

Impact of Promotion on Destination Reputation: A Case of Gujarat

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Abstract India is unparalleled in its beauty, uniqueness, rich culture, heritage and history. The Government of India has been initiating various advertising campaigns such as the Incredible India to promote India as an attractive tourist destination. Different states in India like Goa, Kerala, Gujarat, etc. have also been promoting themselves as tourist destinations by using such campaigns for attracting more tourists in their states. Gujarat has been a front runner in adopting innovative promotional strategies; the state government is encouraging the tourists to discover its century's old history. The "Khushboo Gujarat Ki" ad-campaign has increased tourism in Gujarat, thereby suggesting the relevance of promotion in brand building of a destination.

Tourism destinations are complex organizations (Buhalis, 2003) which need to manage their reputation (Inversini, Cantoni, & Buhalis, 2009) vis-a-vis other destinations in order to attract larger number of tourists. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly critical for destinations to measure and manage their reputations. (Passow, Fehlmann, & Grahlow, 2005).

The present paper is an empirical study which attempts to analyze the Ad content of "Khushboo Gujarat Ki" campaign of Gujarat and its impact on the reputation of the destination.

Keywords: Destination Marketing, Destination Reputation, Ad-content, Country Rep Trak, Khushboo Gujarat Ki.

INTRODUCTION

The evolving Indian tourism and hospitality industry has become one of the key forces contributing towards the growth of the services sector in India. The industry facilitates employment generation, generates foreign exchange for the country, helps local and host populations by offering economic activities and thus, is referred as a sun rise industry. India celebrated for its rich cultural heritage and unique beauty is unparalleled as a tourism product and has also been aggressively pursuing the promotion of tourism both internationally as well as in the domestic market. Travel and tourism sector in India has been witnessing steady growth in the past few years. This is evident from the fact that total tourist visits have increased at a rate of 16.3 per cent per annum from 577 million tourists in 2008 (India Tourism Statistics 2008, Ministry of Tourism) to 1057 million tourists in 2012 (India Tourism Statistics 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, Ministry of Tourism).

In this direction, the Government of India has been initiating various communication programs to promote India's culture and tourist attractions. One such initiative has been the advertising campaigns such as the Incredible India, Atithi Devo Bhavah. The Government of India adopted the phrase "Incredible India" and launched the campaign in 2002 to promote India as a tourism destination to the global audiences. In 2008, the Ministry of Tourism further launched a campaign targeted at the local population to educate them regarding good behavior and etiquette when dealing with foreign tourists. This campaign titled 'Atithidevo Bhava', (Guests are like God) aimed at creating awareness about the effects of tourism. It also attempted to encourage a sense of responsibility towards tourists and regain the confidence of foreign tourists towards India as a preferred tourism destination. The concept has been designed to complement the 'Incredible India' campaign. In 2009, the government extended the Incredible India campaign to the domestic tourism sector as well. These advertising campaigns have been able to showcase different aspects of Indian culture and

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history like yoga, spirituality, etc. and project India as an attractive tourist destination. The major tourist attraction in States like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh are the holy pilgrimage sites in these states, which highlights the importance of pilgrimage tourism in India. Whereas, other states like Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Gujarat and Karnataka have invested in tourism infrastructure creation in the state, and thus garnered the attention of the non-pilgrim tourists.

Gujarat as a tourist destination is unique and has a lot to offer to its tourists. Apart from being the abode of the majestic Asiatic Lion, Gujarat offers everything in the tourism landscape including ancient heritage sites, existing wild life, magnificent temples, white pristine desert and exquisite handicrafts. In addition it has ancient history, art and culture depicted in the form of ancient cave paintings to historic wall paintings, natural and manmade caves, all these features unite with each other to form a phenomenal environment. Furthermore, Gujarat is bestowed with one of the longest coast lines in India and thus has a lot to offer on the front of beach / coastal tourism. Gujarat is also home to India's most vibrant and colourful festivals like Navratri, Rann Utsav and International Kite Festival. Showcasing the uniqueness of Gujarat as a tourist destination and to endorse rich culture and tradition of the state, the "Khushboo Gujarat Ki" campaign with brand-ambassador Amitabh Bachchan has increased tourism in Gujarat by 14 percent per annum. The promotional campaign has been a huge success and has also been awarded with three prestigious National Tourism Awards (Vibrant Gujarat 2013, Industrial Extension Bureau Gujarat, 2013). The "Khushboo Gujarat Ki" campaign has enabled Gujarat Tourism to market key destinations of the state in a big way and has also driven tourist influx to Gujarat with an increase of 54 lakh visitors in the last two years (Vibrant Gujarat 2013, Industrial Extension Bureau Gujarat, 2013). Viewing this increase, Gujarat Tourism is eyeing a 25 percent growth in tourist arrivals to touch 25 million in the new financial year (India as a Hotspot for Inbound Tourism, FICCI, 2013).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

While tourism can be regarded as a hedonic consumption experience (Dann, 1996), it is represented by stories which acts as a attraction system of the tourism destination and which define its cultural identity (e.g., stories or narratives about national histories, literatures, popular culture; narratives on origins; traditions; foundational myths; and national folklore). Destinations are treated as a set of attributes by some whereas others treat it as a set of cultural and symbolic meanings and contested 'realities.' Thus, while Buhalis (2000) defines a tourism destination as a 'geographical region which is understood by its visitors as

a unique entity, with a political and legislative framework for tourism marketing and planning,' Saarinen (2004) understands a tourist destination as a socio-culturally produced space, the result of constantly evolving discursive practices (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride, 2012). Destinations are complex objects, and can be considered as a social construct based on individual and group emotional thoughts about a place (Lawson & Baud-Bovy, 1977). Destination as a term is probably of most significance to marketing professionals and academicians, and therefore, destinations exist only through the acts of marketing. In other words, a 'place' only becomes a 'destination' through the narratives, images and stories communicated by tourism promotional material (Morgan, et al., 2012). Therefore, branding of a destination is related to the process of destination image communication to a specific audience (Govers & Go, 2009). It is associated with combining all the attributes associated with the place (i.e. its products, and services from various industries such as agriculture, tourism, sports, arts, investment, technology, education, etc.) under one concept, which creates a unique identity and personality of the destination and differentiates it from its competition. Most importantly, branding requires a vision and mission about the destination and its future success. Place branding as a marketing activity consolidates and reinforces the recollection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience, with the intended purpose of creating an image that influences consumers' decisions to visit the destination in question, as opposed to an alternative one (Ritchie & Ritchie, 1998; Blain, Levy & Ritchie, 2005). In other words, a place brand is a representation of a place's identity by building a favourable internal (with those who deliver the experience) and external (with visitors) image; leading to favourability, brand satisfaction and loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality (Govers, 2013). It is a promise to the consumer, an expectation of performance and a mark of integrity and reputation (Travis, 2000). It builds up continuously in the minds of the destination's consumers and it is affected by experiences, memories (Deutsch & Real, 2002) and other visitors' opinions. A destination needs to have unique elements, which differentiate it from its competitors and establish an image in the mind of the consumer.

Tourism Destinations (TDs) are considered as organizational units of the tourism industry, and as more complex structures in terms of management and coordination (Buhalis, 2000; Murphy, Pritchard, & Smith, 2000; Presenza, Sheehan, & Ritchie, 2005; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). These are competitive units in the global tourism industry and in order to stay competitive they need to present themselves to the market in a coherent and strategic manner (Bieger & Laesser, 2004). To remain competitive in the market, destinations need to develop specific core competences in order to attract and convince consumers. This goal can be achieved by showing the benefits and characteristics of the

products (e.g. marketing and advertisement campaigns) or by offering discounts and special offers (e.g. price benefits) or even by using and showing the reputation of the firms and their products (Dowling, 2001). Innovative tourism destinations are urban and rural places which enhance the well-being of their populations through tourism by embracing new ways of thinking and sustainable living. These places are attractive to live in and visit. The places which are able to command attention irrespective of their size or diplomatic influence are clever places (Morgan, et al., 2012). As these places compete in attracting visitors, most of them follow an approach of promoting a place brand that brings together the qualities which it has in order to generate memorable positive associations with the consumers and powerful place brand equity (Morgan, et al., 2012). When a brand is established in a consumer's mind it can trigger associations with smaller destinations within the area the brand represents. In the case of a state, the brand name provides an umbrella for the state's other destinations, as well as other business entities, which benefit from its greater exposure. The success of a destination brand also depends on how much the smaller entities in a destination embrace and support it in order to reinforce the brand identity to the visitors and increase its reputation.

Positive reputation of a destination becomes the key for competitiveness and is considered as an "asset" for the destination. For place with a positive reputation it becomes easier to fight for attention, resources, people, jobs, and money. A positive place reputation builds place competitiveness and cements it as somewhere worth visiting (Morgan, et al., 2012). A place's reputation reflects how others see it and how it sees itself; its management moves its reputation forward to where it wants to be seen. Reputations of destinations are further linked to supportive behaviours of the prospective tourists which includes visiting, investing, living, working etc. at a highly reputed destination. The existing literature also shows the correlation between supportive behaviours and external reputation. Reputation management offers a framework in which stakeholder expectations are managed through thorough internal and external communications programs. This framework could also apply to destinations, because the destination, much like the corporation is a competitive unit, made up of smaller interdependent units, which needs to legitimize its operation amongst its stakeholders (Ermen, 2006). Moreover, the existing studies indicate that a more informed tourist is more likely to return i.e. to visit again, suggesting the presence of a reputation mechanism in case of destinations (Ledesma, Navarro & Rodríguez, 2005). Positioning of destination brands is done by using the destination's strong points and building upon them. A key imperative for a destination brand is to be believable and exhibit some of the core aspects of the destination even though they might not be widely known. Besides, it is equally critical to understand the position of

the destination in the minds of the consumers so that an appropriate positioning strategy is formulated.

Today most countries have a destination brand, whether it is 100% 'Pure New Zealand,' 'South Africa it's Possible,' 'Malayasia truly Asia', 'YourSingapore,' or 'Incredible India.' The top 4 destination brands as voted for by their peers are: New Zealand, India, Spain, and Australia (Morgan, et al., 2012).

India's Incredible India campaign has aided a lot in branding it as a unique destination. The Incredible India campaign was started by the govt. of India in 2002. Since then, tourism in India has grown more in value than volume. It has grown from US\$ 2.8 billion to US\$ 11.5 billion whereas the numbers grew from about 2.3 million to about 5.6 million (Business Standard, 2009). The 'Incredible India' campaign, for instance, works by showing gorgeous photos of India that are believable because they are in harmony with what the majority of their target audience thinks it knows about that nation. The target audiences already have a story in their mind about India and they are happy to have their opinion reinforced by a romantic advertisement. Following the similar road map, different states in India like Rajasthan, Goa, Kerala, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, etc. have also been promoting themselves as tourist destinations by using such campaigns for building a brand for themselves and attracting more tourists in their states. Thus, advertising has emerged as an effective tool for promoting the places as tourism destinations by imparting unexplored facts, information and experiences related to the destination. In fact, advertising is often compared with "brain surgery" as it shapes the tastes of the masses and reinforces materialistic values in society (Swaminathan, Zinkhan & Reddy, 1996). The use of emotion and imagery has an economic function; advertisers employ emotion to link advertising experiences and feelings to the actual experience of using the advertised product (Puto & Wells, 1984). In view of attracting more tourists, the present contemporary advertising campaigns need to be more effective than the traditional advertising. Advertising in the consumer interest should begin with the communication of features and competitive advantages which the consumer can use by making an intelligent decision in the marketplace. There appears to be widespread controversy as to the usefulness of information communicated through advertising. The vast integration of TV into daily lives of the consumers and its potential for shaping viewers behaviour makes the ad-content a critical area. The content of the advertising campaigns provides information about the destinations and also transforms the opinions of prospective tourists through implementing the cognitive and affective elements of informational (e.g., highly cognitive) and transformational (e.g., highly experiential) advertising (Puto & Wells, 1984).

The informational content of the advertising campaigns need to be essentially fair so that a reasonable choice can be made by the viewers. The determination of the informational value of ad-content is of significant importance to advertisers, networks, government, and consumers. The ultimate judgements made by after being influenced by the advertisement, whatever it may be, should facilitate decisions that are both in the interest of the economy and of the consumer. In order to be considered informative, an advertisement must permit its viewers to make a more intelligent and rational buying decision after seeing it than before seeing it. In other words, it must provide cues that enable viewers to better achieve their own personal sets of purchase objectives (whatever they may be) (Resnik & Stem, 1977). Thus, as suggested by Puto & Wells (1984), an informational advertisement, is one which provides consumers with factual (i.e., presumably verifiable), relevant brand data in a clear and logical manner such that they have greater confidence in their ability to assess the merits of buying the brand after having seen the advertisement. An ad is informational if the consumer perceives the data as important and verifiable. An ad for a club membership that contains price information (e.g., Buy one get one free) is an informational ad. An informational ad execution is designed to appeal to the rationality of the audience (MacInnis, Rao & Weiss, 2002; Vaughn, 1980). When the ad execution is informational, the creation of positive brand attitudes appears to lie in creating favourable evaluative thoughts and forming strong beliefs (Yoo & MacInnis, 2005).

Whereas, a transformational advertisement is one which associates the experience of using (consuming) the advertised brand with a unique set of psychological characteristics which would not typically be associated with the brand experience to the same degree without exposure to the advertisement (Puto & Wells, 1984). Transformational advertising provides a key concept for explaining consumers' reactions to advertising and plays an important role in creating brand differentiation. When compared with one another, tourism destinations offer similar set of places or when the features and benefits offered by them are well understood by consumers, benefit-based (informational) advertising emphasizes category promotion rather than brand promotion. In such situations, destinations may use transformational advertising as a means to attaining a competitive edge. Advertising thus creates value in offerings of a destination by the nature of emotional associations that are conveyed.

The terms informational and transformational advertising do not mean to suggest that an informational ad is purely informational and a transformational ad is purely transformational. Information and transformation are not mutually exclusive categories of advertisements and are, however, exhaustive (Puto & Wells, 1984). Instead according to Puto and Wells (1984), it is possible to classify an ad as

'primarily informational' or 'primarily transformational' or neither. Elements of both informational and transformational advertising may exist in each advertisement. Thus, any given advertisement can be classified as belonging to one of four basic categories: (1) High Transformation/ Low Information, (2) Low Transformation/High Information, (3) High Transformation/High Information, and (4) Low Transformation/Low Information (Puto & Wells, 1984).

OBJECTIVES

To analyze the perceptions of respondents for ad-content of Kushboo Gujarat ki campaign.

To measure the reputation of Gujarat as a destination.

To measure the impact of ad-content of the campaign on the reputation of the destination under study.

HYPOTHESIS

H_0 – There is no significant impact of ad-content on the reputation of a destination.

H_1 – There is a significant impact of ad-content on the reputation of a destination.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is descriptive in nature as it studies the impact of promotion (Ad campaigns) on destination's reputation. Sample is collected from post graduate students of University of Jammu. Sample Size is 50 post graduate students. The primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire has been developed by using the Country RepTrak (ReputationInstitute.com) and Ad-content Scale (Puto & Wells, 1984). To study the destination's reputation Country RepTrak is used, as it is a standardized scorecard to measure the perceptions of countries based on key performance indicators designed to assess the relative appeal of the country. The scale is categorized into three dimensions as Advanced Economy (produces high quality products and services, has many well-known brands, important contributor to global culture, technologically advanced, well-educated and reliable workforce, values education), Appealing Environment (beautiful place, enjoyable place, offers an appealing lifestyle, people are friendly and welcoming), Effective Government (favourable environment for doing business, effective government, progressive social and economic policies, responsible participant in the global community, safe place, operates efficiently). The Ad-Content of the campaign is measured by Informational & Transformational Ad-content Scale (Puto & Wells, 1984) on 23 statements. The secondary data is collected from journals, websites, reports, published papers etc.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

The primary data collected from the respondents for the study has been tested for reliability and validity. The reliability of each construct scale has been assessed by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Scale reliabilities range from 0.81 to 0.84, indicating Cronbach's alpha measures of 0.81 for Country Reprtrak and 0.84 for Ad-content. All scale reliabilities exhibit an acceptable level of reliability of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978).

Ad-content Scale –

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.841	0.852	23

Country Reprtrak Scale –

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.814	0.815	16

H_0 – There is no significant impact of ad-content on the reputation of a destination.

Table - 1

ANOVAa						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.188	1	6.188	22.189	.000b
	Residual	13.387	48	.279		
	Total	19.575	49			

a. Dependent Variable: RepMean

b. Predictors: (Constant), AdMean

This hypothesis has been statistically analysed in Table – 1, which depicts that the p value has been found out to be statistically significant ($p = 0.000$) thus leading to the conclusion that there exists a linear relationship between Ad-content and Destination reputation.

Therefore, H_0 is rejected, which approves the alternate hypothesis.

H_1 - There is a significant impact of ad-content on the reputation of a destination.

Table - 2

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.562a	.316	.302	.52810

a. Predictors: (Constant), AdMean

b. Dependent Variable: RepMean

Furthermore, the Table - 2 clearly indicates that Ad-content has a significant and a positive impact on Destination Reputation. The R square value of 0.316 indicates that the variation in destination reputation up to 32% is caused by Ad-content of promotional campaign.

From the Table – 3, the correlation between Informational Ad-content and destination reputation is .520. Table – 4 indicates the p value which has been found out to be statistically significant ($p = 0.000$). In Table – 5, the R square value of 0.270 indicates that the variation in destination reputation up to 27% is caused by Informational Ad-content of promotional campaign.

Table - 3

Correlations			
		RepMean	InfoMean
Pearson Correlation	RepMean	1.000	.520
	InfoMean	.520	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	RepMean		.000
	InfoMean	.000	

Table – 4

ANOVAa						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.284	1	5.284	17.749	.000b
	Residual	14.290	48	.298		
	Total	19.575	49			

a. Dependent Variable: RepMean

b. Predictors: (Constant), InfoMean

Table - 5

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.520a	.270	.255	.54564

a. Predictors: (Constant), InfoMean

b. Dependent Variable: RepMean

Further, Table – 6 shows the correlation between Transformational Ad-content and destination reputation is 0.483. Table – 7 indicates the p value has been found out to be statistically significant ($p = 0.000$). In Table – 8, the R square value of 0.234 indicates that the variation in destination reputation up to 23% is caused by Transformational Ad-content of promotional campaign.

Table – 6

Correlations			
		RepMean	Trans Mean
Pearson Correlation	RepMean	1.000	.483
	TransMean	.483	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	RepMean		.000
	TransMean	.000	

Table – 7

ANOVAa						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.571	1	4.571	14.624	.000b
	Residual	15.004	48	.313		
	Total	19.575	49			

a. Dependent Variable: RepMean

b. Predictors: (Constant), TransMean

Table – 8

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.483a	.234	.218	.55909

a. Predictors: (Constant), TransMean

b. Dependent Variable: RepMean

Objectives

1. To analyze the perceptions of respondents for ad-content of Kushboo Gujarat ki campaign.

The overall mean of all the 23 statements of Ad-content scale is 4.981, and because $4.981 < 4$ which is the central point in a 7 point scale, it can be concluded that the respondents perceive the ad-content of Kushboo Gujarat ki campaign positively.

2. To measure the reputation of Gujarat as a destination.

The overall mean of all the 16 statements of destination reputation scale is 5.2038, and because $5.2038 < 4$ which is the central point in a 7 point scale, it can be concluded that Gujarat as a destination has positive reputation among respondents.

3. To measure the impact of ad-content of the campaign on the reputation of the destination understudy.

The Ad-content has a significant and a positive impact on Destination Reputation. The R square value of 0.319 indicates that the variation in destination reputation up to 32% is caused by Ad-content of promotional campaign.

DISCUSSION

Stakeholder management through corporate communications management (Cornelissen, 2004) or reputation management (Alessandri, 2001; Fombrun, 1996; Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004; Gotsi & Wilson, 2001; Greyser, 1999) has emerged as a promising approach for promoting tourism destinations. It is so due to the fact that multi-level communications is a key component to get close to the various stakeholder groups, both internal as well as external, and for communicating with these groups, destinations are being promoted by varied mediums. The “Kushboo Gujarat Ki” ad-campaign is one such initiative, which aimed at communicating with the prospective tourists. This campaign attempts to position Gujarat as an ultimate destination to meet the preferences of all types of tourists – offering experience ranging from spiritual to leisure, religious to cultural, natural to historical. The campaign in addition promotes various colourful festivals and events to draw tourists to Gujarat from across the country as well as from abroad. While the destinations having strong reputation may easily attract business, recent research suggests that a place’s so-called ‘soft’ factors such as its environment, friendly local people, entertainment and leisure services, and traditions in art and culture are gaining importance with potential investors and tourists (Morgan, et al., 2012). Also, destination connectivity, wayside amenities cleanliness and security (in particular for women) in and around the tourist sites are a key concern for tourists. Thus, a more innovative approach is needed to create right conditions for creativity, competitive identity, and building a strong destination reputation. In view of improving upon the soft factors, the Ministry of Tourism launched ‘Atithi Devo Bhavah’, campaign targeted at the local population to educate them regarding good behavior and etiquette and sensitizing them about preservation of India’s heritage, culture, cleanliness and hospitality. The Atithi Devo Bhavah is a seven point program of hospitality and training, which attempts to inculcate a sense of responsibility towards tourists. The tourists while making destination choices take account of both rational as well as emotional aspects and various

elements of the promotion campaigns have a significant influence on improving the perceptions of a destination. The analysis of the present study also indicates that Gujarat holds a higher and positive reputation among the respondents and the promotional strategies (ad-campaigns) adopted by the state have significantly impacted the reputation of the state as a tourism destination. The analysis further suggests that the respondents perceive the ad-content of Kushboo Gujarat ki campaign in a positive manner.

The 'Khushboo Gujarat Ki' was launched to increase awareness of the state's diverse tourism aspects. The success of the Gujarat tourism campaign with Amitabh Bachchan as the brand ambassador and other marketing and promotional activities have improved the tourism appeal of Gujarat many fold. The total number of tourist arrivals in Gujarat for FY 2013 is 2.54 crore, which is 13.62% higher than 2012 (The 'Gujarat dream' is happening: Piyush Pandey). Moreover, the domestic tourist arrivals in Gujarat have ramped up considerably, with an almost 33 per cent rise in the numbers from within the state, a 50 per cent rise from other parts of India and from non-resident Indian (IIM-A to study Gujarat Tourism's branding campaign). In the last two years, there has been a flow of nearly 54 lakh tourists to Gujarat, the Gir sanctuary has also seen a 30% jump in tourists. The pilgrimage sites of Somnath and Dwarka have also been able to attract many tourists to the state. The increase in the tourist arrivals suggest that the state has considerably built on its reputation as a tourism destination. The analysis of the present study also reveals that Gujarat as a destination has been perceived to be having positive reputation among respondents.

The ad-campaign has been able to make an impact on the perception of tourists about the destination as the content of the campaign has certain elements to grab the interest of the target audience. Every promotional ad-campaign includes some element of information, it intends to provide to the prospective consumers/ tourists. But an ad designed with an intention of providing information is not considered as an informational ad unless it is perceived so by the consumers (Puto & Wells, 1984). The analysis depicts that the Informational Ad-content of the Kushboo Gujarat ki campaign has higher correlation with the reputation of Gujarat as a destination i.e. the campaign provides new information about Gujarat's rich culture, history, art, culture, tourist sites, etc. to the prospective tourists. The transformational ad-content of the campaign also aims at changing the opinion or perception of the consumption experience that would normally be expected to occur without exposure to the advertisement (Puto & Wells, 1984). For instance, the Kushboo Gujarat ki campaign aims at transforming the perception of tourists about Rann of Kutch from being a mere barren land to a place of cultural heritage and festivities. The study also reveals that variation in destination reputation

up to 23% is caused by Transformational Ad-content of promotional campaign. Also, in the campaign understudy the impact of informational content on the destination reputation is higher than its transformational content.

Therefore, the results of the present study suggest that the ad-campaign understudy i.e. Kushboo Gujarat ki has a remarkable impact on the image of Gujarat as a tourist destination. The study also points out that the ad campaign has transformed the perception of tourists about the place, as the number of people visiting the state has remarkably grown. This change in the perceptions is more a result of the ad-content of the campaign, which has been able to provide additional information and also transform the opinions of the target population about the place as a unique tourist destination.

LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

Although, this research offers insights into building destination reputations from the ad-content of the promotional campaigns, there are some limitations that need to be pointed out. In this study, 50 respondents were surveyed in Jammu region, therefore the findings may be limited to the sample and the post graduate students investigated in the research. Further research can verify whether these findings hold for other samples i.e. same study can be extended to other areas by taking the sample from other parts of the country. Similar campaigns are being run by other state governments like Rajasthan, Goa, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh etc. The impact of these specific campaigns can also be studied.

In addition, as the analysis suggests that the variation in destination reputation up to 32% is caused by Ad-content of the promotional campaign. Therefore, one more limitation results from considering ad-content as the only antecedent to destination reputation. Whereas, other factors affecting reputation can also be studied in order to get a better understanding of destination's reputation.

As many other studies, the current study has some theoretical and practical implications. Findings of this research are important for researchers dealing with destination marketing by understanding that reputation of a destination is also of critical importance. Research findings also have some practical implications such as understanding the impact of the ad-campaign and its content on the improving and changing the perceptions of the prospective consumers/ tourists. Further, the study makes it clear that the ad-content provides informational as well as transformational content to present new information to its prospective consumers and also transform their opinion about the destination by exhibiting unexplored experiences related with the destination. These are vital issues for practitioners to be incorporated in their promotional strategies. To sum up, it

is hoped that this study will stimulate further research on destination reputation literature to provide valuable insights for both academics and practitioners.

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