

A STUDY ON THE POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES OF BANGLADESH THROUGH WHICH SHE CAN BE BRANDED AS A NATION

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ABSTRACT

Nation branding has evolved as an effective weapon for country to build her positive image in the world. This study identifies the most important and unique attributes of Bangladesh which she can be associated for branding. By collecting data from a sample of 750 local Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi expatriate and foreign people who know about Bangladesh, researchers conducted reliability test, descriptive analysis, Z test, Factor analysis and ANOVA test and identified a number of key findings as to the unique attributes of Bangladesh. The research shows that the most significant strength of Bangladesh is Cox's bazaar sea beach. The hospitability of Bangladeshis has been found as the most positive attribute to brand the country. Cox's bazaar as the longest sea beach of the world and the Sundarbans as the largest mangrove forest of the world, found to be the most attractive tourist spots in this country. Along with these two, the historic mosque city of Bagerhat, Somapura Mahavihara and Madhabkunda waterfall have mentionable attractiveness. Bangladesh can be branded through her exclusive handicrafts and readymade garments as well. The research also found that cheap labor, association of Bangladeshis with international mother language day and innovation of the concept of micro-credit can also be associated to brand this country. It shows that there is a significant difference in the opinion of the strata (local Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi expatriates and Foreigners) regarding the strength of these positive attributes. Thus, this study finds specific attributes related to people, export, tourism, culture, investment and even governance of Bangladesh which have enough strength to promote the country as a brand in the world.

Keywords: Bangladesh, Attributes, Brand, Nation, Cox's Bazaar, Tourism, Exports, People, Culture, Governance, Sundarbans.

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes a praiseworthy thing can earn the blame, sometimes the negatives make shadow over all the positives, and sometimes lie takes control over the truth. Not necessary to go far to find the example on the paradoxes, it is here, near and closer to us. The image of Bangladesh to the outer world is such an example. No matter, what the prospect and prosperity she holds, it is continuously and repeatedly branded by the media more negatively shadowing her positives. So, the problem the researchers identified was "Bangladesh is suffering from negative image." Whenever the international community thinks of Bangladesh, negative impression flashes into their mind and associations like corruption, child labor, underdeveloped human assets, internecine politics, bad investment climate, poor law and order, and recently Islamic terrorism had killed its image (Ahsan; 2005). Even, according to

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some people image crisis is the number one problem for Bangladesh. Places with a reputation for being poor, uncultured, backward, dangerous or corrupt find that everything they or their citizens try to achieve outside their own neighborhood is harder, and the burden is always on their side to prove that they don't conform to the national stereotype (Anholt; 2008). Compare the ease with which a mediocre tourist resort in a highly regarded country can gain glowing media coverage and celebrity endorsement, with the difficulties experienced by an unspoiled and unique destination in a country with a weak or poor reputation. Compare the way consumers in Europe or America will willingly pay more for an unknown 'Japanese' product than for an identical 'Korean' product that is probably made in the same Chinese factory. Compare how positively the international media will report on an ordinary piece of policy from the government of a country reputed to be fair, rich and stable, with the media silence or sharp criticism which greets a wise, brave and innovative policy from a country that's saddled with a negative image (Anholt; 2008). The way a country is perceived can make a critical difference to the success of its business, trade and tourism efforts, as well as its diplomatic and cultural relations with other nations (Zhao; 2008).

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Bangladesh with an acute crisis of its image in the outer world finds that everything they or their citizens wish to do on the global stage is difficult. So it's the time to brighten our nation's image by branding as a nation can be an effective way to do this. According to Ahsan (2005), in the competitive era of globalized world Bangladesh should concentrate on nation branding to uphold its image to the people, i.e. the tourists, investors and other stakeholders of the country. Simon Anholt, the pioneer of nation branding mentions that "in an era of globalization, countries have to compete with each other for the attention, respect and trust of investors, tourists, consumers, donors, immigrants, the governments of other nations and the media." He argues, that "a powerful and positive nation brand provides a crucial competitive advantage." Simon Anholt(1998) in his another article states that the nation branding is "about helping tourists, investors and consumers learn about the good things that are going on there to broaden and deepen their understanding of the country. Bhattachary in one of his writing mentioned that nation branding is not about pretending that everything is fine in a country, nor is it about discouraging investors and tourists from coming into the country. It is about letting others know about the talents and the opportunities that a country is endowed with. Rashid (2009) states that nation branding is the establishment of an image (internally and externally) for a country based on positive and relevant values and perceptions. So, like the countries with brand slogans, i.e., Malaysia with Truly Asia, India with Incredible India, Sri Lanka with the Pearl of the Indian Ocean, "Dubai: The Jewel in the Desert," "China: The Factory of the World," Bangladesh should also concentrate on the image building through the nation branding to brighten its image in the world. As countries are competing with each other for gaining the competitive advantage over other, the theme of nation branding accentuated the competition. For example, Italy gains its competitive advantage on the fashion and design, French with holidays and cooking, Germans on engineering, Japan on Technology, China on manufacturing, Bangladesh should also find the unique attributes of the country that can brand Bangladesh as a nation. So, at this point of study, the researchers concentrated on "what should be the attributes through which Bangladesh can be branded?" In 2005, Anholt introduced the Anholt-GMI Nation Brand Index to measure the power and appeal of each country's 'brand image' by examining six dimensions of national competence. The index provided a score addressing six core areas of a country depicted through a hexagon: Tourism, Culture, Governance, Exports, People and Investment (Zhao; 2008).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The central objective of this study is to explore the national competence of Bangladesh in all the six dimensions of Anholt-GMI Brand Index hexagon. To achieve the main objective, the study focuses on the following specific objectives:

- i) To identify the unique natural and archaeological heritage that can be focused to brand Bangladesh through tourism;
- ii) To find out the unique attributes of Bangladeshis that can be utilized to brand Bangladesh as a nation;
- iii) To explore the strong and unique resources of Bangladeshi culture that can be utilized to brand Bangladesh;
- iv) To find out the products which can be used to brand Bangladesh;
- v) To identify the positive attributes of Governance of Bangladesh that can be used to brand the country.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The subjective choice of the portion of the sampling frame of local Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi expatriate and foreigners may not be free from bias in this study. However, this is not considered a significant weakness of the study since the research result to be effective, extensive knowledge on branding, nation branding, image of Bangladesh in international arena and in-depth knowledge regarding strength of Bangladesh is required.

THEORITICAL REVIEW

When a nation advertises itself through an extensive brand building program, it is to get initial attention from prejudiced, ignorant, or somewhat knowledgeable folks to begin to form a better understanding about the nation (Phan; 2007). So, this section of the article focuses on the primary strength of the country which can be used to brand this country in the world at large so that the perceived image crisis of the country is overcome. Hence, an enhanced image may help to build political relations with other countries.

A good number of countries in the world try to brand the nation through their tourism sector. 'Egypt has once again proved that it is the number one tourist destination in terms of historical appeal. It has successfully positioned itself in this spot by leveraging its rich history, ancient sites and mystical structures such as its pyramids, which have contributed in making Egypt one of the most popular destinations for travellers from around the world' (Natarelli; 2008). A clean and green oasis, 100 percent pure, and the land of "Lord of the Rings" are some of New Zealand's signature images that have been shaped over the years, transforming the southwestern Pacific dairy country into the world's fourth most desired place to visit in 2006. Thus positioning Brand New Zealand through '100% Pure New Zealand' campaign, words like "fresh", "outdoors", "invigorating experiences" through the positioning lines of 'Space to Breathe' and 'Space to Think', has helped the country in its bid to promote itself as a destination for tourism and investment (Han; 2007). In order to take full advantage of the tourism potential held by Brazil, the government is exploring opportunities to attract foreign tourists and international investment through the creation of a brand image for the country (Dixon; 2006). A new brand proposition has been developed to help communicate Australia's positioning to the world "Life in a Different Light", which draws on the powerful link between the light, the land, and the life in Australia (Cousins; 2005). Similarly, "Malaysia: Truly Asia," "Dubai: The Jewel in the Desert," "Sri Lanka: The Pearl of the Indian Ocean," and many other countries has positioned or trying to position themselves as a brand focusing tourism sector.

In the Anholt-GMI Nation Brand Index, Anholt measured a country's tourism appeal in three major areas: natural beauty, historic buildings and monuments, and vibrant city life and urban attractions (Zhao; 2008). Bangladesh being a land of natural beauty has ample natural resources which can be used to brand this country. Bangladesh has 3 sites listed in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world (140,000 ha), lies on the delta of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers on the Bay of Bengal had been enlisted in 1997. Furthermore, the

World Heritage Committee has inscribed Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat and Ruins of the Buddhist Vihara at Paharpur on the World Heritage Listed in 1985 (UNESCO report, 2007). The ancient city, Bagerhat's infrastructure reveals considerable technical skill and an exceptional number of mosques and early Islamic monuments, many built of brick. Somapura Mahavira, or the Great Monastery at Paharpur, was a renowned intellectual centre until the 12th century. Its layout perfectly adapted to its religious function, this monastery-city represents a unique artistic achievement. With its simple, harmonious lines and its profusion of carved decoration, it influenced Buddhist architecture as far away as Cambodia (retrieved from discover.com). The Cox's Bazar Beach is considered as the longest natural beach in the world. The unbroken 125 km sandy beach along with a chain of hills that run parallel to the sea for almost the entire length, towering cliffs, colorful, ancient pagodas and Hindu temples is one of Bangladesh's major tourist attraction (worldnaturalwonders.com). Madhabkunda, the largest waterfall in Bangladesh, about 200 ft (61 m) high, situated in the northeast area is another key attraction for the tourists (wikipedia.org). Kantanagar Temple an eighteenth century brick temple, situated in the peaceful island hamlet of Kantanagar (Kantanagar) of Dinajpur town has gained eminence as an outstanding monument in Bengal for its fabulous terracotta embellishment (Banglapedia.com.bd). Ahsan Manzil is one of the most significant architectural monuments of Bangladesh. The palace has enjoyed a varied history, starting from being Rang Mahal of Sheikh Enayetullah, a Zamindar of Jamalpur pargana (Barisal) to the official Nawabi residence of Nawab Khwaja Abdul Ghani. This architectural monument, Ahsan Manzil has now been converted into a museum and a popular tourist attraction of old Dhaka (bangladeshmuseum.gov.bd). Thus, this article considers the Cox's bazaar, the Sundarbans, the Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat, the Somapura Mahavira, Madhabkunda waterfall, Kantaji Temple, Mahasthangarh and Sitakunda as key strength of Bangladesh which can be used to brand this country as a tourism spot.

This is what marketers call the "country of origin effect" – whether knowing where the product is made increases or decreases people's likelihood of purchasing it, and whether a country has particular strengths in science and technology, and has creative energy. A perceived association with particular industries rounds out that country's image in this space (Zhao; 2008). Anholt; (1998) in his articles, says Japan has built trust through its high-quality exports, directly with consumers around the world. German technology has been widely recognized in the world, Thailand has shown moderate to high capability in the Export Promotion sector (Anonymous; 2008). Thus like many other countries, Bangladesh also can promote their unique products to the world to build a positive image in the mind of consumers. Bangladesh is famous for its handicraft cottage industries. The prominent handicrafts in the early and Middle Ages were textiles, metal works, jewelry, wood works, cane and bamboo works, and clay and pottery. Later, jute and leather became the major raw materials of handicrafts (banglapedia.search.com.bd). Handicraft product is one of the most important export goods from Bangladesh. The country produces baskets, bags, pottery, paintings, toys, carpets, decoration pieces such as frames, boxes, candleholders etc. which can be produced out of jute, leather, wood and textile. The destinations of exports are Italy, the USA, France, Holland, Germany, Japan, Australia, Canada, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Denmark and Switzerland (Chamber of Commerce and Industry France Dhaka). The Bangladeshi leather remains one of the best qualities. More than 80% of the country's annual production is exported throughout the world. The products manufactured can either be finished or semi-finished such as gloves, sports shoes, bags/accessories, suitcases etc. The local leather industries export their products to 53 countries across the world. The list of jute made products include gunny bags, Sugar bags, Shopping bags, carpet backing cloth, Hessian clothes etc which are exported to many countries of the world (Chamber of Commerce and Industry France Dhaka). The production of light industrial materials is expanding in Bangladesh. It provides Bangladesh with a ground for generating important services. The country counts on more than 30,000 small production units, more or less mechanized, in light industry sector. All forms of machines/tools are manufactured in Bangladesh, starting from simple machines for domestic use to complex products for use in heavy industry. For example, the manufacture of "bicycles" that dominates the light industry in Bangladesh was exported mainly to the UK, Holland, Ukraine, Italy, Belgium, Denmark,

Malaysia, the USA, Australia and Saudi Arabia (Chamber of Commerce and Industry France Dhaka). 'All eyes are on Bangladesh because it is the only country which can produce quality textile items at least 20-30 per cent cheaper than China,' said Mr Steffen Mohler; (2009), director of Germany's Multiline Limited, a top trading firm. It will be the largest foreign investment in the country's fast growing textile sector, which accounts 75 per cent of its total exports, and will create jobs for 15,000 people when it goes into production early next year (Mohler; 2009). Pharmaceuticals products of Bangladesh are also being exported to a large number of countries of the world. Based on the literature survey, products which found to be promising and having huge potential to create a positive image for Bangladesh, has been considered for this study. In this case, researchers focus on handicrafts, readymade garments (RMG), light engineering and pharmaceuticals products.

This dimension focuses on three different important aspects of a country's people. The first concept – how welcoming the people of a country are – gets at a country's overall friendliness and manners. The second concept goes beyond manners, encompassing characteristics that we want in our close friends – fun, loyal, interesting, and in many cases, sharing our interests. The last concept assesses whether the people of a country would be valuable assets as employees. The responses to this question relate to preconceived notions of the intelligence, competence, and work ethic of a country's people (Zhao; 2008). Zhao also states that Canada has been rated as the most attractive country for its people's friendliness, efficiency at work and ethical standard. Bangladesh is a model of religious harmony and tolerance where people belonging to all caste and creed have been practicing their religions freely and peacefully and the minorities are well represented in all tiers of society as well as in the government machinery (minlaw.gov.bd). A beautiful communal harmony among the different religions has ensured a very congenial atmosphere. That is why, the UN has recognized the country as Moderate Muslim democratic country (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics; 2008). Bangladeshis are essentially simple in nature. Bangladesh has been treated as an amazing country of hospitality since time immemorial. Bangladeshis are noted for their valour and resilience as well as for their friendliness. Bangladeshis are also equally known for their creativity. They have an innate quality of open mindedness (minlaw.gov.bd). This study considers resilience nature of Bangladeshis, their hospitality, existing communal harmony in the country as the key characteristics of the people of this country which can be associated to brand Bangladesh.

A country's power to attract talent and capital is measured not only by whether people would consider studying, working and living in that country but also by the country's economic prosperity, equal opportunity, and ultimately the perception that it is a place with a high quality of life (Zhao; 2008). Many countries in the world branded them as a centre of investment and a place of quality life. For example, Harcourt; (2005) states that "The survey showed Australia is a place to immigrate to or invest in. In addition, The Australian economy's success is widely admired and Australia is regarded as a place that 'works' – a good place to travel to and do business with." Similarly, Phan; (2007) mentioned that Singapore runs some television advertisements in their local channel that paints Singapore as the high-tech hub of Asia, attempting to attract skilled foreign professionals to make Singapore their homes. The brandline—Asia's world city—compliments the identity and underscores Hong Kong's role as an international hub for business, arts, and culture (Associates; 2008). Bangladesh can be a land of opportunities for the foreign investors if it can be branded. Analysts and foreign investors said tens of millions of laborers who work in poor conditions for less than \$50 a month are boosting Dhaka's growth at a time when buyers such as Wal-Mart are looking for cheaper sources (Chen; 2009). Bangladesh has gained competitive advantage in the world market for its cheap labor. Dhaka - an army of cheap labor has made Bangladesh a hotspot for growth as the rest of Asia struggles through the global financial crisis and observers say the country must now exploit its advantages. Chen also mentions that Taiwanese entrepreneurs who played a key role in transforming China into the world's top performing economy are rushing to Bangladesh to look for land to build footwear and textile factories. With China finding it increasingly difficult to mass-produce low-cost items at discount rates, buyers have turned their attention to Bangladesh where textiles and footwear

can be made cheaply. According to Chen; (2009) such has been the rush of investors that Bangladesh's export processing zone (EPZ) authority says it is running short of plots to allocate to the incoming foreign investors. Bangladesh has not only the cheap labor but also the plenty of natural resources which can be utilized to attract investors. Since all industrial and other economic activities rely on electricity or other means of power, the primary energy production can be considered as an indicator of a country's economic strength and the standard of living in a society (Khalequzzaman; 2008). He also says that there have been significant discoveries of commercial energy resources in Bangladesh specially natural gas and coal. Successful exploration and exploitation of these energy resources can boost the economic development through industrial growth. Bangladesh has huge deposits of hard rock in its north-west region. Proper excavation of hardrock may fulfil the country's demand for constructing roads, bridges, dams and embankments (Akhtar; 2008). Solar energy is plentiful in Bangladesh. Generation of electricity using solar power is environmentally feasible. Development of solar power should be a top priority for Bangladesh in the 21st century (Khalequzzaman; 2008). Wind power can be another resource which has a high potential in Bangladesh. Availability of resources like gas, coal, hard rock, limestone, white clay, glass sand and renewable energy like solar and wind energy and their proper application to overall development activities are the key factors for the economic growth of the nation. And the economic condition of the nation plays the key role to attract foreign investors to invest in a country. Considering the huge potential of these resources, this research considers cheap labor, manpower and energy resources as unique strength to brand Bangladesh.

“Cultural aspects include perceptions of a country’s heritage, its contemporary cultural “vibes” from music, films, art and literature, as well as the country’s excellence in sports (Zhao; 2008). French culture has been worldwide recognized for its antiquity, depth and richness. It focuses its culture to attract the tourists. As like France, Bangladesh is heir to a rich cultural legacy. In two thousand or more years of its conquered history, many illustrious dynasties of kings and Sultans ruled the country and have left their mark in the shape of magnificent cities and monuments. Apart from this, the century old cultural traditions can be viewed in innumerable tangible and intangible heritages -in archaeological sites, in sculptures, in stones and terracotta, in architectures, museums, archives, libraries, classical music, songs and dance, paintings, dramas, folk arts, festivals, games as well as ethnic cultural activities (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics; 2006). Languages are the most powerful instruments of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage. The spirit of sacrifice of the Language Martyrs is deeply rooted in the history of the Bengali Language, culture and tradition. Bengalese became the first people in the history of mankind to shed blood for their mother tongue. The unique heritage of Bangladeshi people took on a global significance when UNESCO declared the 21st of February as the International Mother Language Day. The International Day has been observed every year since February 2000 to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism (United Nation; 2008). Bangalees have a rich literary heritage. The earliest available specimen of Bengali literature is about a thousand years old. The era of modern Bengali Literature began in the late nineteenth century. Rabindranath Tagore, the Nobel Laureate is a vital part of Bangalee culture. Bangladesh has a rich tradition of folk songs, with lyrics rooted into vibrant tradition and spirituality, mysticism and devotion. Such folk songs also revolve round several other themes, including love themes. In relatively modern context, Rabindra Sangeet and Nazrul geeti form precious cultural heritage of Bangladesh (Art of Bengal; 2008). The greatest artist of Bangladesh, and probably one of the greatest artists of the Indian subcontinent was Zoynul Abedin. Bangladesh is also famous for its distinctive culinary tradition, and delicious food, snacks and savories. Boiled rice constitutes the staple food, and is served with a variety of vegetables, fried as well as curries, thick lentil soups, and fish and meat preparations of beef, mutton and chicken (Art of Bengal; 2008). Recently Bangladesh has drawn attention of the world through playing cricket in international level. So, based on the literature and the qualitative survey, the researchers considered folk songs, Tagor song, Nazrul song, association of Bangla language movement with International mother language day, traditional Bangladeshi food, paintings and sports (cricket) are the cultural strength of Bangladesh which can be used to promote the country as a brand.

This aspect incorporates competency and honesty of government, respect for citizens' rights and fair treatment, as well as global behavior in the areas of international peace and security, environmental protection, and world poverty reduction (Zhao; 2008). Zhao also states that Switzerland's number one ranking for governance is its best example of a "direct democracy" in the world, and with one of the strongest and most effective welfare states, Switzerland has been seen as a model of good public policy for decades. Furthermore, its trademark policy of neutrality has earned a global reputation as a peaceful partner. A country with enormous problems in Governance also has something to focus in the international community. It is not the West helping the developing world, but an idea from Bangladesh that could help Britain's underprivileged. The Economic Secretary to the Treasury Patricia Hewitt MP has announced new measures to encourage credit unions formed by poor people to expand. Many other countries have begun copying this model (bbc.co.uk). UNICEF Representative in Bangladesh called Mr. Yunus's work "an outstanding contribution to humanity," adding that "micro credit programmes have contributed to improve sustain ably the status of the poorest women – in Bangladesh and many other countries"(UNICEF website; 2008). So, the concept of microcredit system has been taken into consideration for this study to associate it with branding Bangladesh.

METHODOLOGY

A single set of questionnaires in English had been developed for each respondent group. To differentiate the opinions of the respondent groups, the questionnaire was started with a multiple choice question. The aim was to identify the status of the respondents that is whether the respondent was a foreigner, a Bangladeshi expatriate or a local Bangladeshi. To identify the strong and unique attribute of Bangladesh which can be associated to brand her, a set of factors (32) had been identified from the secondary study and primary qualitative research. KII approach had been followed to conduct the qualitative research. In the questionnaire for each of those factors a statement had been provided to the respondents. A seven-point Likert scale was used, where the respondents had to score each factor on the basis of their level of agreement with the statements. The seven-point scale indicated 1 as highly disagree while 7 meant highly agree. It was also mentioned that the gaps between the scores were uniformly distributed.

The coding of the questionnaires was done once the survey was started. The questionnaires mainly comprised of continuous scales and a categorical scale. For both categorical and continuous scales multiple coding was used. Data analyses were done using reliability test, Z test, descriptive analysis, ANOVA test and factor analysis.

The target population of this research was local people and the foreigners who know about Bangladesh. This study was a cross sectional study as various segments of the population were sampled at a single point in time and it was not needed to analyze the response continuity of the respondents over time. Since there was no fixed sampling frame for the population of interest and the research did not depict the population, the sampling method that was followed was non probability sampling. For the local people the sampling frame had been defined as the students of the universities of Dhaka city, marketing and branding experts, journalists at national desks and media experts. The foreign diplomats, foreign students and foreigners have been considered as another sampling frame. A multistage non probability sampling method has been employed to collect data from the local people. Some sort of judgment was required to identify the branding and marketing experts, journalists, academicians and media experts who are working on branding and it was followed by convenience sampling to access the respondents. A total number of 450 samples have been taken from the sampling frame of local people. Furthermore, snowball sampling procedure was applied to collect data through e-mails from the foreigners who know about Bangladesh and residing outside of Bangladesh. Some known Bangladeshi (80) residing outside the country were the initial respondents who referred to some other selected additional respondents (120) where the basis of selection was knowledge about Bangladesh. Again few foreign diplomats (3) based on convenience and foreign students (97) studying

at Islamic University of Technology (IUT) had also been sampled randomly to yield a total sample size of 750 including local Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi expatriates and foreigners. In mid 2008, several university campuses, government and non-government organizations and several foreign embassies were visited and questionnaire had been filled up by the respondents. Questionnaire was also sent through E-mail to get data from the Bangladeshi expatriates and foreigners who know about Bangladesh.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The most commonly used indicator of internal consistency is Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Ideally, this coefficient should be above 0.7 (Pallant; 2001). In this study, the attributes/features considered to brand Bangladesh have strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient estimated at 0.910.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on the preference of the respondents to unique or strong attributes of Bangladesh through which she can be branded. The table shows that the hospitality of Bangladeshis having a mean value of 6.66 has been rated as the most preferred attribute to brand Bangladesh. This may be attributed to the fact that since time immemorial foreigners residing or visiting this country have been allured by the hospitality of Bangladeshis and it has been disseminated through word of mouth. Cox's bazaar has been found as the second preference to brand Bangladesh. Cox's Bazar as the longest sea beach of the world has been a key attraction to the local as well as foreign tourists. Moreover it has drawn attention worldwide being at one of the top 3 positions in the selected list of new 7 wonders of the nature for more than a year. The largest mangrove forest Sundarbans follows the list.

Table 1: Ranking of the attributes (sector wise)

Sector wise Features	Mean	Ranking Sector wise	Overall Ranking
Tourism			
Strength of Cox's Bazar in promoting BD	6.66	1	2
Strength of Sundarbans in promoting BD	6.6	2	3
Strength of Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat in promoting BD	5.45	3	9
Strength of Somapura Mahavihara in promoting BD	5.44	4	10
Strength of Madhabkunda waterfall in promoting BD	4.8	5	15
Strength of Mhastangarh in promoting BD	4.54	6	20
Strength of Sitakunda in promoting BD	4.14	7	24
Strength of Kantaji Temple in promoting BD	3.98	8	27
Strength of Ahsan Manjil in promoting BD	3.96	9	28
Export			
Strength of RMG in promoting BD	5.41	1	11
Strength of Pharmaceutical products in promoting BD	4.78	2	17
Strength of Handicrafts in promoting BD	4.64	3	19
Strength of manpower in promoting BD	4.19	4	23
Strength of light engineering in promoting BD	3.59	5	29
People			
Strength of hospitality of the people in promoting BD	6.09	1	1
Strength of the resilience nature of the people in promoting BD	5.6	2	4
Strength of communal harmony in promoting BD	5.31	3	12

Culture			
Strength of International Mother Language Day in promoting BD	6.38	1	5
Strength of traditional BD food in promoting BD	5.63	2	7
Strength of folk song in promoting BD	4.78	3	16
Strength of Sports(cricket) in promoting BD	4.06	4	25
Strength of Nazrul song in promoting BD	4.05	5	26
Strength of painting in promoting BD	3.13	6	30
Strength of Tagore song in promoting BD	3.04	7	31
Strength of Sufism in promoting BD	2.92	8	32

Immigration and Investment

Strength of cheap labor in promoting BD	5.91	1	6
Strength of coal in promoting BD	5.02	2	13
Strength of solar energy availability in promoting BD	4.92	3	14
Strength of hard rock in promoting BD	4.68	4	18
Strength of gas in promoting BD	4.41	5	21
Strength of wind energy availability in promoting BD	4.22	6	22

Governance

Strength of the concept of microcredit in promoting BD	6.18	1	8
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It is observed from the table (Table 1) that to promote tourism sector, except for Kantaji Temple and Ahsan Manjil all the natural beauties(Cox's Bazar, the Sundarbans, Madhabkunda waterfall, Sitakunda) and historic buildings and monuments(the Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat, the Somapura Mahavira, Mahasthangarh) have a mean score above the average score of 4. The table also shows that Bangladesh to be branded as export oriented country, all the variables(handicrafts, ready made garments(RMG), manpower and pharmaceuticals products) except light engineering have a mean score above the average score of 4 where Ready Made Garments(RMG) tops this list. It can be reasoned here that Bangladesh earns major portion of its foreign exchange from RMG sector. Due to the lower production cost of quality Ready made garments in Bangladesh, it has got a competitive edge in the global market. Again this country is familiar to the world due to the natural calamity it faces each year and the way her poor people struggles and restarts their bare handed lives smilingly. Thus, the resilience nature of the people received a higher preference in the list. Along with hospitality of Bangladeshis and their resilience nature, existing communal harmony in the country also have a very moderate mean score. The result in the table shows that Bangladesh can be branded as a land of opportunities for investment due to its cheap labor and the energy resources it possesses. The strength of cheap labor to promote this country has a mean score of 5.91 which is well above the average mean score. The respondents have moderate level of belief that storage of natural energy like coal, wind energy, gas, solar energy and hard rock can be a potential sector to attract the investors in Bangladesh. To promote nation brand Bangladesh, the association of Bengali language with International Mother Language Day might be a key cultural aspect which is followed by traditional Bangladeshi food. The only governance is aspect considered for this study, Micro Credit concept, has been rated fourth in the list to brand this country. The acceptance of this concept by many governments may be attributed to this preference.

To find out whether any particular attributes have above average satisfaction, the following hypothesis has been tested for each attributes.

Null hypothesis: Respondents have an average level of believe that Bangladesh can be branded as a nation to the world with each of the attributes (i.e. $H_0=4$).

Alternate hypothesis: Respondents have an above average level of believe that Bangladesh can be branded as a nation to the world with each of the attributes ($H_A >4$).

Table 2: Results for Tests of Hypotheses for Above-average believe with Bangladeshi attributes

Feature/Attributes	Calculated z value for hypothesized population mean=4	Result
International Mother Language Day	4.923***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Traditional BD food	6.412***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Coal	5.339***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Painting	1.904	Not enough evidence to reject null hypothesis
Hospitality of the people	6.750***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Cheap labor	6.062***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Sundarbans	5.791	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Resilience nature of the people	4.121	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat	5.120	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Somapura Mahavihara	4.449***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Tagore song	-1.000	Not enough evidence to reject null hypothesis
Solar energy	4.021	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
The concept of micro credit	5.732	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Ahsan Manjil	2.236***	Not enough evidence to reject null hypothesis
Madhabkunda waterfall	4.716***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Folk song	7.838	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Pharmaceutical products	5.702	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Hard rock	4.890	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Handicrafts	6.956	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Mohastangarh	4.354	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Light engineering	-1.000	Not enough evidence to reject null hypothesis
Wind energy	11.449***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Manpower	6.462	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Sitakunda	7.587	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Sports(cricket)	4.303***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Nazrul song	5.908	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Kantaji Temple	-1.000	Not enough evidence to reject null hypothesis
Communal harmony	4.303***	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Gas	5.712	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Cox's Bazar	6.085	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Ready Made Garments(RMG)	7.345	H_A is established; H_0 is rejected
Sufism	-1.724	Not enough evidence to reject null hypothesis

Source: Field survey data, 2007 (Note: *** means significant at 1% level)

Table 3: Comprehensive ranking of the attributes

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Ranking
Strength of hospitality of the people in promoting BD	6.66	0.923	750	1
Strength of Cox's Bazar in promoting BD	6.6	1.384	750	2
Strength of Sundarbans in promoting BD	6.38	1.442	750	3
Strength of the resilience nature of the people in promoting BD	6.18	1.208	750	4
Strength of International Mother Language Day in promoting BD	6.09	1.247	750	5
Strength of cheap labor in promoting BD	5.91	1.5	750	6
Strength of traditional BD food in promoting BD	5.63	1.552	750	7
Strength of the concept of microcredit in promoting BD	5.6	1.797	750	8
Strength of Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat in promoting BD	5.45	1.494	750	9
Strength of Somapura Mahavihara in promoting BD	5.44	1.696	750	10
Strength of RMG in promoting BD	5.41	1.585	750	11
Strength of communal harmony in promoting BD	5.31	1.423	750	12
Strength of coal in promoting BD	5.02	1.94	750	13
Strength of solar energy availability in promoting BD	4.92	1.925	750	14
Strength of Madhabkunda waterfall in promoting BD	4.8	1.721	750	15
Strength of folk song in promoting BD	4.78	1.6	750	16
Strength of Pharmaceutical products in promoting BD	4.78	1.681	750	17
Strength of hard rock in promoting BD	4.68	1.926	750	18
Strength of Handicrafts in promoting BD	4.64	1.745	750	19
Strength of Mhastangarh in promoting BD	4.54	1.253	750	20
Strength of gas in promoting BD	4.41	1.76	750	21
Strength of wind energy availability in promoting BD	4.22	1.924	750	22
Strength of manpower in promoting BD	4.19	1.155	750	23
Strength of Sitakunda in promoting BD	4.14	1.329	750	24
Strength of Sports(cricket) in promoting BD	4.06	1.432	750	25
Strength of Nazrul song in promoting BD	4.05	1.397	750	26
Strength of Kantaji Temple in promoting BD	3.98	1.395	750	27
Strength of Ahsan Manjil in promoting BD	3.96	1.193	750	28
Strength of light engineering in promoting BD	3.59	1.517	750	29
Strength of painting in promoting BD	3.13	1.083	750	30
Strength of Tagore song in promoting BD	3.04	1.47	750	31
Strength of Sufism in promoting BD	2.92	1.077	750	32

The results derived after testing the above hypothesis for each attribute (Table 2) show that respondents do not consider that Kantaji Temple, Ahsan Manjil, light engineering, painting, tagore song, sufism have that much strength to be associated to brand Bangladesh. Apart from those attributes all others can be utilized to brand Bangladesh. Table 3 shows the comprehensive ranking of all the attributes considered.

The result of ANOVA shows whether there is any significant difference among the opinions of the several categories of respondents (Foreigners, Bangladeshi expatriate and local Bangladeshi). It is observed from the result that except for the strength of painting, Tagore song, Sufism, Cox's bazar, Sundarbans and hospitality of people, the respondents' opinion vary significantly regarding the strength of the rest of the attributes of Bangladesh. These findings indicate that local Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi expatriate and foreigners agree that Cox's bazaar, Sundarbans and hospitality of Bangladeshis have reasonable strength to be associated with nation brand Bangladesh while painting, Tagore song and Sufism do not have the same. Furthermore, even though the concept of micro credit, association of Bangladeshis with International Mother Language Day, cheap labor, traditional Bangladeshi food has been found as very strong unique attributes of this country in the descriptive

statistics, there is a significant variation among the three categories of respondents' opinion regarding the strength of those attributes in branding Bangladesh.

CONCLUSION

This study provides very useful information for the policy makers for both government and non government institutions who are involved in branding our nation. The findings suggest that the key strength of Bangladesh is its people. Mainly, the hospitality and resilience nature of Bangladeshi people have been recognized worldwide. Natural beauties like the longest sea beach of the world, Cox's bazaar; the largest mangrove forest, the Sundarbans have been rated as other unique strengths of Bangladesh. Historic mosque city of Bagerhat, Madhabkunda water fall and Somapura Mahavihara along with those two have been found attractive places for the tourists. Again people through out the world have an attraction to the Bangladeshi traditional food. If we want to brand Bangladesh as a land of tourists, we can associate both the people related attributes and attractive foods of the country along with her historic and natural beauties. Bangladesh can also be branded through its RMG, exclusive handicrafts and cheap labor. Association of Bangladeshi with international mother language day and innovation of micro credit concept by Bangladeshi can uphold the image if it can be promoted appropriately. Thus, this study identified few key strength related to its tourism, people, culture, export, investment or governance sector which can be utilized to brand her. In fact, the rat race going on even among the developed nations to rebrand them to woo tourists and investors has placed developing countries into a vital reality to go forward outperforming others. So, as a developing country it is high time Bangladesh starts nation branding in no time. This research might be considered as the first step to brand our country and will pave a way to the policy makers to create a brand Bangladesh.

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