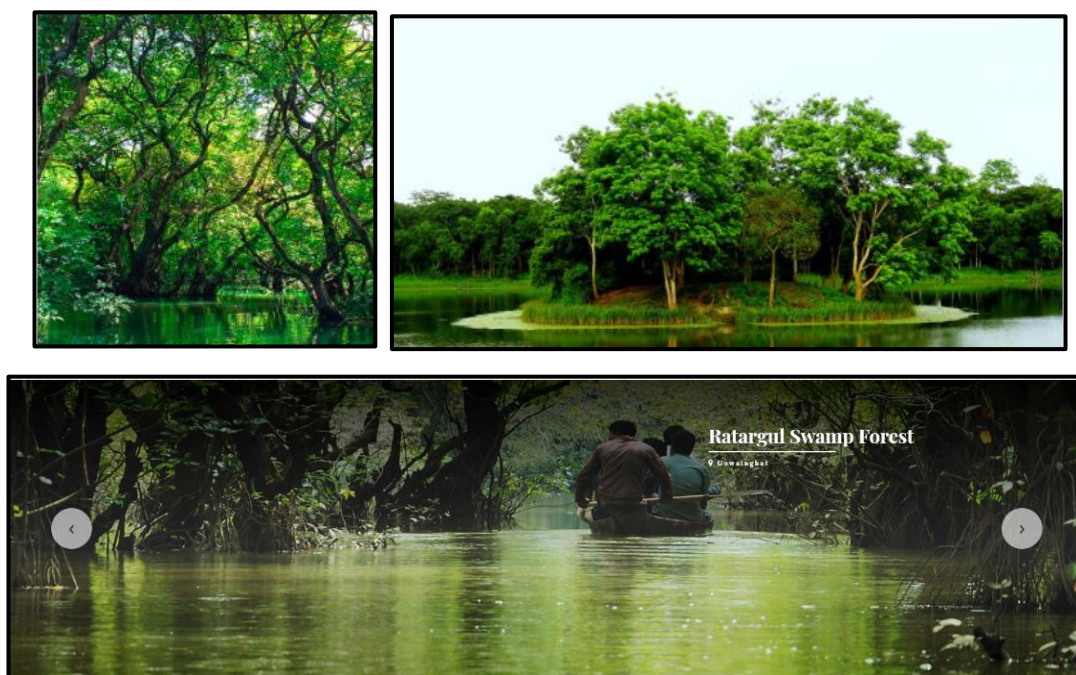


(**Photo left:** A tree at the foci in a mustard yard; **Photo middle:** a tree leaf; **Photo right:** A close-up of a palm tree) Photo left- Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd); Photos middle and right- Source: Instagram



### 2.3.3 Forests, Woodlands, and Jungles (FF-FJ)

Dense or moderate coverage of land with trees, bushes, and greenery, which dominates the photograph is coded as NF-FJ. This includes forests, jungles, swamps, mangroves, and woodlands as well as wildlife sanctuaries and national parks. NF-FJ however, consist only of forests, jungles, or any aforementioned categories that are natural formations or afforestation. Farmlands or plantations with economic purposes (e.g., Tea plantation, paddy field) are not to be included under FF-FJ. Images with the minor presence of the animals and people such as explorers, travellers, or natives in such landscapes, but they were not the foci, can be included in FF-FJ.



*(Photo top-left: Close-up of a mangrove forest; Photo top-right: A panoramic view of a forest; Photo Bottom: people boating through a swamp forest)*  
Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

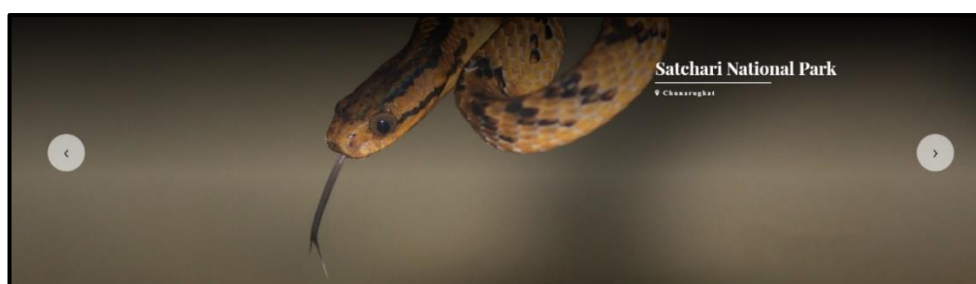
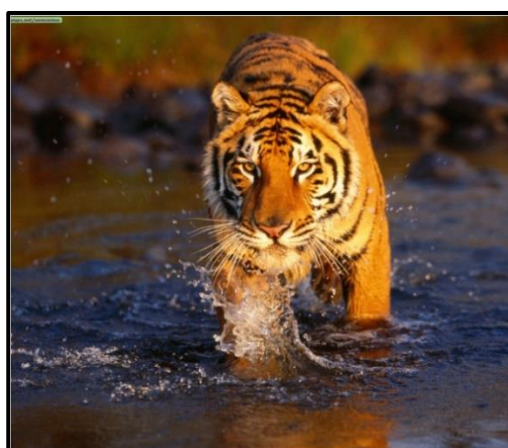
## 2.4 Wildlife (N-WL)

Generic category WL includes images of wild animals such as mammals, reptiles, birds, marine life, reptiles, amphibians, and insects as one of the foci of the picture. And N-WL does not include any domesticated animals or animal/bird/marine life/mammals etc. that live in a zoological park/garden or animal in any other manmade environment.

### 2.4.1 Wild Animals (WL-WA)

WL-WA includes photographs of the mammals and the reptiles that spend most of their life on land (not water) as individuals or in their herds. This category does not include any animal

living in zoological parks/gardens or any other manmade environments as well as domesticated animals that live with people as pets, farm animals or livestock.



**(Photo top:** Herd of dears; **Photo middle-left:** A monkey on a tree; **Photo middle-right:** Close-up of a Bengali tiger; **Photo bottom:** A reptile)  
Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

#### 2.4.2 Birds (WL-B)

WL-B includes photographs of birds as individuals or in their flocks. WL-B also excludes birds that live in zoological parks/gardens or any other manmade environments and birds that live with people as pets or livestock. However, photographs of birds flying over or searching for food in a manmade environment are categorised under WL-B.





Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

(Photo top-left: weaverbirds in their nests; Photo top-right: a flock of birds flying over a lake;  
Photo bottom: a flock of storks searching for food)

### 2.4.3 Insects (WL-I)

WL-I includes photographs of the insects or amphibians at their foci. If there is enough evidence in the photograph that those insects were kept by people for economic purposes (e.g., apiary of bees, leeches, or silkworms) such are not categorised under WL-I.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh official Instagram page](https://www.instagram.com/beautifulbangladesh)

(Photo in left: Bee extracting nectar from a flower; Photo in right: Spider on its spider-web)

### 2.4.4 Marine Life (WL-ML)

WL-ML includes creatures that spend their whole life or spend most of their lives in water. Although marine life refers to living beings on salty water, all the fish were categorised under

WL-ML without referring to the type of water they live in, i.e. salty water or fresh water. WL-ML includes photos containing fish such as whales and dolphins; reptiles that spend most of their life in water such as turtles and marine arthropods such as crabs. However, if there is enough evidence that the fish are kept for economic purposes (e.g., fish tank at a pet shop or domestic environments, zoological gardens, and fish farms), they are excluded from this category.



Source: beautifulbangladesh official Instagram page  
(**Photo top-left:** Sea Dolphins; **Photo top-right:** river dolphin; **photo bottom:** Consortium of crabs in the beach)

### **Main Category 3: Society, and Lifestyles [\(SL\)](#)**

SL is the largest main category with six generic categories and 16 sub-categories. These include the living conditions, lifestyles and livelihoods of the native Bangladeshi people who live in rural or urban.

#### **3.1 Rural life and livelihood (SL-RL)**

3.1.1 Farming and agriculture (RL-FA)

3.1.2 Fishing (RL-F)

3.1.3 Neighbourhood and domestic activities (RL-ND)

3.1.4. Other rural livelihood activities (RL-OL)

#### **3.2 Urban life and livelihood (SL-UL)**

3.2.1 Street sellers and marketplaces (UL-M)

3.2.2 Urban industries and industrial workforce (UL-IL)

3.2.3 Urban landscape ((UL-TB)

3.2.4 Urban buildings (UL-B)

3.4.5 Urban streets and street life (UL-US)

#### **3.3 Domesticated animals (SL-DA)**

#### **3.4 Religious observances and buildings (SL-R)**

#### **3.5 Food (SL-F)**

3.5.1 Traditional/local food (F-TF)

3.5.2 Beverages (F-B)

3.5.3 Non-local food (F-NL)

3.5.4 Fruits, vegetables, and harvest (F-FV)

3.5.5 Alcoholic beverages and smoking (F-AS)

#### **3.6 Literature and Literacy (SL-LL)**

3.6.1 Teaching, learning, and reading environments (LL-TL)

3.6.2 Renowned intellectuals (LL-RI)

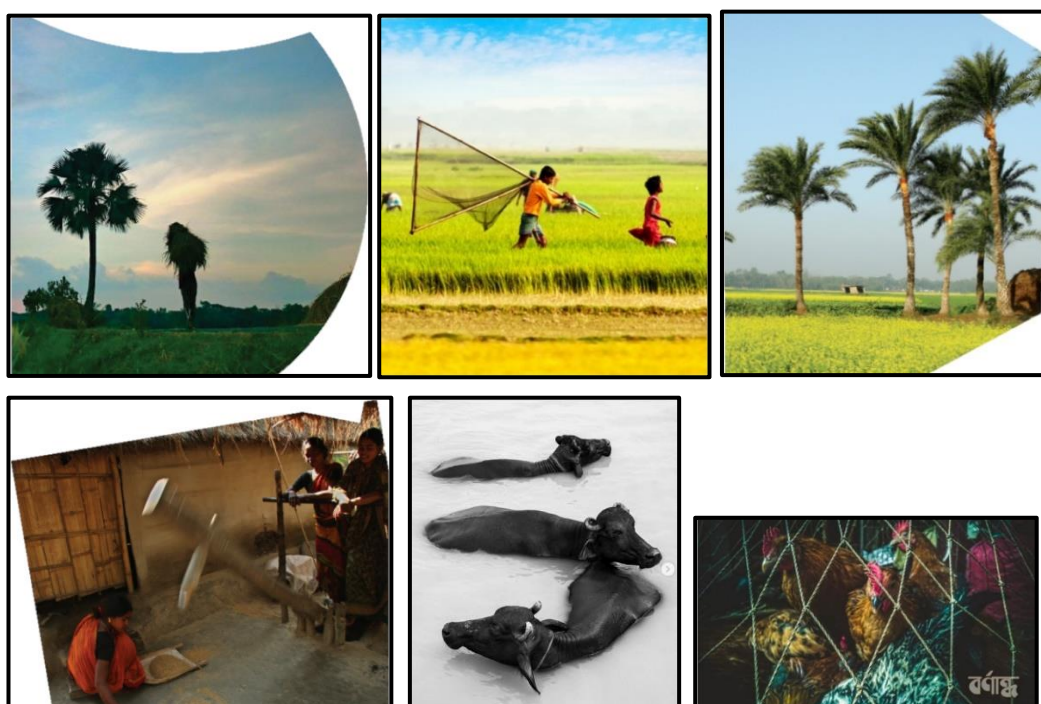
#### **3.1 Rural Life and Livelihood [\(SL-RL\)](#)**

SL-RL refers to the natural living conditions and livelihoods of the native people who live in rural or village areas. Geographical areas that are not urbanized were considered rural areas. Photographs in this category reflect living conditions, housing, everyday activities, and livelihood activities that are mostly combined with the natural resources, neighbourhood,

and relationships in the rural native society. Accordingly, SL-RL may include single or multiple houses and architectures that are for use of residents in rural Bangladesh: private dwellings, street scenes in rural areas, local market scenes in the countryside, paddy fields and agricultural activities, and children spending their leisure time etc. “staged” photos are not to be coded under SL-RL.

### 3.1.1 Farming and Agriculture (RL-FA)

RL-FA subcategory includes photographs of farming and agricultural activities of the local rural people. Rice being the single-most-important product in Bangladesh, agriculture is the prominent livelihood of rural Bangladesh, which employs nearly half of the population of Bangladesh. RL-FA do not cover aquaculture. RL-FA may include farmers preparing the land, farming, and harvesting the crops as well as rice milling with traditional or modern farming equipment (mamoty tool or tractor), and their families including children helping in such activities. Further, the animals used to support agricultural activities (e.g., bulls) and other farm animals e.g., poultry, goats, and cows are included. Paddy fields, crops, or harvests without any presence of people were also included. However, trading the harvest or children playing in empty agrarian lands are not included.



**(Photo top-left:** A person carrying the crops on his/her head; **Photo top-middle:** carrying farming equipment; **Photo top-right:** palm oil trees in the mustard field; **Photo bottom-left:** manual rice milling by women) **Source:** [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)  
**(Photo bottom-middle:** Bulls that help with paddy farming; **Photo bottom-right:** Poultry in a cage) **Source:** *Instagram*



### 3.1.2 Fishing (RL-F)

Fishing is the second largest livelihood sector in rural and coastal areas of Bangladesh. Fishing or aquaculture (farming) activities in freshwater or oceans were categorised into RL-F. Photographs may cover mostly fishers with their fishing equipment or boats as well as different stages of processing the fish harvest. Photos without the presence of people, but are covering the fishing sector such as fishing boats and fishing harvest also included in RL-F.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

*(Photo top-left: People processing the dry fish; Photo top-middle: fishermen with their harvest Photo top-right: fresh fishing harvest in a basket; Photo middle: Fishers with their fishing equipment on a river Photo bottom: fishing boats in a port)*

### 3.1.3 Neighbourhood and Domestic Activities (RL-ND)

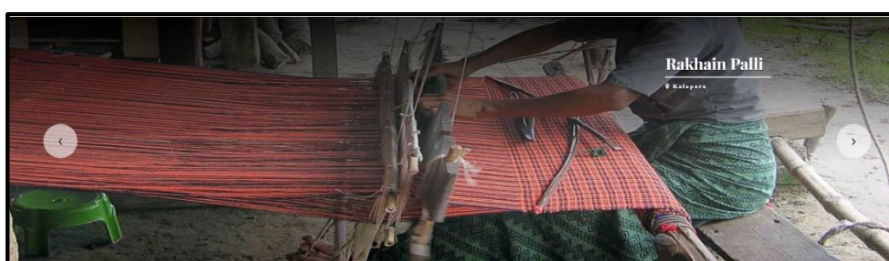
RL-ND covers the day-to-day activities of rural people in Bangladesh that do not involve with any livelihood activities. So, this includes socialising with neighbours, children spending their leisure time together and a circle of men or women chatting.



*(Photos: Children spending their leisure time)* Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

### 3.1.4 Other Rural Livelihood Activities (RL-OL)

All the other livelihood activities of rural Bangladeshi people, which are not agriculture, farming or fishing, were included in RL-OL. This may include large or small marketplaces, retail shops, other trading activities, manual labour (e.g., construction, mining), livelihood depends on natural resources (e.g., collecting bee honey, or herbs in jungles) and other local industries (e.g., weaving, pottery).



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

*(Photo top: floating Guava market; Photo middle: weaving cloth on a loom; Photo bottom-left: workers at a sand mining site; Photo bottom-right: local retail shop)*

### 3.2 Urban life and Livelihood ([SL-UL](#))

This generic category covers natural living conditions, housing, livelihood or everyday activities of Bangladeshi people living in urban or suburban areas. SL-UL includes single or multiple buildings use as residents, other private dwellings, garages, local stores and restaurants in cities, street scenes in urban, etc. SL- UL also may include activities like fixing a car, doing farm work, selling goods and souvenirs on the street, cooking, etc. in urban areas. However, this excludes any “staged” pictures.



### 3.2.1 Street Sellers and Marketplaces (UL-M)

UL-M includes images of street sellers and urban marketplaces, such as open marketplaces, retail shops, souvenir shops, street vendors, sales personals etc. in an urban setting.



*(Photo: Souvenir shop)* Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

### 3.2.2 Urban Industries and Industrial Workforce (UL-IL)

UL-IL covers photographs of the urban labour force and their workplaces. Moreover, UL-IL also includes large to medium-scale plantations such as tea plantations and its employees. This may include single or a group of workers in their work minor or major presence and use of work-related tools, machinery, equipment, and vehicles; both the interior and exterior of the factory premises; as well as factory buildings, vehicles, and other assets.

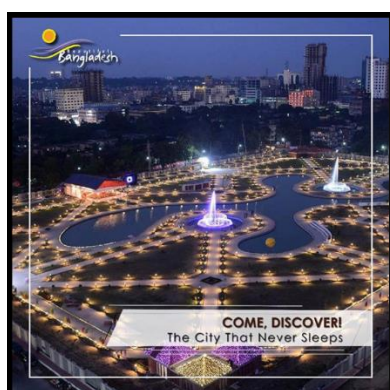


Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

*(Photo top-left: Workers in a garment factory; Photo top-right: Tea plantation; Photo bottom: Factory workers and vehicles)*

### 3.2.3 Urban Landscape ((UL-TB)

UL-TB covers photographs with urban landscapes, with either a panoramic view or a close-up of an amalgam of man-built buildings, machinery, or infrastructure. This can be a city, a town, or a harbour that was taken at day or night time. However, photographs of a single building or a building complex that can be considered as a single unit (e.g., a luxury hotel) are not categorised under UL-TB.



*(Photo top: A close-up of a selected area of a city) Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd*  
*(Photos bottom: Panoramic night scene of a city) Source: beautifulbangladesh official Instagram page*

### 3.2.4 Urban Buildings (UL-B)

UL-B covers the interior or exterior of single or multiple houses and architectures that are for use by residents, or other private dwellings that are in the urban or suburban setting. Minor presence of animals, birds and other man-made machinery as vehicles can be included in the photograph but the focus should be the building. If a person or a group of people are at the foci of the photograph, it is not included in UL-B. Urban buildings that are not completed or abandoned also can be included.

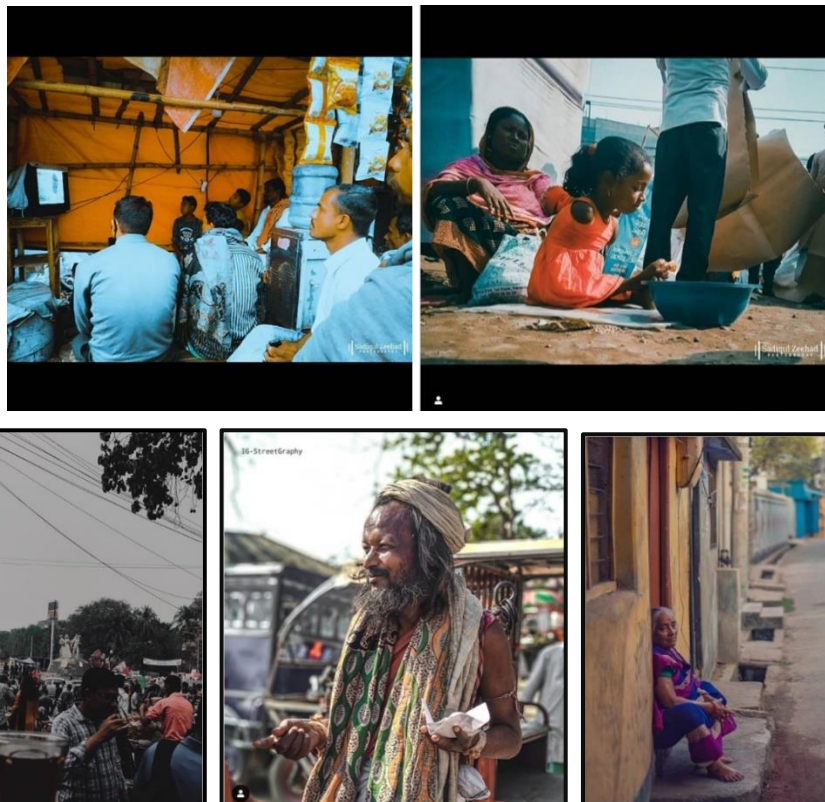


*(Photo-left: view of a building from a window; Photo-right: abandoned construction site)*

Source: Instagram

### 3.2.5 Urban Streets and Street Life (UL-US)

UL-US covers street life in urban Bangladesh. The presence of individuals or groups of people are the focus of these images, which may include beggars, homeless people, slumps, informal gatherings, etc.



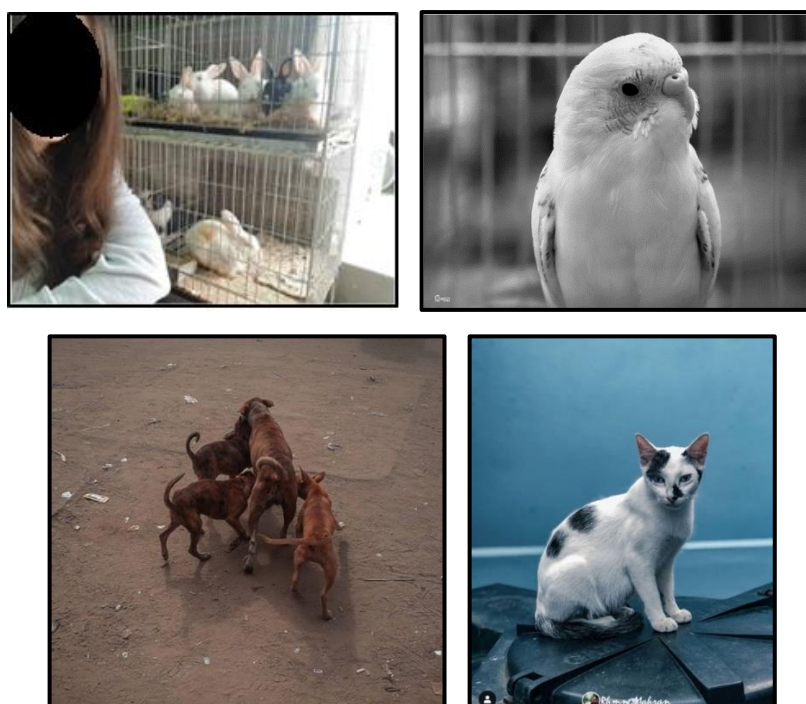
Source: Instagram

*(Photo top-left: Group watching TV in an urban boutique; Photo top-right: Child with a disability used for begging on a street; Photo bottom-left: Busy City Street; Photo bottom-middle: Person who may be a fortune teller or begging; Photo bottom- right: An urban neighbourhood)*



### 3.3. Domesticated Animals (SL-DA)

Images of domesticated animals, which can be clearly distinguished from wild animals, birds, insects or marine life, and who live with people or in the environments people live, directly depend on people for their survival were categorised under SL-DA. Animals, birds or fish kept by people as pets (e.g., dogs, cats, parrots, rabbits and fish), animals in Zoological gardens, as well as animals living in urban or suburban streets (e.g., stray dogs) are included in SL-DA. These animals can be seen on rural or urban streets, inside or nearby residences, markets, or shops. There may be a minor presence of people, but the domesticated animal is at the foci. In the case of birds and fish, clear evidence should be present in the photograph to be considered SL-DA. e.g., a fish tank or caged bird/s. Farm animals are not included.



Source: Instagram

*(Photo top-left: Caged rabbits probably in a pet shop; Photo top-right: a caged love bird; Photo bottom-left: a group of stray dogs; Photo bottom-right: a cat on a tank-lid)*

### 3.4 Religious Observances and Buildings (SL-R)

SL-R includes the interior or exterior of religious buildings with no historical value, most probably built after the colonial era with present-day architectural styles in Bangladesh. SL-R may also include religious artefacts such as statutes and individuals or a group of people engaging in religious activities such as religious rituals, observing, and participating in prayers or masses, pilgrimages, and religious teachings at the foci of the image. Photographs of

people (who may or may not engage in religious activities) at the religious sites and buildings recognized as sites with historical value are not included in SL-R but are coded under AS-RB only.



Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

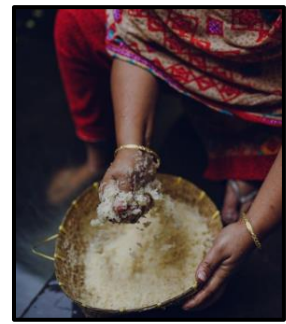
*(Photo top-left: Buddha statue; Photo top-right: Hindu temple; Photo middle: Priest teaching at a dhamma school; Photo bottom-left: Group of Islamic pilgrims praying; Photo bottom-right: a person praying in front of an Islamic mosque)*

### 3.5 Food (SL-F)

SL-F includes four sub-categories that directly represent raw or prepared meals or beverages and one sub-category on liquor and smoking. Food or beverages under SL-f can be in different stages, i.e., prepared meals, food preparation, food consumption and finally fresh fruit and vegetables. People may present in these photographs, but food, beverage, or consumption of them at the foci.

#### 3.5.1 Traditional and Local Food (F-TF)

This category includes images of foods with local or traditional orientation. Some may have links with other Asian cultures. F-TF may contain main meals, desserts, or snacks that are with native orientation.



(**Photo top left:** Plate of rice; **Photo middle:** traditional snack) Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd  
(**Photo top right:** A woman washing rice to be cooked; **Photo bottom:** People praying before the meal) Source: Instagram

### 3.5.2 Beverages (F-B)

F-B includes beverages that can be in packages or servings in a mug, cup, or jar.



Source: Instagram

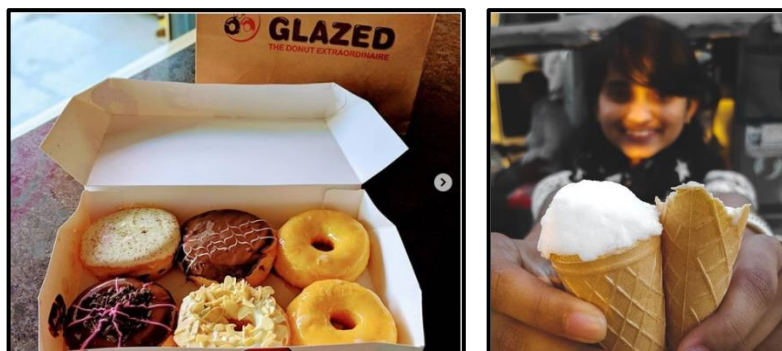
(**Photo left:** Cup of tea; **Photo middle:** mug of milkshake; **Photo right:** Bottled water)

### 3.5.3 Non-local food (F-NL)

Food that has Western and non-Asian origins is coded into F-NL.







(**Photo top:** Grilling meat) Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd  
 (**Photo bottom-left:** doughnuts packed in a box; **Photo bottom-right:** partly consumed ice cream in cones) Source: Instagram

### 3.5.4 Fruits, Vegetables and Harvest (F-FV)

Images with fruits and vegetables at the foci are categorised under F-FV. Minor presence of people such as farmers, intermediaries, sellers, or consumers may be there. F-FV may include fruits and vegetables on the trees, collected in heaps at the farmlands, close-up of fruits and vegetables, on shelves at the retailers, and fruit on baskets or plates that are ready to be consumed. If the marketplace is at the foci but not fruits or vegetables, such photos are excluded from this subcategory.



(**Photo top: top left corner-**Ripened jackfruit cut in half and served on a plate; **bottom right corner-** a bunch of green jackfruits on the tree)  
 Source: beautifulbangladesh official Instagram page  
 (**Photo middle:** tropical fruits at a store; **Photo right:** Packing cauliflower harvest) Source: Instagram

### 3.5.5 Alcoholic Beverages and Smoking (F-AS)

F-AS includes photos of people consuming or with alcoholic beverages and smoking. This may also include alcoholic beverages (including liquor, wine, and beer) and tobacco products, without the presence of any person.



Source: Instagram

(**Photo right:** Glass of liquor; **Photo middle:** A man smoking; **Photo right:** Group of young with a Shisha pipe)

### 3.6 Literature and Literacy ([SL-LL](#))

SL-LL includes photographs of literature and literacy of Bangladesh. This may include any formal or informal teaching and learning environments that intend to improve the literacy and knowledge of people. Any information and memorabilia on famous and renowned Bangladeshi authors do not include here.

#### 3.6.1 Teaching, Learning and Reading Environments (LL-TL)

LL-TL contains any photograph resembling the people engaging in teaching and learning at such teaching and learning environments. LL-TL may also include other events and exhibitions promoting literacy among people. This may include school classrooms with children, book fairs and exhibitions, bookshelves, and reading books. However, information about renowned authors and their memorabilia is not coded under LL-TL.



Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

(**Photos top:** people at a Book fair; **Photo bottom:** Schoolchildren in a classroom)



### 3.6.2 Renowned Intellectuals (LL-RI)

Bangladeshi literature is rich and well-known around the world. The father of Bengali literature, Rabindranath Tagore was the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. He is recognized as a great Bengali poet, writer, philosopher, and painter. LL-RI contains photographs of such recognized authors, their work, memorial museums and other memorabilia (e.g., their tomb, previous residences and personal belongings).



*(Photo left: Painting of Rabindranath Tagore)* Source: beautifulbangladesh official Instagram page.

*(Photo right: Mir Mosharraf Hossain (a renowned Bangladeshi author) Memorial Museum)*  
Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

## **Main Category 4: Infrastructure (I)**

Main category I covers infrastructure and tourism facilities that would directly influence the tourists' stay in Bangladesh. This includes three generic categories and nine sub-categories.

### **4.1 Transportation and general infrastructure (I-TG)**

#### **4.1.1 Means of transportation (TG-TM)**

#### **4.1.2 General infrastructure (TG-GI)**

### **4.2 Tourist facilities (I-TF)**

#### **4.2.1 Accommodation and restaurants (TF-AR)**

#### **4.2.2 Equipment and facilities at attractions/sites (TF-FA)**

#### **4.2.3 Directions and information (TF-DI)**

### **4.3 Sports, recreation, and leisure (I-SR)**

#### **4.3.1 Organized sporting events-International or local level (SR-OS)**

#### **4.3.2 Leisure exploration (SR-LE)**

#### **4.3.3 Recreational activities and theme parks (SR-R)**

#### **4.3.4 Picnicking, leisure, and public gardens (SR-PL)**

### **4.1 Transportation and General Infrastructure (I-TG)**

Transportation-related infrastructure and general fundamental facilities and systems assisting tourists to stay and mobility while on their tour are categorised under I-TG. Images may be close-ups or captured from a distance.

#### **4.1.1 Means of Transportation (TG-TM)**

Vehicles used for transportation via land, air or water at the foci of the photo are to be coded under TG-TM. These photos may include people such as cabin crew, drivers and passengers. And the vehicles may be parked in relevant parks such as ports, yards or docks. However, transportation-related infrastructure such as roadways, railways, bridges, tunnels, and ports and docks, without a vehicle at the foci are not included here.

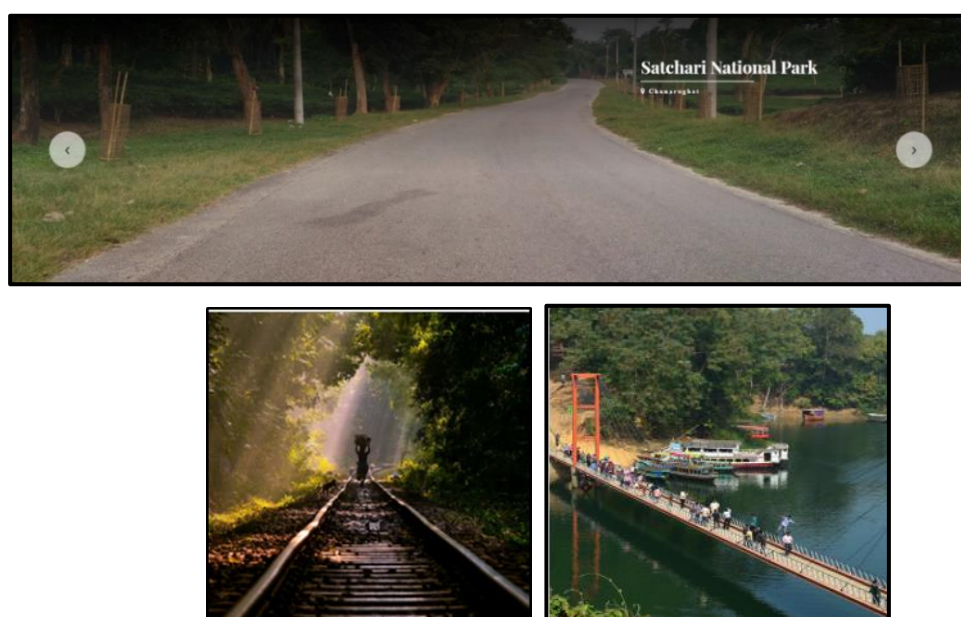


Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

(**Photo top-left:** Busy streets with many land vehicles, including public transportation; **Photo right:** Airplane landed or taking off; **Photo bottom-right:** ferry; **Photo Bottom-left:** Car)

#### 4.1.2 General Infrastructure (TG-GI)

Fundamental infrastructure, facilities and systems of Bangladesh that facilitate tourists while on their tour are categorised under TG-G. Such infrastructure and facilities may be transportation-related, telecommunication-related, power or water supply or any other general infrastructure. For example, there may include roadways, railways, bridges, ports, and docks as well as electricity transmission towers, water tunnels, etc.



Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

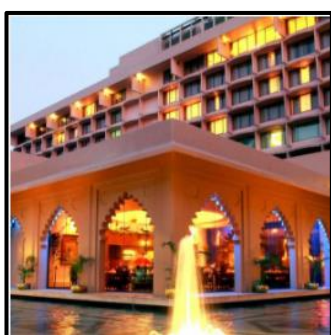
**Photo top:** Carpeted Road; **Photo bottom -left:** Railroad;  
**Photo bottom -right:** Bridge

## 4.2 Tourism Facilities ([L-TF](#))

TFI-TF includes all the tourism facilities that facilitate the tourist's stay and enhance their touristic experience in the destination. This includes accommodation-related facilities, equipment, and facilities at the attractions to enhance the touristic experience, as well as signs, directions and touristic information provided.

### 4.2.1 Accommodation and Facilities (TF-AR)

Hotels, resorts, spas, and any other accommodation facilities available for tourists are categorised under TR-AR. This may include the interior or exterior of hotels, eco-lodges, or other accommodation facilities, including hotel rooms, swimming pools, gardens, gyms, and lobbies. However, restaurants are not categorised under TF-AR.



**Source:**

[beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

*(Photo top: Swimming pool of a hotel; Photo Bottom -left: Exterior of a hotel; Photo Bottom-right: Exterior of a hotel with minor presence of people)*

### 4.2.2 Equipment and Facilities at Attractions (TF-FA)

Facilities provided for tourists at the attractions and tourism sites to enhance their travel experience are included in TF-FA. These may include tour boats at a pier or on the river/lake, chairs and umbrellas at beaches, golf courses, hot air balloons, and sightseeing facilities established.



**Source:**

[beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

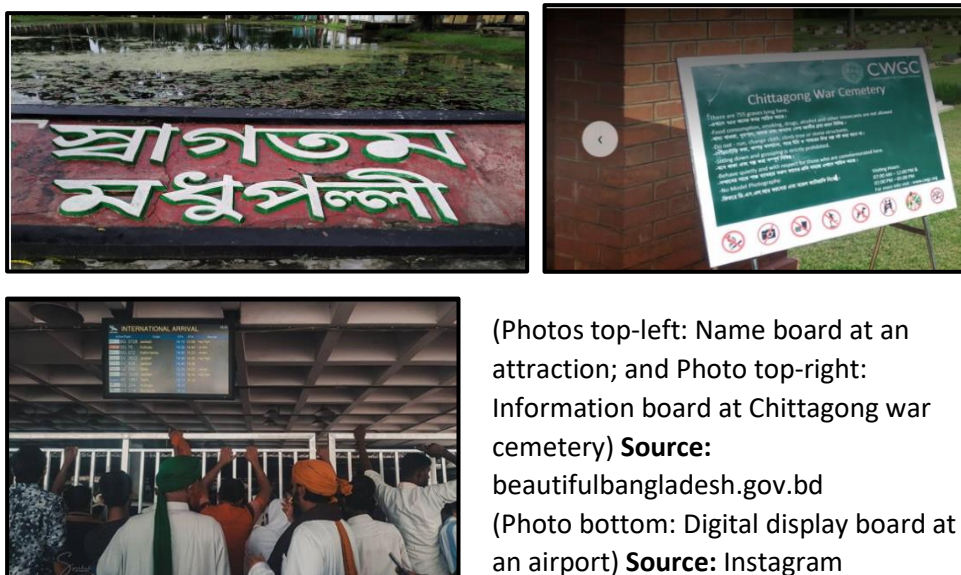
*(Photo left: Hot air balloon)*

Source: Instagram

*(Photo right: establishment made for sightseeing and resting)*

#### 4.2.3 Directions and Information (TF-DI)

TF-DI includes signs and symbols made available to provide directions and information for tourists, which will facilitate roaming around the country and assure safety. These may be available on roads, transportation facilities, public places and tourist attractions. For example, signboards, direction boards, name boards, digital signage or digital screens providing information, street names etc.



(Photos top-left: Name board at an attraction; and Photo top-right: Information board at Chittagong war cemetery) **Source:** beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd  
(Photo bottom: Digital display board at an airport) **Source:** Instagram

#### 4.3 Sports, Recreation and Leisure ([I-SR](#))

SL-SR includes images of organized sporting events that are at a national or international level, exploration activities (e.g., camping, hiking or trekking); other recreational activities (e.g., theme parks built for commercial purposes) and also other leisure activities that require physical activity or require to travel into specific environments dedicate for leisure (e.g., picnicking and visiting public gardens or play areas). Rural or urban locals engage in their day-to-day activities or spend their leisure time (e.g., playing in streets, fields or playgrounds) in their domestic environments and are included under any sub-category of the SL-SR category.

##### 4.3.1 Organized Sporting Events: International or Local (SR-OS)

SR-OS includes organized sports events at the national or international level. Outdoor or indoor sporting activities including national or international level such as Cricket tournaments, national or international sports persons or sports teams are included in SR-OS.





*(Photo left: Bangladesh national cricket team at a cricket ground; Photo right: Boating competition) Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd*

#### 4.3.2 Leisure Exploration (SR-LE)

SR-LE includes leisure or adventure activities that require physical activity in the natural environment. This may include camping, boating, exploring, hiking, and trekking. The presence of people including domestic or international travellers, or their leisure exploration tools should be at the foci of the photograph.



Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

*(Photo top: Camping; Photo middle: Group of trekkers at Sundarbans mangrove; Photo bottom: Group of explorers in a cave)*

#### 4.2.3 Recreational Activities and Theme Parks (SR-R)

Recreational activities that take place in theme parks, adventure parks or similar environments that are built for commercial purposes are categorised into SR-R. SR-R may consist of places that are fully fabricated artificial environments or can be a natural

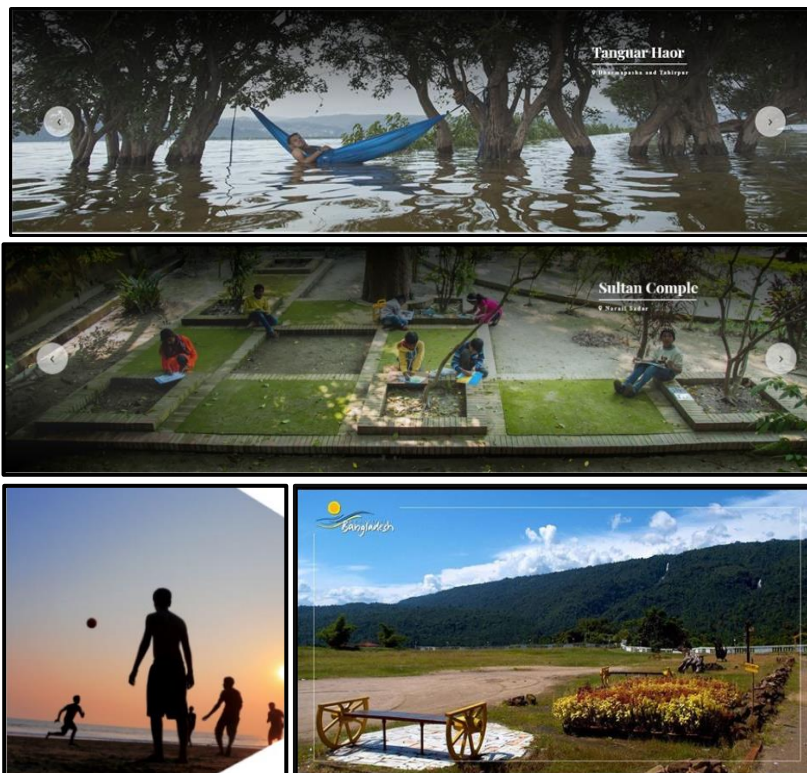
environment equipped with artificial set-ups to accommodate leisure and adventure activities.



(**Photo:** Water Park) **Source:** beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

#### 4.3.3 Picnicking, Leisure, and Public Gardens (SR-PL)

SR-PL covers activities for people relaxing and spending their leisure time at a specific place dedicated to leisure purposes or commonly used places (e.g., beaches), necessarily away from the domestic environment, such as picnics, botanical gardens, and parks. Most of the images may include people at the foci. Even though a considerable portion of the image covers natural scenery or environment, if the leisure activity is at the foci, such images can be categorised under SR-PL. e.g., people playing on the beach.



(**Photo top:** A person on a hammock over a river; **Photo middle:** Group of children drawing in a park; **Photo bottom-left:** Group of people playing a ball game on a beach)

**Source:** beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd

(**Photo bottom-right:** sitting area with a garden) **Source:** beautifulbangladesh official Instagram page

## Main category 5: Portraits of people (PP)

Main Category PP consists of two generic categories, that include images of local people or travellers that are at the image's foci. Photos that might be 'staged', which has intentionally selected and arranged the places to take the photo and artefacts are also included. There may be clear evidence that people are posing for the photograph, with facial expressions and body posture displaying the emotions of the persons captured in the photo. These can be an individual or a group of people capturing themselves (e.g., selfies) or capturing others. If people present in the photo are not the focus of the image (too small, barely distinguishable, or on the periphery of the picture), such are not categorised under the two sub-categories of PP.

### 5.1 Portraits of local people (PP-L)

### 5.2 Portraits of international or domestic tourists (PP-T)

#### 5.1 Portraits of Local People (PP-L)

PP-L includes photographs of individuals or groups at the foci. Most of them may have clear evidence that they are posing for the photograph (i.e., staged). Artefacts, animals, or other people may be present in the background of the picture.



*(Photo left: A young girl posing for the photograph (staged); Photo middle: A native man facing the photograph (not staged); Photo right: Group of men posing for a photograph where some other people are present in the background) Source: Instagram*

#### 5.2 Portraits of International or Domestic Tourists (PP-T)

International or domestic travellers posing for the photographs, individually or as a group are categorised under PP-T. There should be clear evidence that the people are travelling (e.g., a destination in the background or dress code) to categorise under PP-T. And most photos may



be 'staged'. Here also artefacts, animals or other people may be present in the background of the image. Most of the photographs may display an attraction in the background.



*(Photo left: International tourist posing for the photograph; Photo middle: Group of travellers sightseeing, where the background scenery and people share 50:50 of the image; Photo right: A person sightseeing, where the background scenery has given 75% of the image) Source: Instagram*

## **Main Category 6: Officials, and Other (OO)**

OO main category contains four generic categories that do not represent any tourist attractions and hence do not display the cognitive image of the destination.

- 6.1. Officials and Events (OO-OE)
- 6.2. Notices, Greetings, and Quotes (OO-NGQ)
- 6.3. COVID-19 Awareness (OO-Cov)
- 6.4. Unclassified (OO-U)

### **6.1. Officials and Events (OO-OE)**

OO-OE includes all the photographs displaying officials and official events conducted by Bangladesh tourism authorities (e.g., BTB) and other government authorities and officials. This may cover meetings, ceremonies, celebrations, and conferences to commemorate different tourism-related activities such as world tourism day celebrations under OO-OE. These are events and activities that do not represent the cognitive image of the destination. Portraits of BTB officials are not categorised under portraits of people, PP-L.

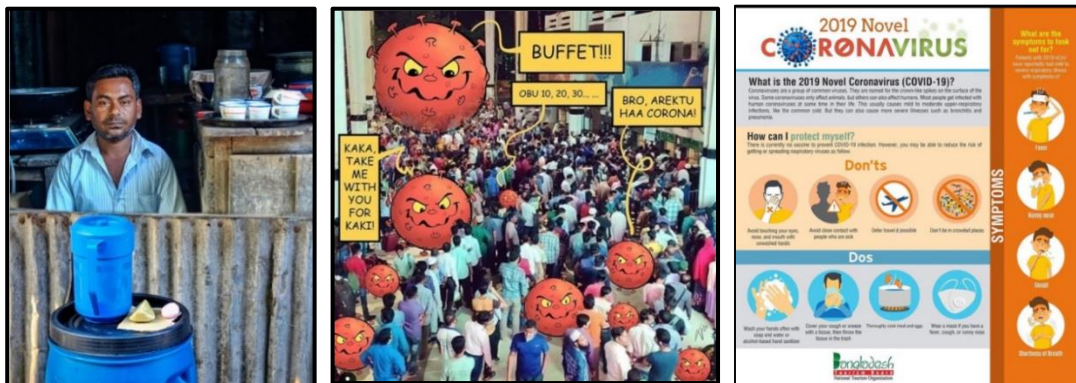


Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd)

(Photo left: Meeting chaired by HE the prime minister of Bangladesh; Photo right: BTB official)

## 6.2 COVID-19 Awareness (OO-Cov)

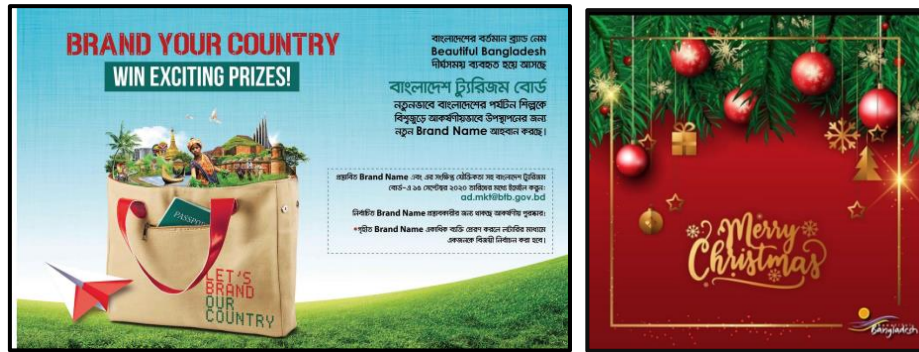
OO-Cov includes any photograph shared to raise awareness or to provide advice on the prevention of the COVID-19 global pandemic or travel advice during the pandemic.



(Photo left: hands cleaning facilitating in front of a small street food selling stall; Photo middle: Poster with COVID-19 prevention advice) Source: Instagram (Photo right: Awareness poster by Bangladesh Government) Source: [beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd](http://beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd) official Instagram page

## 6.3 Posters, Greetings and Quotes (OQ-NGQ)

OQ-NGQ includes notices and quotes are the image's foci with or without a photo in the background. Such DMO photos may be notices, posters, announcements, greeting cards or invitations. Such UGC photos may have used pictures only to enhance the appearance of the quote or notice they want to communicate.



(Photo-left: Poster by BTB on their branding completion) Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd.

(Photo-right: Greeting card issued for Christmas) Source: beautifulbangladesh official Instagram page

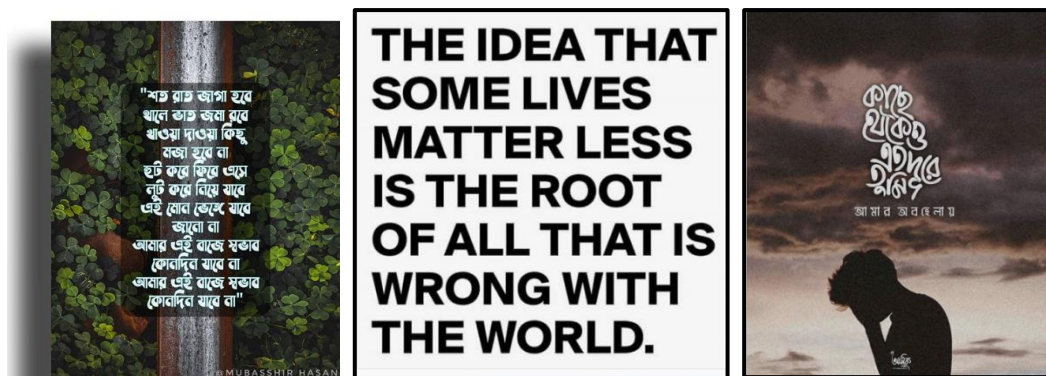


Photo left: A text-dominant photo; Photo middle: Plain text; Photo-right: Photo in the background dominant with a quote in the Bengali language) Source: Instagram.

#### 6.4 Unclassified (OO-U)

OO-U contains photographs that cannot be rationally categorised into any of the sub-categories because they do not display any aspect of the cognitive image of Bangladesh.



Source: beautifulbangladesh.gov.bd  
(Photo: A globe in hands)

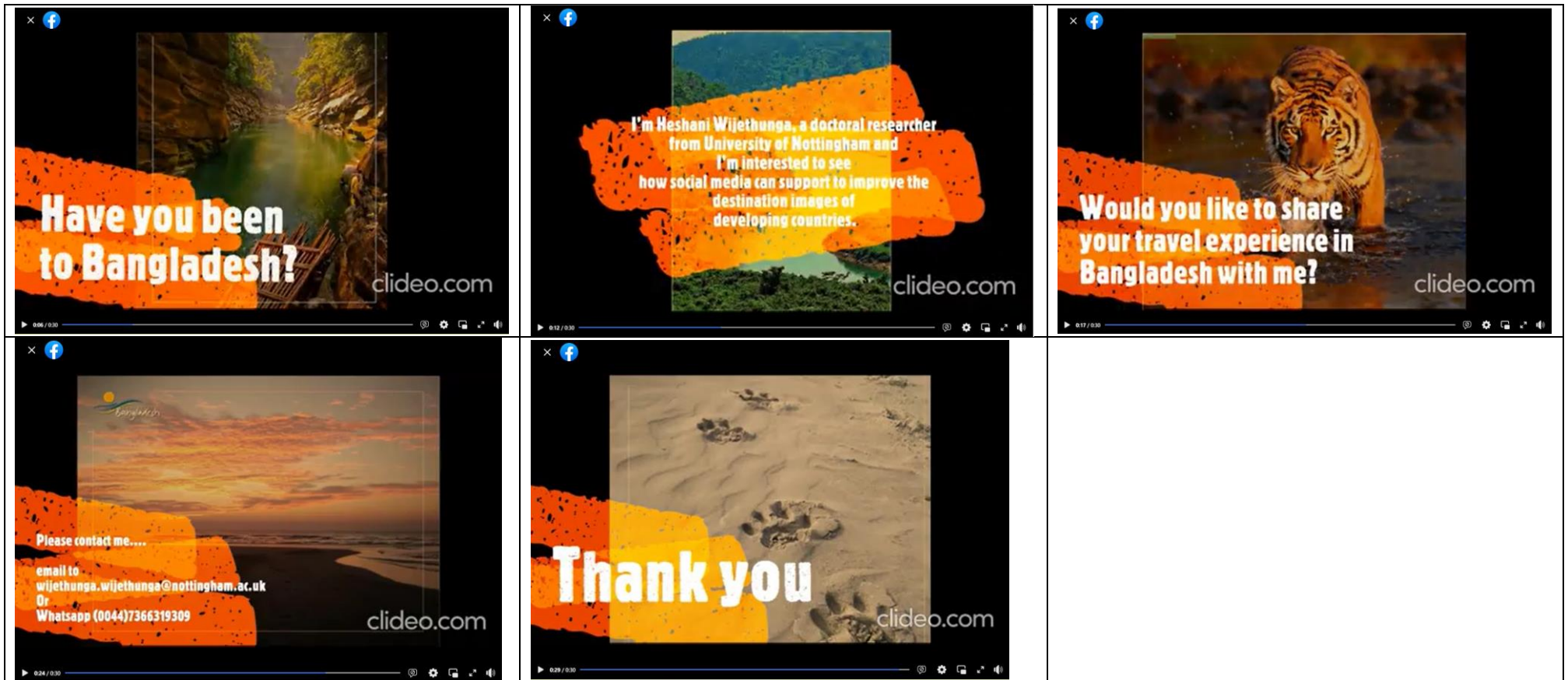


## Appendix 5: Poster and Video Inviting Participants

### 5a. Poster



## 5b. Video Share in Social Media



## Appendix 6: Sample Profile

	Name	Demographic information *	Bangladesh travel**	Places visited in Bangladesh
1	Chad	The UK Male Age group 61-70 Retired company director/ Engineer Bachelor's Degree Retired and travelling from his investments	1st time went alone in December 2019 21 Days Travelled only in Bangladesh but came to Bangladesh through India	Dhaka, Cox Bazar (the ship demolishing yard), Chittagong (the power station), Khulna, Sundarbans
2	Mark	France Male Age group 21-30 Master's Degree Euro 0-20,000 PA	1st time went alone 4 Months 2019 March	Cox's Bazar, an island called Samatar, Panam City, monuments in Dhaka (the Parliament, Lalbagh fort), old Dhaka.
3	Christina	Germany Female Age group 51-60 Trust and safety specialist bachelor's degree Euro 40001-50000 PA	2nd time with husband 2020 February-March (1st time in 2017) 21 days	Dhaka (Eco share book market), Dinajpur (Santal people and a Santal village, Kantajew temple), Chittagong, Lake Kaptai, Jaunpur, Sri Mangol (Tea Garden)
4	Andy	Canada Age group 51-60 Male Retired and now maintain a blog Bachelor's Degree £ 20,001- £ 40,000PA	2nd time went alone December 2018 (1st time in 1994) 30 Days Travelled to Bangladesh, India, and Thailand	Entered West Bengal from India, then Jessore, Kushiara, Rajshahi, Bogra, Rampur, Thakurgaon, Rampur and Jahapur, Kishoreganj, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Noakhali and to Cumilla, Sundarbans, Sylhet

5	AJ	Finland Age group 41-50 Male Visual Performing artist bachelor's degree	6th time went with a friend and family. 2019 December around 3 weeks only to Bangladesh	Dhaka, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, (there are many other places), Upazila Bazar in Cox's Bazar
6	Kate	The USA Age group 61-70 Female Retired reporter Bachelor's Degree US\$ 0- \$ 20000 PA	1st time went alone (Backpacked, used couch surfers) January 2018 2 weeks only to Bangladesh	Khulna, Sundarbans, Dhaka (bird park, National Martyrs Museum, arts festival), Sri Mangal,
7	Pete	The UK Male Age group 61-70 Casual work Diploma Retired £ 20,001- £ 40,000 PA	1st time went alone. December 2018 3 weeks Mauritius, then to Bangladesh, and then to India	Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar, Barishal, Bogra
8	Imran	USA/Israel Male Age group 31-40 Historian Master's Degree Euro 20,001- 40,001 PA	1st time went alone (Backpacked, used couch surfers) 2018 1.5 to 2 months, travelled independently for a year and a half, which included India and Bangladesh	Dhaka (Parliament, Gurudwara, Lalbagh Fort, the Dhakeshwari mandir, many mosques, Liberation War Museum), Khulna, Sunderbans, Bagerhat (many old Mughal mosques), Chittagong, Bandarban, Cox Bazar, Srimangal, Sylhet.

<b>9</b>	Eddie	Netherlands Male Age group 31-40 Bachelor's Degree	Many times (had previously worked in Bangladesh) 2020 with a friend Only to Bangladesh	Bandarban, Sundarbans, Cox's Bazar, Chittagong Hill tracks, Tanguar haor up North. Many areas within Dhaka, mostly around old Dhaka.
<b>10</b>	Alice	The USA Female Age group 21-30 Full-time traveller bachelor's degree £ 2,001- £ 40,000PA	1st time went alone 2018 for 6 weeks travelling for a while as an independent traveller been to Bangladesh and India on the same trip	Kolkata to Jessore broader, Khulna, Dhaka, Srimangal, Bogra, Nijhum Dwip, Katia, and Bahnpara.
<b>11</b>	Jack	The USA Male Age group 71-80 Retired military personal/ Aikido Martial Arts Master Equivalent to bachelor's degree US\$ 20001 -40000 PA	1st time went alone 2018 December 30 days Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Vietnam on the same trip,	Dhaka and Rohingya refugee camps in Cox Bazar
<b>12</b>	Tod	Canada Male Age group 71-80 School Principal Master's degree US\$ 40001- US\$ 60000 PA	1st time 2018 10 days went by with a group of friends who went to a volunteer charity project, Only to Bangladesh	Chittagong and Dhaka



<b>13</b>	Cynthia	Germany Female Age group 41-50 TV Station/Media Company Masters Degree	1st time 2019 June 10 days went by with a group of colleagues who went to a shoot	Dhaka (Old Dhaka, Markets, Modal of Taj Mahal), Sundarbans, another big city near the Sundarbans. Countryside (fishing using otters), Cox Bazar.
<b>14</b>	Cathy	Germany Female Age group 21-30 Master's degree Euro 60,001- 80,000 PA	1st time November 2019 for 10 days, went alone (Backpacked, CouchSurfers) Only to Bangladesh	Dhaka, Sri Mangal (tea estates), Cox's Bazar (beach), Sylhet
<b>15</b>	Mercy	Italy Female Age group 41-50 University Professor PhD Euro 50001-60000PA	1st time January 2017, 10 Days, went with a colleague, India and Bangladesh	Dhaka (Bishwa Ijtema religious festival), Chittagong, Chandpur Sadar, Kulna
<b>16</b>	Simon	Spain Male Age group 41-50 Project Manager Master's Degree	1st time August 2019 7 days went with his girlfriend (Backpacked, used couch surfers), India and Bangladesh	Sri Mangal, Dhaka, Barisal, Bugerhutt (ruins of ancient temples)
<b>17</b>	Pole	Slovakia Male Age group 51-60	2nd time December 2019 (1st time in 2018)	Dhaka, Kulna, Sylhet, Rangpoor, Bangla Taj Mahal, Dhaka old

		Secondary vocational school 20,000PA	Euro 0- £	7 days went alone Only to Bangladesh	
<b>18</b>	Richie	Brazil Male Age group 31-40 CEO/owner of a company Masters Degree \$60000-70000 PA		1st time 2017 December 9 days went alone (Backpacked, used CouchSurfers), Many places including Japan, South Korea, Qatar, India, Bangladesh, and Italy	Dhaka (Lalbagh, of a lot of public markets, and shopping malls (just going over the city but not much-visiting attractions), Chittagong (Fish market and ship demolishing yard)

## **Appendix 7: Coding Frame (Thematic Analysis)**

Fitting into the theory (DI formation process)	Theme	Category	Initial Code
Pre-visit Image Construction	1. Curious to explore an uncommon destination	Curiosity	Interest in the countries in the South Asian region / Developing countries
			a country that is relatively unexplored/ uncommon among travellers
			Curious to explore the culture, religion, and people
		Exemplar raw quotations:	
		(...) because it's not a common tourist destination. It's kind of off the grid, which for me is attractive. I wanted to go somewhere where there's less tourism. (Imran, Israel/USA, Age group 31-40)	
		So, I'm always curious about this part of the world [South and East Asia]. (...) and also, was curious to know. And I'm very interested to go to places where there are very few tourists. (Simon, Spain, Age group 41-50)	
		I want to visit all the countries in the Indian subcontinent with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh I haven't been there. And I also like adventure, but I like countries that are undeveloped. So, I specifically targeted it for that reason. (Andy, Canada, Age group 51-60)	
		Attributes dominant in the perceived DI	Poverty
			Pollution
			Labour-intensive industries (garments, ship demolishing)
	natural disasters		
	Islamic extremists		
	Rohingya refugees		
	overcrowding		
	2. Value of organic information	Information requirements	Natural beauty
			Places to go and things to do
			Visa requirements and process
			Accommodation arrangements and food
			Cost

	sources over DMO		Transportation
			Personal safety and security
		The difficulty of obtaining the required information	No updated guidebooks
			Information on the internet is very limited
			The information is available in the Bengali language.
		Solicited and unsolicited organic Sources of Information	Social networking sites (SNS) in general (FB, Instagram, YouTube) and SNS groups
			Online travel forums (Individual traveller's blogs, Thorn Tree by Lonely Planet) and other travellers
			Local people (including couch surfers)
		Autonomous Sources of Information	Printed guidebooks
			Search engines and Wikipedia (e.g., Google and duckduckgo)
			Travel review platforms (Lonely Planet and Trip Advisor)
			Home country's (or other countries) government travel advice and websites
		Overt induced-II agents Image projection by the DMO: Induced image	News reports and popular culture
			Travel booking platforms (e.g., Booking.com) and travel agencies
During the visit: Image production	3. Memorable experiences with locals	Memorable experience	Tour guides
		Attractions	Awareness of the DMO website/s or other promotions
			Lack of information on DMO websites (unsatisfactory)
	4. Risks and challenges experienced	Poor tourism services	Friendliness and hospitality of locals
			Attention to tourists with white skin
			Culture and Religion (including Muslim heritage)
			People, lifestyles, and livelihoods
			Nature
			Lack of tourist information
			Formal accommodation arrangements (Hotels)
			Couch surfing and hosts
			Language Barriers
			Security and personal safety of tourists
			Extreme traffic and Chaos


		Underdeveloped inland transportation facilities	Lack of transportation infrastructure and travel-related instructions
			Uncomfortable, Unsafe and dangerous land transportation
			Boat travel
		Widespread environmental pollution, poverty and crowded	Dirt and landfill waste
			Air pollution
			Pollution in waterways
			Poverty
			Lots of people, crowded cities and noise pollution
	5. Travel experiences triggered mixed emotions	Positive emotions	Positive surprises
			Pride (self-praising)
			Amazing
			Exciting and arousing
			Relaxing
			Safe
			Adventure
			Empathy
			Happiness, pleasure, and joy
		Negative emotions	Fear
			Disappointment
			Nervous
			Discomfort, uncomfortable
			disgust
			anger
			exhaustion
			unpleasantness
	6. Capturing memories into Photographs	Destination Attributes captured for photographs	Number of photographs taken
			Capturing everything and unusual
			Destination attributes captured in photographs (People, culture, nature)
			Photos of pollution, poverty and reality
			Pre-planned iconic photographs
Post-visit: Image reproduction and circulation	7. UGC Sharing behaviour	Actions with photographs taken	Keep as memories
			Showing them to family and friends after returning home
			Sharing on social media
			Use in personal blogging pages or exhibitions
			Share with friends in personal messages

	8. Post-travel evaluation	Recommend ed for adventure travellers (allocentric)	Backpacking
			Not for luxury travellers
			For adventure-loving- people / open- minded people
			Previous travel experience
		Post-travel positive emotions	Exciting
			Arousing
			Pleasure
			Relaxing
			Not Distressing or gloomy
			Distressing (negative)
			Exhausting (negative)
		Revisit intention Meeting Expectations	Intention to spread positive word of mouth (WoM)
			Revisit intention (re-visit intentions or already have been there more than once)
			Bangladesh met travellers' expectations or exceeded their expectations
			Some parts were better than expected and some are not

## Appendix 8: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results

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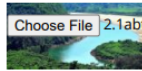
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**magazine/2013/01/03/roman.htm** (<http://archive.thedailystar.net/magazine/2013/01/03/roman.htm>)

- First found on Nov 26, 2014

**magazine/2013/01/03/roman.htm** (<http://archive.thedailystar.net/magazine/2013/01/03/roman.htm>)


- First found on Aug 22, 2019

**view image** (<http://archive.thedailystar.net/magazine/2013/01/03/roman01.jpg>)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_3

Upload

Paste or enter image URL




### 4 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 1.0 seconds for: 2.1abtd4.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection




**www.pixoto.com** (<https://www.pixoto.com/images-photography/images-photography/landscapes/weat...>)

- First found on Feb 10, 2016

**art-shop/5571901673963520** (<https://w...>)

- First found on Feb 11, 2016

**view image** (<http://lh5.ggpht.com/bTKlWwpEiLnSkjJLQMmTf53D1f2Ah07gRldqUI>)



**www.pixoto.com** (<https://www.pixoto.com/images-photography/images-photography/landscapes/weat...>)


- First found on Feb 10, 2016

**view image** (<http://lh5.ggpht.com/bTKlWwpEiLnSkjJLQMmTf53D1f2Ah07gRldqUI>)

**Source:** TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_4

Upload

Paste or enter image URL




### 2 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 0.6 seconds for: 2.1abtd6.png

Using TinEye is private. We do not save your search images (/faq#uploading). TinEye is free to use for non-commercial purposes. For business solutions, learn about our technology (/technology).

Sort by best match


Filter by domain/collection



**www.lamchame.com** (<https://www.lamchame.com/forum/membforum/members/vanlonghy.879480/> (h...))

- First found on Mar 20, 2017

**view image** (<https://www.lamchame.com/forum/data/avatars/l/879/879480.jpg>)



**imgpicta.com** (<http://imgpicta.com/chelsea.e.reeves/43146629/>)

**chelsea.e.reeves/43146629/** (<http://img...>)

- First found on Jun 24, 2017

**view image** ([https://scontent.cdninstagram.com/t51.2885-15/e35/19425508\\_145](https://scontent.cdninstagram.com/t51.2885-15/e35/19425508_145))

**Source:** TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_5

Upload

Paste or enter image URL



## 22 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 4.8 seconds for: 2.1abtd5.png

Using TinEye is private. We do not save your search images (/faq#uploading). TinEye is free to use for non-commercial purposes. For business solutions, learn about our technology (/technology).

Show only stock and collection results:

☐ 1 result found in collections (/faq#image\_collections).

Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection

1 of 3



**www.abashannews24.com** (<http://www.abashannews24.com/>)

**www.abashannews24.com/** (<http://www.abashannews24.com/>)

- First found on Mar 23, 2017

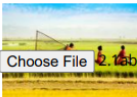
**view image** ([http://www.abashannews24.com/assets/images/pic\\_4.jpg](http://www.abashannews24.com/assets/images/pic_4.jpg)) (656 x 442, 205 KB)

**abashannews24.com** (<http://www.abashannews24.com/>)

**abashannews24.com/** (<http://abashannews24.com/>)

- First found on Mar 23, 2017

**view image** ([http://abashannews24.com/assets/images/pic\\_4.jpg](http://abashannews24.com/assets/images/pic_4.jpg)) (656 x 442, 205 KB)



Choose File 2.1abtd5.png

**breezeofmonsoon.com** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/>)

**breezeofmonsoon.com/** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/>)

- First found on Mar 9, 2020

**view image** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/natural-scenery-in-bangladesh-1200x800.jpg>) (1200 x 800, 1.2 MB)



**breezeofmonsoon.com** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/>)

**breezeofmonsoon.com/** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/>)

- First found on Mar 9, 2020

**view image** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/natural-scenery-in-bangladesh-1200x800.jpg>) (1200 x 800, 1.2 MB)



**irresponsiblecareer.tk** (<http://irresponsiblecareer.tk/b620291.php>)

**b620291.php** (<http://irresponsiblecareer.tk/b620291.php>)

- First found on Apr 20, 2018

**view image** (<http://stourismbangladesh.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Natural-scenery-in-bangladesh-1200x800.jpg>) (1200 x 800, 1.2 MB)



**breezeofmonsoon.com** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/>)

**breezeofmonsoon.com/** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/>)

- First found on Mar 9, 2020

**page/2/** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/page/2/>)

- First found on Mar 9, 2020

**view image** (<https://breezeofmonsoon.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/natural-scenery-in-bangladesh-1200x800.jpg>) (1200 x 800, 1.2 MB)



**bigger-cent.ga** (<http://bigger-cent.ga/v393185.php>)

**v393185.php** (<http://bigger-cent.ga/v393185.php>)

- First found on May 17, 2018

**view image** (<http://www.kinyu-z.net/data/wallpapers/120/1125039.jpg>) (1299 x 800, 1.2 MB)



**baygiare24h.com** (<http://baygiare24h.com/ve-may-bay-di-dhaka/>)

**ve-may-bay-di-dhaka/** (<http://baygiare24h.com/ve-may-bay-di-dhaka/>)

- First found on Jun 11, 2016

**view image** (<http://baygiare24h.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/ve-may-bay-di-dhaka-1200x800.jpg>) (1200 x 800, 1.2 MB)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_6

Upload

Paste or enter image URL



## 2,326 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 1.8 seconds for: 2.1abtd7.png

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Show only stock and collection results:

- ☐ 21 results found in collections (/faq#image\_collections).
- ☐ 6 results found in stock (/faq#stock\_images).

Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection

1 of 233



STOCK · SPONSORED

**www.gettyimages.com** (<https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/photo/close-up-portrait-of-tiger-...>)  
- First found on Nov 9, 2018



**hdpic.org** (<http://hdpic.org/category/animals/tiger/>)

[category/animals/tiger/](http://hdpic.org/category/animals/tiger/) ([http://hdpic.org...](http://hdpic.org/category/animals/tiger/))  
- First found on Jan 28, 2017

[view image](http://hdpic.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Tiger-Top-Full-Screen.jpg) (<http://hdpic.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Tiger-Top-Full-Screen.jpg>)



**www.undp.org** (<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/es/home/ourperspectives/undp-es-home-ourperspectives.html>)

- First found on Nov 9, 2018

[view image](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/comoros/img/test/UNDP_KM_tiger.jpg) ([http://www.undp.org/content/dam/comoros/img/test/UNDP\\_KM\\_tiger.jpg](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/comoros/img/test/UNDP_KM_tiger.jpg))



**plus.google.com** (<https://plus.google.com/s/%23RanjiTrophy/posts/s/RanjiTrophy/posts>) ([https://plus.google.com/s/%23RanjiTrophy/posts](https://plus.google.com/s/%23RanjiTrophy/posts/s/RanjiTrophy/posts))

- First found on Jan 30, 2018

[view image](http://lh6.googleusercontent.com/-cXwNFcDFk4/AAAAAAAAAI/A) (<http://lh6.googleusercontent.com/-cXwNFcDFk4/AAAAAAAAAI/A>)



**awardpay.ning.com** (<http://awardpay.ning.com/profile/TRAFFICKING>)

[profile/TRAFFICKING](http://awardpay.ning.com/profile/TRAFFICKING) (<http://awardpay.ning.com/profile/TRAFFICKING>)

- First found on Jul 22, 2008

[view image](http://api.ning.com/files/OuBZoeaFLwCG65iGHI45qakabGG2VZpAH) (<http://api.ning.com/files/OuBZoeaFLwCG65iGHI45qakabGG2VZpAH>)



**www.dwallpaperhd.com** (<http://www.dwallpaperhd.com/2013/09/2013/09/national-animal.html>)

- First found on Dec 18, 2013

[view image](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-lCypLB_v1U/T-htCSaNN_I/AAAAAAAAAw) ([http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-lCypLB\\_v1U/T-htCSaNN\\_I/AAAAAAAAAw](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-lCypLB_v1U/T-htCSaNN_I/AAAAAAAAAw))



**sydex.net** (<http://sydex.net/page71276>)

[page71276](http://sydex.net/page71276) (<http://sydex.net/page71276>)

- First found on May 28, 2016

[view image](https://media.licdn.com/mp/MP/shrinknp_400_400/AAEAAQAAAA) ([https://media.licdn.com/mp/MP/shrinknp\\_400\\_400/AAEAAQAAAA](https://media.licdn.com/mp/MP/shrinknp_400_400/AAEAAQAAAA))



**plus.google.com** (<https://plus.google.com/s/%23endangeredspecies/posts/s/endangeredspecies/posts>)

[s/#endangeredspecies/posts](https://plus.google.com/s/%23endangeredspecies/posts/s/endangeredspecies/posts) ([https://p...](https://plus.google.com/s/%23endangeredspecies/posts/s/endangeredspecies/posts))

- First found on Dec 12, 2017

[s/#wildlife/posts](https://plus.google.com/s/%23wildlife/posts/s/wildlife/posts) ([https://plus.google.c...](https://plus.google.com/s/%23wildlife/posts/s/wildlife/posts))

- First found on Nov 22, 2017

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_7



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Paste or enter image URL



## 5 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 0.7 seconds for: 2.2abtbtd1.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection



**twitter.com** (<https://twitter.com/DebbarmaBittu/status/1296679>

**DebbarmaBittu/status/1296679363606...**

- First found on Feb 19, 2021

**view image** ([https://pbs.twimg.com/profile\\_banners/913657765037432832/16041](https://pbs.twimg.com/profile_banners/913657765037432832/16041)



**www.thedailystar.net** (<https://www.thedailystar.net/country/int>

**country/intl-day-indigenous-peoples-o...**

- First found on Jun 23, 2018

**view image** (<https://assetsds.cdnedge.bluemix.net/sites/default/files/styles/so>



Choose File 2.2abtbtd1.png

**m.popaganda.gr** (<http://m.popaganda.gr/aleka-kanellidou-interv>

**aleka-kanellidou-interview/** (<http://m....>

- First found on Aug 9, 2019

**archio-k-p-kavafi-elfthero-pia-stin-pr...**

- First found on Aug 9, 2019

**view all 4 matches**

**view image** ([https://m.popaganda.gr/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/rs\\_6736-web](https://m.popaganda.gr/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/rs_6736-web)



**twitter.com** (<https://twitter.com/DebbarmaBittu/status/1296679>

**DebbarmaBittu/status/1296679363606...**

- First found on Feb 19, 2021

**view image** ([https://pbs.twimg.com/profile\\_banners/913657765037432832/16041](https://pbs.twimg.com/profile_banners/913657765037432832/16041)



**twitter.com** (<https://twitter.com/DebbarmaBittu/status/1296679>

**DebbarmaBittu/status/1296679363606...**

- First found on Feb 19, 2021

**view image** ([https://pbs.twimg.com/profile\\_banners/913657765037432832/16041](https://pbs.twimg.com/profile_banners/913657765037432832/16041)

**Source:** TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_8

Upload

Paste or enter image URL



## 0 matches

TinEye searched over 46.4 billion images but didn't find any matches for your search image. That's probably because we have yet to crawl any pages where this image appears. TinEye is always crawling, so try your search again soon. See our [FAQ \(/faq#why\\_cant\\_find\)](#) for other reasons we may not have found your image.

**Source:** TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_9



## 12 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 0.6 seconds for: 2.2abtd2.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection

1 of 2



bengali.oneindia.com (<https://bengali.oneindia.com/news/kolkata/news/kolkata/mamata-banerjee-decid...>)  
- First found on Jan 19, 2019

view image (<https://bengali.oneindia.com/img/2017/12/25-1514203286-04.jpg>) (€



eduportalbd.com (<https://eduportalbd.com/category/curiosity/>)  
category/curiosity/ (<https://eduportalbd...>)  
- First found on Dec 21, 2017

view image (<https://i0.wp.com/blog.eduportalbd.com/wp-content/uploads/2016>)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_10



## 0 matches

TinEye searched over 46.4 billion images but didn't find any matches for your search image. That's probably because we have yet to crawl any pages where this image appears. TinEye is always crawling, so try your search again soon. See our FAQ (/faq#why\_cant\_find) for other reasons we may not have found your image.

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_11



## 0 matches

TinEye searched over 46.4 billion images but didn't find any matches for your search image. That's probably because we have yet to crawl any pages where this image appears. TinEye is always crawling, so try your search again soon. See our FAQ (/faq#why\_cant\_find) for other reasons we may not have found your image.

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_12



## 1 result

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 1.8 seconds for: 2.5abtd6.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection



**www.thedailystar.net** (<http://www.thedailystar.net/arts-enterta>

**arts-entertainment/event/grand-displ...**

- First found on Feb 13, 2018

**arts-entertainment/event/grand-displ...**

- First found on Sep 22, 2018

**view image** ([http://cdn.thedailystar.net/sites/default/files/styles/very\\_big\\_2/pu](http://cdn.thedailystar.net/sites/default/files/styles/very_big_2/pu)

**Source:** TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_13



## 1 result

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 2.1 seconds for: 2.7abtd1.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection



**www.kalerkantho.com** (<https://www.kalerkantho.com/online/w>

**online/world/2020/09/22/958070** ([https...](https://www.kalerkantho.com/online/world/2020/09/22/958070)

- First found on Nov 5, 2020

**view image** ([https://www.kalerkantho.com/assets/news\\_images/2020/09/22/14:](https://www.kalerkantho.com/assets/news_images/2020/09/22/14:)

**Source:** TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_14







## 2,918 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 3.1 seconds for: 2.7abtb4.png

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### Show only stock and collection results:

- ☐ 33 results found in collections (/faq#image\_collections).  
☐ 60 results found in stock (/faq#stock\_images).

Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection

1 of 292



STOCK · SPONSORED

**www.istockphoto.com** (<https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/darphoto/dangerous-wild-animal-tiger-gm...>)  
- First found on Sep 12, 2020



**www.youtube.com** ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjr\\_SEw7watch](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjr_SEw7watch)) ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjr\\_SEw7watch](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjr_SEw7watch))  
- First found on May 21, 2018  
**view image** ([https://i.ytimg.com/vi/tjr\\_SEw76zM/maxresdefault.jpg](https://i.ytimg.com/vi/tjr_SEw76zM/maxresdefault.jpg)) (1280 x 720,



**wallperio.com** (<http://wallperio.com/tiger-images.html>)  
**tiger-images.html** (<http://wallperio.com/tiger-images.html>)  
- First found on Jun 23, 2019  
**download-wp/627266873.html** (<http://wallperio.com/tiger-images.html#download-wp/627266873.html>)  
- First found on May 22, 2019  
**view all 4 matches**  
**view image** ([http://wallperio.com/data/out/528/tiger-images\\_627266873.jpg](http://wallperio.com/data/out/528/tiger-images_627266873.jpg)) (1280 x 720,



**wallpaperpulse.com** (<http://wallpaperpulse.com/tiger-backgrounds-for-computer>)  
**tiger-backgrounds-for-computer** (<http://wallpaperpulse.com/tiger-backgrounds-for-computer>)  
- First found on Apr 18, 2017  
**view image** (<http://wallpaperpulse.com/thumb/3861820.jpg>) (480 x 280, 53.2 KB)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_16



## 11 results

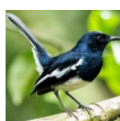
Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 2.2 seconds

Using TinEye is private. We do not save your search images (/faq#uploading). TinEye is free to use for non-commercial purposes. For business solutions, learn about our technology (/technology).

Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection

1 of 2



**whotalking.com** (<http://whotalking.com/picasa/Doyel>)

**picasa/Doyel** (<http://whotalking.com/p...>)

- First found on Nov 18, 2014

**view image** ([https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/-ycw-Ye9UkaQ/U\\_nIUTCIR4I/AA](https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/-ycw-Ye9UkaQ/U_nIUTCIR4I/AA))



**whotalking.com** (<http://whotalking.com/picasa/Doyel>)

**picasa/Doyel** (<http://whotalking.com/p...>)

- First found on Nov 18, 2014

**view image** (<https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/-9Pwdv9G-j1w/VDjCgW0JTal/AA>)



**www.rhythmofnature.org** (<http://www.rhythmofnature.org/2013>)

**2013\_09\_01\_archive.html** (<http://www.r...>)

- First found on Oct 24, 2014

**2013/09/oriental-magpie-robin-2.html** (...)

- First found on Oct 21, 2014

**view image** (<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-fSF7Bw8LC1Q/UklLdmjJltI/AAAAAAAAACK>)



**play.google.com** (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/developer?>)

**store/apps/developer** (<https://play.goo...>)

- First found on Aug 8, 2017

**view image** ([https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/h\\_jYNvGASao0qNPTTj4j\\_4X\\_YgN](https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/h_jYNvGASao0qNPTTj4j_4X_YgN))



**www.rhythmofnature.org** (<http://www.rhythmofnature.org/2013>)

**2013\_09\_01\_archive.html** (<http://www.r...>)

- First found on Oct 24, 2014

**2013/09/oriental-magpie-robin-2.html** (...)

- First found on Oct 21, 2014

**view image** (<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-fSF7Bw8LC1Q/UklLdmjJltI/AAAAAAAAACK>)



**www.alvintube.xyz** (<http://www.alvintube.xyz/hanya-5-menit-di>)

**hanya-5-menit--dijamin-lovebird-anda-...**

- First found on Feb 8, 2017

**view image** (<https://img.youtube.com/vi/xPworQd57RY/mqdefault.jpg>) (320 x 180)



**www.virtantiq.com** (<http://www.virtantiq.com/Terbaiknya+ini+2>)

**Terbaiknya+ini+2+menit+saja+pagi** (<http://www.virtantiq.com/Terbaiknya+ini+2+menit+saja+pagi>)

- First found on May 29, 2017

**view image** (<https://i.ytimg.com/vi/V2Fwlhq5MQI/hqdefault.jpg>) (480 x 360, 12 KB)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_17



## 165 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 4.5 seconds for: 2.6abtd10.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection

1 of 17



**blog.bdnews24.com** (<https://blog.bdnews24.com/fardeenferdous>

**fardeenferdous/178207** (<https://blog.b...>

- First found on Dec 24, 2018

**fardeenferdous/178207** (<https://blog.b...>

- First found on Oct 1, 2018

**view image** (<http://blog.bdnews24.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/25102068c>



**www.rtvonline.com** (<https://www.rtvonline.com/bangladesh/108>

**bangladesh/10883/খেতাব-ও-পদক-বর্জন...**

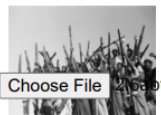
- First found on Jun 17, 2020

**bangladesh/10883/খেতাব-ও-পদক-বর্জন...**

- First found on Jun 13, 2019

**view all 20 matches**

**view image** ([https://www.rtvonline.com/assets/news\\_photos/2017/03/14/image](https://www.rtvonline.com/assets/news_photos/2017/03/14/image)



Choose File

2.6abtd10.png

**www.rtvonline.com** (<https://www.rtvonline.com/bangladesh/114>

**bangladesh/11498/রাস্তায়-নামে-সংগ্রামী...**

- First found on Jun 13, 2019

**bangladesh/11498/রাস্তায়-নামে-সংগ্রামী...**

- First found on Oct 23, 2019

**view all 10 matches**

**view image** ([https://www.rtvonline.com/assets/news\\_photos/2017/03/24/image](https://www.rtvonline.com/assets/news_photos/2017/03/24/image)



**hiveminer.com** (<https://hiveminer.com/User/%E0%A6%AF%E0%A>

**User/ফুদুদলিল** (<https://hiveminer.com/...>

- First found on Sep 2, 2018

**User/ফুদুদলিল/Recent** (<https://hivemin...>

- First found on Aug 3, 2018

**view image** ([https://farm5.static.flickr.com/4182/34537577401\\_31914f6c51\\_b.jpg](https://farm5.static.flickr.com/4182/34537577401_31914f6c51_b.jpg)



**archive.thedailystar.net** (<http://archive.thedailystar.net/magazi>

**magazine/2012/12/03/periscope.htm** (h...

- First found on Dec 6, 2014

**magazine/2012/12/03/periscope.htm** (h...

- First found on Aug 22, 2019

**view image** (<http://archive.thedailystar.net/magazine/2012/12/03/pe01.jpg>) (39'



**blog.priyo.com** (<http://blog.priyo.com/blogs/begumzahanara>)

**blogs/begumzahanara** (<http://blog.priy...>

- First found on Jan 8, 2015

**view image** (<http://img.priyo.com/files/201408/AnwarDohar71-5.jpg>) (1024 x 707

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_18



## 11 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 0.6 seconds for: 2.6abtb9.png

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Sort by best match

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**www.nbcnews.com** (<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/bang>

**news/world/bangladesh-killings-why-d...**

- First found on Apr 27, 2016

**view image** ([http://media4.s-nbcnews.com/j/newscms/2016\\_17/1512641/160426](http://media4.s-nbcnews.com/j/newscms/2016_17/1512641/160426)



**www.smithsonianmag.com** (<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/is>

**ist/** (<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/...>

- First found on Dec 16, 2016

**author/lorraine-boissoneault/** (<http://...>

- First found on Dec 26, 2016

**view image** (<http://thumbs.media.smithsonianmag.com/filer/41/b4/41b4774d-8>

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_19



## 6 results

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Sort by best match

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**www.historic-uk.com** (<http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/Hi>

**HistoryUK/HistoryofEngland/South-Sea...**

- First found on Sep 3, 2017

**view image** (<http://www.historic-uk.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/east-ind>



**infocom.info** (<http://infocom.info/what-two-nations-were-former>

**what-two-nations-were-formed-from-b...**

- First found on Nov 8, 2017

**view image** (<http://www.historic-uk.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/east-ind>



**www.historic-uk.com** (<https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/H>

**HistoryUK/HistoryofEngland/The-East-l...**

- First found on Feb 5, 2020

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_20





## 97 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 1.5 seconds for: 2.6abtd7.png

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### Show only stock and collection results:

- ☐ 1 result found in collections (/faq#image\_collections).  
☐ 1 result found in stock (/faq#stock\_images).

Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection

1 of 10



STOCK - SPONSORED

**www.gettyimages.com** (<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/the-madras-army-a-...>)  
- First found on Sep 28, 2015



**www.sangfroidlife.com** ([http://www.sangfroidlife.com/2012\\_09\\_02012\\_09\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.sangfroidlife.com/2012_09_02012_09_01_archive.html)) (<http://www.s...>)  
- First found on Oct 1, 2013

**view image** (<http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-2EYSbfSBxu4/UGhClzDfQI/AAAAAAAAA3>)



**mikedashhistory.com** (<https://mikedashhistory.com/2010/09/07/2010/09/07/the-chupatty-movement/>) (...)  
- First found on Nov 14, 2019

**view image** (<https://allkindsofhistory.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/madras-arm>)



**durdgereport492.web.fc2.com** (<http://durdgereport492.web.fc2.com/free-essays/paper-20165295371/>) (<http://...>)  
- First found on Apr 9, 2017

**view image** (<http://cdn.historydiscussion.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/66.ji>)



**www.timetoast.com** (<https://www.timetoast.com/timelines/ap-e-timelines/ap-european-history-import...>)  
- First found on Apr 5, 2018

**view image** (<https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.timetoast.com/public/uploads/phot>)



**www.thoughtco.com** (<https://www.thoughtco.com/images-of-bri-images-of-british-india-4122914>) (<https://...>)  
- First found on Jul 3, 2017

**view image** ([https://ftmb.tqn.com/woKqo03CS9W\\_5\\_6MseYQ0B1aRPe=/735x0/z](https://ftmb.tqn.com/woKqo03CS9W_5_6MseYQ0B1aRPe=/735x0/z))



**www.rosspectehnika.com** (<http://www.rosspectehnika.com/the-the-cut-side-of-the-legs-i-ripped-were-a-...>)  
- First found on Dec 11, 2017

**view image** (<https://content.artofmanliness.com/uploads/2016/04/madras.jpg>)



**www.artofmanliness.com** (<https://www.artofmanliness.com/2016/04/13/style-staples-a-mans-guide-...>)  
- First found on Dec 2, 2017

**view image** (<https://content.artofmanliness.com/uploads/2016/04/madras.jpg>)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_21



## 134 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 1.7 seconds for: 2.6abtd6.png

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- ☐ 1 result found in collections (/faq#image\_collections).  
☐ 22 results found in stock (/faq#stock\_images).

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1 of 14



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**www.gettyimages.com** (<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/illustration/european-seated-on...>)

**detail/illustration/european-seated-on...**

- First found on May 22, 2012



**www.telegraph.co.uk** (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/bbc/10743407/BBC-...>)

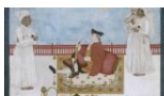
**culture/tvandradio/bbc/10743407/BBC-...**

- First found on Apr 10, 2016

**culture/tvandradio/bbc/10743407/BBC-...**

- First found on Nov 11, 2018

**view image** (<http://i.telegraph.co.uk/multimedia/archive/02871/East-India-Com>)

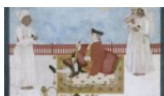


**www.heise.de** (<https://www.heise.de/tp/thema/S%C3%B6ldner>)

**tp/thema/Söldner** (<https://www.heise....>)

- First found on Feb 24, 2020

**view image** (<https://heise.cloudimg.io/width/899/q50.png-lossy-50.webp-lossy-5>)



**brightsblog.wordpress.com** (<https://brightsblog.wordpress.com/2017/07/12/>)

**2017/07/12/** (<https://brightsblog.wordpress.com/2017/07/12/>)

- First found on Jul 20, 2017

**view image** (<https://www.heise.de/scale/geometry/700/q75/tp/imgs/89/2/2/3/7/8/4/>)

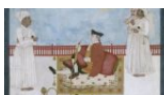


**www.heise.de** (<https://www.heise.de/tp/thema/S%C3%B6ldner>)

**tp/thema/Söldner** (<https://www.heise....>)

- First found on Feb 24, 2020

**view image** (<https://heise.cloudimg.io/width/1798/q30.png-lossy-30.webp-lossy-3>)



**www.heise.de** (<https://www.heise.de/tp/autoren/Thomas-Pany-3>)

**tp/autoren/Thomas-Pany-3458977.htm...**

- First found on Jul 16, 2017

**view image** (<https://1.f.ix.de/scale/geometry/380/q100/tp/imgs/89/2/2/3/7/8/4/>)



**qz.com** (<https://qz.com/india/1535109/how-the-british-empires-c>)

**india/1535109/how-the-british-empires-c**

- First found on Mar 18, 2019

**view image** ([https://cms.qz.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Portrait\\_of\\_East\\_India](https://cms.qz.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Portrait_of_East_India))



**lukehoney.typepad.com** ([http://lukehoney.typepad.com/the\\_greasy\\_spoon/herbs\\_and\\_spices/](http://lukehoney.typepad.com/the_greasy_spoon/herbs_and_spices/))

**the\_greasy\_spoon/herbs\_and\_spices/** (h...

- First found on Jan 8, 2015

**the\_greasy\_spoon/ingredients/** ([http://lukehoney.typepad.com/the\\_greasy\\_spoon/ingredients/](http://lukehoney.typepad.com/the_greasy_spoon/ingredients/))

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_22



## 58 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 1.1 seconds for: 2.6abtd4.png

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Filter by domain/collection

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**www.gettyimages.com** (<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/indian-spiritual-leader-stands-with-follower>)

- First found on Oct 31, 2014



**www.theglobeandmail.com** (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/the-contagious-courage-of-the-11th-panchajanya/article847883.ece/>)

- First found on Nov 2, 2014

view image (<http://static.theglobeandmail.ca/770/incoming/article847883.ece/>)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_23



## 0 matches

TinEye searched over 46.4 billion images but didn't find any matches for your search image. That's probably because we have yet to crawl any pages where this image appears. TinEye is always crawling, so try your search again soon. See our FAQ (/faq#why\_cant\_find) for other reasons we may not have found your image.

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_24





## 171 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 3.4 seconds for: 2.6abtd3.png

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Show only stock and collection results:

- ☐ 1 result found in collections (/faq#image\_collections).  
☐ 3 results found in stock (/faq#stock\_images).

Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection

1 of 18



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**www.gettyimages.com** (<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/illustration/illustration/emperor-akbar-in-c...>)  
- First found on Jan 12, 2015



**news.stanford.edu** (<http://news.stanford.edu/news/2015/september/2015/september/sanskrit-mugha...>)  
- First found on Jul 24, 2016  
**view image** (<http://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/stanford.ucomm.newsms.mei>)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_25



## 1 result

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 1.2 seconds for: 2.5abtd9.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection



**www.dw.com** (<https://www.dw.com/bn/%E0%A6%AC%E0%A6%B1bn/বাংলাদেশ-গণমাধ্যম-কতটুকু-স্বাধীন/a...>)  
- First found on Jul 20, 2019  
**view image** ([https://www.dw.com/image/18779293\\_303.jpg](https://www.dw.com/image/18779293_303.jpg)) (700 x 394, 59.5 KB)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_26



## 26 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 0.6 seconds for: 2.6abtbtd1.png

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- First found on Mar 18, 2020



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[www.zazzle.com \(https://www.zazzle.com/bangabandhu\\_sheikh\\_bangabandhu\\_sheikh\\_mujibur\\_rahman...](https://www.zazzle.com/bangabandhu_sheikh_bangabandhu_sheikh_mujibur_rahman...)

- First found on Aug 30, 2020



[golamfaruque.com \(https://golamfaruque.com/\)](https://golamfaruque.com/)

[golamfaruque.com/ \(https://golamfaruque.com/\)](https://golamfaruque.com/)

- First found on Nov 6, 2019

[view image \(https://golamfaruque.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/001-2-3.jp](https://golamfaruque.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/001-2-3.jp)



[golamfaruque.com \(https://golamfaruque.com/\)](https://golamfaruque.com/)

[golamfaruque.com/ \(https://golamfaruque.com/\)](https://golamfaruque.com/)

- First found on Nov 6, 2019

[view image \(https://golamfaruque.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/d2.jpg\) \(28](https://golamfaruque.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/d2.jpg)



[www.prothomalo.com \(https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/article/291661/খুনিদের-ফে...](https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/article/291661/খুনিদের-ফে...)

- First found on Oct 31, 2018

[view image \(https://paloimages.prothom-alo.com/contents/cache/images/400x](https://paloimages.prothom-alo.com/contents/cache/images/400x)



[www.jagonews24.com \(https://www.jagonews24.com/m/august-1](https://www.jagonews24.com/m/august-1)

[m/august-1](https://www.jagonews24.com/m/august-1)

- First found on May 20, 2019

[m/august-1](https://www.jagonews24.com/m/august-1)

- First found on Mar 27, 2019

[view all 3 matches](#)

[view image \(https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/images.jagonews24/me](https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/images.jagonews24/me)



[www.emersonkent.com \(http://www.emersonkent.com/history\\_1](http://www.emersonkent.com/history_1)

[history\\_notes\\_from\\_R.htm \(http://www...](http://www.emersonkent.com/history_1)

- First found on Sep 21, 2014

[view image \(http://www.emersonkent.com/images/mujibur\\_rahman\\_bio.jpg\) \(1](http://www.emersonkent.com/images/mujibur_rahman_bio.jpg)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_27



## 54 results

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[www.rtvonline.com \(https://www.rtvonline.com/sports/70956/%](https://www.rtvonline.com/sports/70956/%)

[sports/70956/বাংলাদেশ-দলের-শীলঙ্কা-স...](#)

- First found on Jan 6, 2020

[sports/70956/বাংলাদেশ-দলের-শীলঙ্কা-স...](#)

- First found on Aug 3, 2020

[view image \(https://www.rtvonline.com/assets/news\\_photos/2019/07/09/image](https://www.rtvonline.com/assets/news_photos/2019/07/09/image)



[www.rtvonline.com \(https://www.rtvonline.com/sports/112710/%](https://www.rtvonline.com/sports/112710/%)

[sports/112710/খেলছেন-মশরাফী-ব্যাটিং...](#)

- First found on Jan 2, 2021

[sports/112577/এবার-রাখির-লক্ষ্য-অলি...](#)

- First found on Jan 1, 2021

[view all 29 matches](#)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_28



## 4 results

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[www.banglanews24.com \(https://www.banglanews24.com/kids/t](https://www.banglanews24.com/kids/t)

[kids/news/bd/625897.details \(https://w...](https://www.banglanews24.com/kids/news/bd/625897.details)

- First found on Jan 12, 2020

[kids/news/bd/20818.details \(https://w...](https://www.banglanews24.com/kids/news/bd/20818.details)

- First found on Jan 11, 2020

[view all 100 matches](#)

[view image \(https://www.banglanews24.com/media/imgAll/2019December/sm/](https://www.banglanews24.com/media/imgAll/2019December/sm/)



[twitter.com \(https://twitter.com/ShahajadaShahP/status/125171](https://twitter.com/ShahajadaShahP/status/125171)

[ShahajadaShahP/status/125171013207...](https://twitter.com/ShahajadaShahP/status/125171013207...)

- First found on Apr 19, 2020

[ShahajadaShahP/status/125193605574...](https://twitter.com/ShahajadaShahP/status/125193605574...)

- First found on Apr 19, 2020

[view image \(https://pbs.twimg.com/profile\\_banners/363233907/1576607514/we](https://pbs.twimg.com/profile_banners/363233907/1576607514/we)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_29



## 1 result

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 4.4 seconds for: 2.5abtb4.png

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☐ 1 result found in collections (/faq#image\_collections).

Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection



COLLECTION

**commons.wikimedia.org** (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/C>

**wiki/Category:Photographs\_taken\_on\_...**

- First found on Jan 6, 2017

**view image** (<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/10/Ba>

**Source:** TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_30



## 7 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 1.2 seconds for: 2.5abtb3.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection



**www.jagonews24.com** (<https://www.jagonews24.com/education/>

**education/news/485177** (<https://www.j...>

- First found on Apr 28, 2019

**view image** (<https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/images.jagonews24/me>



**www.jagonews24.com** (<https://www.jagonews24.com/religion/ar>

**religion/article/584744** (<https://www.ja...>

- First found on Jul 21, 2020

**national/news/585100** (<https://www.ja...>

- First found on Jul 21, 2020

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**Source:** TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_31



## 2 results

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Show only stock and collection results:

☐ 1 result found in collections (/faq#image\_collections).

Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection



**hiveminer.com** ([https://hiveminer.com/flickr\\_hvmnd.cgi?method](https://hiveminer.com/flickr_hvmnd.cgi?method)

[flickr\\_hvmnd.cgi](https://hiveminer.com/flickr_hvmnd.cgi) ([https://hiveminer.com/flickr\\_hvmnd.cgi](https://hiveminer.com/flickr_hvmnd.cgi))  
- First found on May 1, 2017

**Tags/pohela/Recent** ([https://hiveminer.com/flickr\\_hvmnd.cgi](https://hiveminer.com/flickr_hvmnd.cgi))  
- First found on Jun 6, 2017

**view all 10 matches**

**view image** ([https://farm4.static.flickr.com/3938/33587231856\\_870a797eed\\_b.jpg](https://farm4.static.flickr.com/3938/33587231856_870a797eed_b.jpg))



COLLECTION

**commons.wikimedia.org** ([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Photographs\\_taken\\_on\\_Pohela](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Photographs_taken_on_Pohela))

**wiki/Category:Photographs\_taken\_on\_Pohela**  
- First found on Jan 31, 2017

**view image** (<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/fe/Bar>)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_32



## 9 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 0.6 seconds for: 2.4abtd5.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection



**rapidprnews.com** (<http://rapidprnews.com/news/detailsNews/8612>)

**news/detailsNews/8612** (<http://rapidprnews.com/news/detailsNews/8612>)  
- First found on Nov 21, 2019

**view image** ([http://rapidprnews.com/assets\\_admin/userprofilepicture/5c32224](http://rapidprnews.com/assets_admin/userprofilepicture/5c32224))



**www.sadhutihighschool.edu.bd** (<http://www.sadhutihighschool.edu.bd/>)

**www.sadhutihighschool.edu.bd/** (<http://www.sadhutihighschool.edu.bd/>)  
- First found on Nov 23, 2019

**view image** (<http://www.sadhutihighschool.edu.bd/uploads/posts/maxresdefault.jpg>)



**rapidprnews.com** (<http://rapidprnews.com/news/detailsNews/8612>)

**news/detailsNews/8612** (<http://rapidprnews.com/news/detailsNews/8612>)  
- First found on Nov 21, 2019

**view image** ([http://rapidprnews.com/assets\\_admin/userprofilepicture/9a61100](http://rapidprnews.com/assets_admin/userprofilepicture/9a61100))

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_33



## 6 results

Searched over 46.4 billion images (/faq#count) in 0.7 seconds for: 2.4abtd4.png

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Sort by best match

Filter by domain/collection



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[m/photo/international/event/7999](https://www.jagonews24.com/m/photo/international/event/7999) (htt...

- First found on Sep 23, 2020

[photo/international/event/7999](https://www.jagonews24.com/m/photo/international/event/7999) (<https://www.jagonews24.com/m/photo/international/event/7999>

- First found on Sep 25, 2020

[view image](https://cdn.jagonews24.com/media/PhotoGalleryNew/BG/2019Nov) (<https://cdn.jagonews24.com/media/PhotoGalleryNew/BG/2019Nov>

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_34



## 0 matches

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## 46 results

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**www.tvn.com.mt** (<https://www.tvn.com.mt/mt/news/offizi-bi-si>)  
**mt/news/offizi-bi-statwa-tal-gustizzja-f...**

- First found on Apr 7, 2018

**en/news/justice-statue-in-bangladesh-...**

- First found on Apr 23, 2018

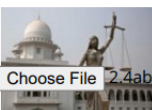
**view image** (<https://assets.tvn.com.mt/mt/wp-content/uploads/sites/1/2017/0>)



**statue.ecoev.us** (<http://statue.ecoev.us/supreme-court-building->)  
**supreme-court-building-statues/** (<http://statue.ecoev.us/supreme-court-building-statues/>)

- First found on Oct 18, 2017

**view image** (<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/>)



Choose File 2.4abtd3.png

**blog.bdnews24.com** (<https://blog.bdnews24.com/asrafulalam/21>)  
**asrafulalam/212415** (<https://blog.bdnews24.com/asrafulalam/212415>)

- First found on Oct 6, 2018

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**lawandotherthings.com** (<https://lawandotherthings.com/topics/>)  
**topics/courts/** (<https://lawandotherthings.com/topics/courts/>)

- First found on Nov 12, 2019

**blogs/** (<http://lawandotherthings.com/blogs/>)

- First found on Nov 12, 2019

**view image** (<https://i0.wp.com/lawandotherthings.com/wp-content/uploads/20>)



**www.rtvonline.com** (<https://www.rtvonline.com/others/15358/%>)  
**others/15358/বিচারক-নিয়োগ-নীতিমালা-...**

- First found on Jun 3, 2019

**others/15358/বিচারক-নিয়োগ-নীতিমালা-...**

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**www.dhakatribune.com** (<http://www.dhakatribune.com/2017/06>)  
**2017/06/12/** (<http://www.dhakatribune.com/2017/06/12/>)

- First found on Aug 19, 2017

**view image** (<http://www.dhakatribune.com/assets/uploads/2017/02/23-8.jpg>) (1)



**iurisdicchio-lexmalacitana.blogspot.ca** (<https://iurisdicchio-lexmalacitana.blogspot.ca>)

**2017/06/arte-y-derecho-lady-justice-co...**

- First found on Sep 26, 2017

**view image** (<https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-QTpnH4Lkxvo/WUTCHR5ZnCI/AAAAAAAAA>)

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**www.qatarliving.com** (<https://www.qatarliving.com/investment-investment-finance/posts/whats-salar...>)

- First found on Mar 13, 2019

**investment-finance/posts/how-be-onli...**

- First found on Mar 12, 2019

**view all 3 matches**

**view image** (<https://files.qatarliving.com/styles/440x270/s3/post/2019/03/12/7.j>)



**www.jagonews24.com** (<https://www.jagonews24.com/economy/r>)

**economy/news/528631** (<https://www.ja...>)

- First found on Feb 21, 2020

**view image** (<https://cdn.jagonews24.com/media/imgAllNew/BG/2019September>)

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_39



## 19 results

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**www.cnn.com** (<https://www.cnn.com/2017/12/01/asia/pope-bang>)

**2017/12/01/asia/pope-bangladesh-mya...**

- First found on Dec 25, 2017

**view image** (<https://cdn.cnn.com/cnnnext/dam/assets/171201132013-09-rohing>)



**www.eldeber.com.bo** (<http://www.eldeber.com.bo/mundo/Franc>)

**mundo/Francisco-recibe-a-los-rohinya...**

- First found on Jun 22, 2018

**view image** ([https://www.eldeber.com.bo/\\_export/1512146032939/sites/eldebe](https://www.eldeber.com.bo/_export/1512146032939/sites/eldebe))

Source: TinEye Reverse Image Search Results of Image DMO-II\_40



