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# International Tourists' Perceptions Towards Destination Brand Image: A Case Study of Socotra Island, Yemen

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## Abstract

The influence of brand image on consumer behaviour is widely recognized. It affects how tourists make pre-purchase decisions, making destinations with more substantial images more likely to be chosen. Additionally, the destination needs a strong brand image to maintain its position in the competitive business world. Product differentiation is crucial because Socotra Island, the research area, has a unique landscape, botanical, marine, and bird biodiversity, and cultural and heritage features and offers tremendously attractive destinations. Purposive random sampling was used to gather data from 410 international tourists at the sample locations for this study, which intends to examine how tourists perceive their expectations and experiences after visiting Socotra Island. Descriptive statistics and pair t-tests were used to analyze the data collected. The findings show that solid waste management, tourism infrastructure, and capacity building for tourism providers must be improved. The study has also suggested that tourism products, e.g., cultural heritage, Nature-based tourism, and Adventure sports, must be positioned and promoted aggressively.

**Keywords:** - Experiences, Expectations, International Tourists, Socotra Island Tourism, Perceptions, Destination Brand Image

## Introduction

Tourism has become one of the fastest-growing sectors globally and presents significant economic growth prospects (Branka & Segota, 2017; Morgan et al., 2009). Many developing countries use tourism to boost their economies and eradicate poverty (Saner et al., 2015; Satghare & Sawant, 2018). As a result, tourism marketers use branding as a strategic tool to help a tourist destination stand out and be remembered by potential visitors (Theodoropoulou & Alos, 2020). Destination branding has historically sprouted from various fields, such as marketing, public relations, international relations, and public administration (Lu et al., 2022; Sevin,

2014). The core objectives of destination branding are to highlight a tourist site's distinctiveness, present alluring imagery to the target markets, and encourage the creation of positive perceptions (Aziz et al., 2012).

Destination marketers attempt to position and promote each destination by creating favourable perceptions in visitors' minds so that they will choose their destination before others (Ndlovu & Heath, 2013). However, the brand image of a tourist destination is considered a very challenging task due to its multidimensional nature and product attributes (Ukaj, 2014). Hence, The branding process requires tourism planners and marketers to conduct an in-depth information study into the tourism sector to understand the consumer's needs (Almeida-García et al., 2020). Cai (2002) and Hosany et al. (2006) contend that a destination's name and location define it and that various tangible and intangible aspects influence its branding. A destination meets the needs of numerous different types of tourists. The tourism marketing literature suggests it is essential to comprehend how tourists think to create a destination brand (Aaker, 1991; Bianchi et al., 2014; Yusof & Ismail, 2014). The most crucial element of destination branding is a brand image; it has to reflect the meaning and values of potential tourists to that specific tourist attraction (Robinson Jr, 2014).

This research study is conducted on Socotra Island, which lies in the northwestern corner of the Western Indian Ocean, at the junction between the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea (Van Damme & Banfield, 2011). It is recognized as a regional centre of biodiversity and was declared a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve (2002) as well as documented as a Natural World Heritage Site (NWHS) (2008) (Al-okaishi, 2020; Brown & Mies, 2012). It covers an area of 3625 km<sup>2</sup> and is acknowledged as the largest Island in Yemen and the Arab Middle East (Elie, 2008). Socotra is a unique Island in Yemen that offers several types of attractions for tourists (Pilling, 2023). Socotra's competitive advantage in tourism lies not only in its unique ecotourism appeal as the 'Galapagos of the Indian Ocean' but also in its ability to provide distinctive and varied products not found or in limited supply in other parts of the region (Downey, 2022). Even though Socotra is very safe, the conflict on the mainland has had a substantial negative impact and reduced tourism on the Island. Therefore, this study intends to examine the difference between the expectations and experiences of international tourists regarding the brand image of Socotra tourism. (Perception of brand image).

## **Literature Review**

Tourism marketers use branding as a tactical technique to help potential visitors easily recognise and remember a tourism destination. (Chellan et al., 2017; Qu & Qu, 2011). In the tourism industry, a brand is one of the most valued assets of a destination that plays a vital role in its success (Sallam, 2016). It has been acknowledged for a long time and is addressed in various academic subjects. According to Cai (2002), destination branding is the process of choosing a "constant element mix to identify and distinguish a destination through positive image-building." Branding has been used and practised for numerous reasons: to assist a destination in distinguishing them and draw attention to tourists' choices. In other words, branding is essential to distinguish a specific offering from competitors and highlight its uniqueness while engaging with targeted consumers (Schaar et al., 2013; Koththagoda, 2017). Despite the increase in destination marketing, extensive research on destination branding is still lacking (Cai, 2002; Ruzzier, 2012; Pike & Page, 2014).

## **Tourists' Perception of Destination**

Travellers frequently regard a destination as the element of tourism services or products that faces outwardly because it is the spot where tourist consumption takes place (Andrades & Dimanche, 2017). Broadly the concept of the destination can be defined as standing for a geographically defined entity, such as a group of countries, an individual country, region, city, or another area that depends economically on the income from tourism (Andrades & Dimanche, 2017; Wang & Zhang, 2017). A destination is where people travel, and a tourist destination is where most tourists opt to stay (MANHAS et al., 2012). A tourism destination, conversely, concentrates on the quality of services created to fulfil visitors' needs, according to observations made by (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015). Similarly, Gao & Zhang (2009) described a tourist destination as an area with all the amenities tourists want, such as infrastructure, lodging, hospitality, and entertainment.

Perception is the mental process by which an individual approaches, organizes, and analyzes sensory data (Hassan et al., 2010). Potential tourists' opinions of a destination reflect their familiarity with its attributes and offerings and can expect quality experiences (Almeida-García et al., 2020). The way tourists perceive a destination can significantly impact destination choice (Lian & Yu, 2019). Therefore,

tourist decisions to return and inspire others to travel there are more likely to be made when a destination is well-perceived (Kim et al., 2019). Factors that affect tourists' insights into a place include **(a)** the information they are given before travelling there (Lin & Kuo, 2016; Moon & Han, 2019) and **(b)** how they feel about the attractiveness, quality, and value of the experiences they have experienced on that destination (Dedeoğlu, 2019). Anastassova (2011) states that physiological aspects, such as travel motivation, may also affect a tourist's destination choices during their decision-making process. Each traveller may choose and organize the information they receive about a place differently based on their socio-demographic characteristics, such as age, education level, and perspective. As a result, each traveller will have a distinct perception of a destination (Chi, 2012).

Considering the above factors, a tourist's overall views of a destination are a multidimensional construct influenced by various outside information sources, social traits, and the actual destination experience (Dam, 2018).

### **Destination Brand Image**

The term brand image is another factor that talks a lot about the brand; it decides the fate of the product. A consumer's memories connected to a brand are collectively referred to as associations (Keller, 1993). Aaker (1991) contends that the link between the consumer and a brand will increase with the number of favourable associations gathered, thus influencing purchase decisions and brand loyalty. Brand associations are a factor in brand image based on both authors' opinions. Numerous studies considered brand associations and images of the same dimension (Hosany et al., 2006; Kamble & Sawant, 2020).

Brand image has been acknowledged as one of the most crucial components of a destination Gupta et al., (2020) as it has a significant impact on tourists' motivation, preferences, and behaviour toward tourism products or services, which helps to create the pull factor for a tourist to travel to a destination. Therefore, a destination's image decides whether it can satisfy potential tourists (Naidoo & Munhurrun, 2012). A powerful and distinctive brand image can strengthen customer loyalty and convince them to make a purchase (Kumar Singh et al., 2013). Additionally, Sönmez (1998) identified three key elements contributing to creating a destination. First, if travellers distribute good word of mouth, it will be simple to perceive a destination positively. The second factor is media image-making, and the third is government interest and

policy. Brand image management is still in its infancy (Kamble & Sawant, 2020). Brands will continue to be important in the choosing process. However, brand managers and designers need to comprehend the intricacies of responding to a consumer who has recently gained more power (Gaikwad et al., 2020). Creating a brand image is challenging, but the even more arduous task is identifying the image you want to create (Fadil et al., 2014). So, therefore, the authors feel this is an essential step in brand-building activity.

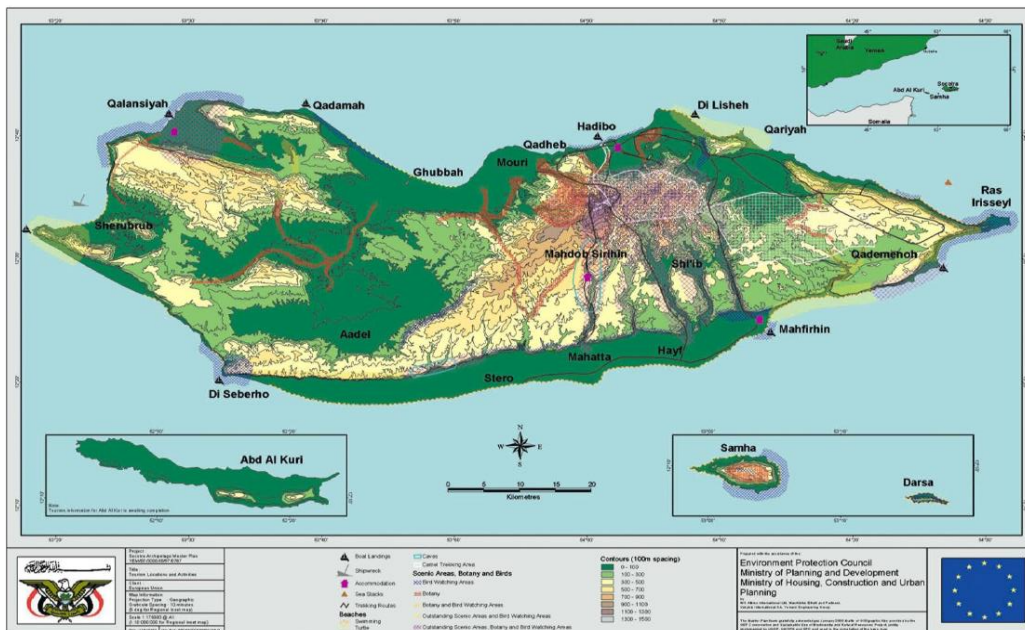
Saqib (2019) concluded that few researchers have tried to assess the destination brand image in relation to tourist attractions. These investigations were primarily carried out in developed countries. However, there was hardly any research on destination images and brand images in Yemen, with a particular focus on the study area of Socotra Island. Hence, this study is a sincere attempt at the destination brand Image evaluation of Socotra Tourism from the perspectives of international tourists visiting the cultural and nature-based attractions of Socotra.

## **Research Method and Design**

The authors employed a quantitative research methodology to gather information for this article, which assesses international tourists' perceptions of Socotra Island's brand image. Hence, the current study has selected potential international tourists to reflect a broader spectrum of visitors to Socotra from various parts of the world, backgrounds, and nations. Additionally, international visitors may have varied preferences for Socotra's characteristics, as well as differing impressions of Socotra's reputation and expectations for a particular location. As a result, their assessment of the critical components of Socotra's image may be more valuable than that of a specific set of tourists. Similar studies have examined international tourists (Henkel et al., 2006; Neth, 2008; Philemon, 2015; Sönmez, 1998). The survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire. An initial list of 10 items was generated on aspects related to the tourist's expectations & same 10 items were used to evaluate their experiences after visiting Socotra. These included items are (e.g. Socotra Island has many well-known tourist sites enriched with diversity in tourism resources, and The destination has good Accessibility; the environment at the Tourist attractions is clean and maintained, Prices charged for flight tickets are reasonable, The destination has good tourism infrastructure and facilities, e.g., hotels, campsites, toilets and restaurants, The destination is a safe and secure place for travellers, The destination is value for

money, The destination has pleasant and peaceful weather, The destination has qualified service staff and guides and Local people are friendly and easily approached). They were derived from prior studies(e.g. (Chia & Qu, 2008; Gaikwad et al., 2020; Kamble & Sawant, 2020; Mirimi et al., 2013; Veríssimo et al., 2017). The authors also surveyed the international tourists who visited major tourist attractions on Socotra Island. (See figure 1 (e.g., Qalansiyah Beach, Diksam Plateau, Delisha Beach, Wadi Dirhur Canyon, Arher Beach, Ayhaft Canyon National Park, Dihamari Marine Protected Area, Homil Protected Area, and Socotra International Airport). A pilot test consisting of 30 questionnaires was conducted to ensure the scale reliability. The  $\alpha$ Cronbach for total scores demonstrated the right post-test internal consistency with an  $\alpha = 0.825$ . Each dining experience attribute was rated using a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)".The sample population for this study comprised international tourists who visited Socotra in October, November, and December of 2022, which are the peak-season months of Socotra Tourism. Four hundred and thirty (430) tourists were eventually surveyed, but 410 usable questionnaires were collected at the sample destinations with the help of a structured questionnaire. A Purposive random sampling method was employed. SPSS (Software Package for Social Sciences) was used to analyze and process the data.Descriptive statistics and a Paired sample t-test were used to test the hypothesis.

**Figure 1: Socotra Tourism Attraction and Activities Map**



Source: Socotra EPA Authority

## Results and Discussion

### Descriptive analysis of the demographic data of the study sample.

Descriptive statistics was used for analyzing the demographic profile of the respondents. Results of the analysis are indicated in table no.1.

**Table 1: The demographic data of the study sample.**

Demographic profile	Frequency(n)	Percent (%)
<b>Gender:</b>		
Male	226	55.1
Female	184	44.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age:</b>		
1-20	6	1.5
21-40	231	56.3
41-60	132	32.2
61-above	41	10.0
<b>Educational Level:</b>		
Secondary School	29	7.1
Diploma	55	13.4
Graduation	86	21.0
Post-Graduation & above	240	58.5
<b>Nationality Wise:</b>		
GCC Countries	25	6.1
Middle East	16	3.9
European	251	61.2
Americans	82	20.0
Africans	4	1.0
Asians	24	5.9
Australia	8	2.0

Source: Field Survey



Table 1 shows that out of the respondents involved in the survey, 55.1% were male, and 44.9% were female, meaning that most of the study respondents were male. Respondents aged between 21-40 formed the largest group, 56.3%, followed by those aged between 41-60, 32.2%. 20 to 24 years old, 20.4%, the age group 61 and above forms 10.0%, and finally, the age group 1-20 records 1.5%.

The tourists' educational attainment is a crucial socio-demographic variable in this study. This factor has an impact on a number of travel-related variables. According to Table 1's analysis of the sample's educational background, those with post-graduate degrees and above make up the majority of the population, 58.5%, followed by those with bachelor's degrees 21%, and tourists with diploma and high school levels were 13.4% and 7.1% respectively. The patterns mentioned indicate that the overall educational profile of the respondents visiting the study area is above average.

Nationality-wise, the majority of the sample belongs to the European category, which forms 61.2% of the total sample and is followed by American nationalities 20.0%. Nationals of GCC and Asian nationalities were 6.1% and 5.9%, respectively. Then they are followed by tourists from the Middle East with a percentage of 3.9%. African tourists ranked last among the total international tourists visiting Socotra Island, at a rate of 1%.

### **Descriptive Analysis of international tourists' Expectations before visiting**

According to Gao & Zhang (2009), tourists' views of a destination, such as its brand image, are believed to significantly impact destination choice and brand loyalty since they can compare the characteristics of several places while deciding whether or not to travel there. Therefore, international tourists were questioned regarding their "Expectations" and "Views Perceived After Coming to Socotra Island," which refers to their experience.

So, the authors start statistically describing tourists' perceptions before coming to Socotra. The average mean ranged between (2.62-3.63), where five items received a high degree of agreement and five items received a degree of neutrality. Tourists' perception was high that the destination was a safe and secure place for travellers, as well as that the Island has many well-known sites and is rich in diversity in tourism resources.

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics of the sample responses on views perceived before coming to Socotra Island.**

Items		Degree of Agreement					Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	General trend
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree				
Socotra Island has many well-known tourist sites enriched with diversity in tourism resources.	N	7	22	115	166	100	3.61	1.06	2	Agree
	%	1.7	5.4	28.0	40.5	24.4				
The destination has good Accessibility.	N	45	157	134	62	12	2.82	0.97	7	Neutral
	%	11.0	38.3	32.7	15.1	2.9				
The environment at the Tourist attractions is clean and maintained.	N	22	52	237	81	18	3.43	0.84	5	Agree
	%	5.4	12.7	57.8	19.8	4.4				
Prices charged for flight tickets are reasonable.	N	69	87	153	90	11	2.62	0.07	10	Neutral
	%	16.8	21.2	37.3	22.0	2.7				
The destination has good tourism infrastructure and facilities, e.g., hotels, campsites, toilets and restaurants.	N	43	132	171	55	9	2.70	0.92	8	Neutral
	%	10.5	32.2	41.7	13.4	2.2				
The destination is safe and secure place for travelers.	N	8	33	63	173	133	3.63	0.92	1	Agree
	%	2.0	8.0	15.4	42.4	32.4				
The destination is value for money.	N	8	35	167	158	42	2.68	0.86	9	Neutral
	%	2.0	8.5	40.7	38.5	10.2				
The destination has pleasant and peaceful weather.	N	14	55	85	164	92	3.60	0.80	3	Agree
	%	3.4	13.4	20.7	40.0	22.4				
The destination has qualified service staff and guides.	N	8	27	206	132	37	3.40	0.82	6	Agree
	%	2.0	6.6	50.2	32.2	9.0				
Local people are friendly and easily approached.	N	4	16	181	144	65	3.55	0.83	4	Agree
	%	1.0	3.9	44.1	35.1	15.9				
<b><i>The overall mean of the Views perceived before coming to Socotra Island</i></b>							<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.49</b>		<b>Neutral</b>

Source: Field Survey

The tourists in the study sample also expected that the Island enjoys pleasant and calm weather and that its indigenous Socotrans are friendly and can be approached easily. Also, the environment was one of the aspects that they had a high belief that it would be clean and preserved, especially in areas that attract tourists. However, the international tourists who visited did not have a clear perception regarding the other variables ( e.g., qualified service staff and the availability of tourist guides, the destination has good accessibility and good infrastructure and tourist facilities such as hotels, camping sites, toilets, and restaurants, the destination is value for money and the prices of air tickets are acceptable).

The overall mean of the tourists' perception before visiting Socotra was 3.20, with a standard deviation of 0.49, indicating that international tourists did not have a clear perception before their visit. The researcher may attribute this to the lack of promotion of the Island in the targeted market. This result can be tested and confirmed when testing the hypothesis.

### **Descriptive analysis of the tourists' "Experience."**

It is clear from the results shown in Table No. 3 that the average mean for the items ranged between (2.79-4.42), that is, between a degree of neutrality and very high agreement. It is noted that tourists' views change regarding their perception of some elements after visiting the Island. The surveyed tourists strongly agree that the Island has many well-known tourist sites and is rich in diversity in tourism resources. They also strongly agree that the Island is a safe and secure place for travellers as a tourist destination. This is one of the positive indicators, as their perception of these statements before coming was high. More importantly and significantly, their experiences after visiting the Island were even higher and increased to a very high degree. Prior to their arrival to Socotra, international tourists had unclear perceptions towards the items that Socotra has good accessibility and value for money; however, their perceptions were totally changed that the Island has easy accessibility and value for money. This may be attributed to the availability of the weekly non-stop flight of Air Arabia from Abu Dhabi to Socotra and vice versa. Additionally, the international tourists surveyed have shown that Socotra is value for money due to its unique landscapes and other tourism activities.

**Table 3: Descriptive statistics of the sample responses on experience after visiting Socotra Island**

Items		Degree of Agreement					Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	General trend
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree				
Socotra Island has many well-known tourist sites and is enriched with diversity in tourism resources.	N	0	2	10	128	270	4.42	0.90	1	<b>Strongly agree</b>
	%	0	0.5	2.4	31.2	65.9				
The destination has good Accessibility.	N	35	126	94	113	42	4.15	0.15	5	<b>Agree</b>
	%	8.5	30.7	22.9	27.6	10.2				
The environment at the Tourist attractions is clean and maintained.	N	57	130	86	112	25	2.81	0.16	9	<b>Neutral</b>
	%	13.9	31.7	21.0	27.3	6.1				
Prices charged for flight tickets are reasonable.	N	71	102	100	103	34	2.86	0.22	8	<b>Neutral</b>
	%	17.3	24.9	24.4	25.1	8.3				
The destination has good tourism infrastructure and facilities, e.g., hotels, campsites, toilets, and restaurants.	N	72	123	90	65	60	2.79	0.30	10	<b>Neutral</b>
	%	17.6	30.0	22.0	15.9	14.6				
The destination is a safe and secure place for travellers.	N	6	36	30	166	172	4.21	0.98	3	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
	%	1.5	8.8	7.3	40.5	42.0				
The destination is value for money.	N	4	14	50	208	134	4.11	0.81	6	<b>Agree</b>
	%	1.0	3.4	12.2	50.7	32.7				
The destination has pleasant and peaceful weather.	N	2	10	55	190	153	4.18	0.78	4	<b>Agree</b>
	%	0.5	2.4	13.4	46.3	37.3				
The destination has qualified service staff and guides.	N	6	10	36	161	197	4.09	0.84	7	<b>Agree</b>
	%	1.5	2.4	8.8	39.3	48.0				
Local people are friendly and easily approached.	N	7	18	37	169	179	<b>4.30</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
	%	1.7	4.4	9.0	41.2	43.7				
<b><i>The overall mean of experience after visiting Socotra Island</i></b>							<b>3.79</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>Agree</b>	

Source: Field Survey

The surveyed tourists have also demonstrated that their perceptions regarding the tourism providers were relatively high before their arrival; however, their perception was ambiguous, and there was a lack of a clear opinion regarding this element. This reflects that the tourism services providers require building capacity through conducting tourism training.

Overall, the surveyed tourists have shown outstanding and positive results after experiencing and visiting the Island compared to their perception before visiting the Island. This was demonstrated by the overall mean, which amounted to 3.79, and a weak standard deviation of 0.52. This result will be verified when testing the hypothesis of the study.

### **Hypothesis Testing:**

To verify the validity of the study's hypothesis, the researcher used the appropriate statistical method for the nature of testing the hypothesis.

**H1. There is a statistically significant difference between International tourists' expectations and experience regarding the brand image of Socotra as a tourist destination.**

Paired-Samples T-Test was used to test this hypothesis, and the result is shown in the Table below:

**Table No 4: Paired-sample test results to test the differences between International tourists' expectations and experiences regarding the brand image of Socotra as a tourist destination**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Brand Image of Socotra Tourism</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>T-Test</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>Brand image of Socotra tourism</b>	Expectations	3.20	0.496	-22.126	0.000	Significant/ Accepted
	Experiences	3.79	0.503			

Source: Field Survey

The results of the Paired-Samples T Test indicated that there is statistically significant difference between the mean expectation and experiences of international tourists regarding the brand image of Socotra Island tourism ( $t = -22.126$ ,  $P\text{-Value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ); however, it is noted that international tourists have no explicit expectation of Socotra brand image prior their arrival with a mean of 3.20 while their point of

view varies after their visit, with a mean average of 3.79, indicating that their perception of Socotra brand image after visiting the Island was high. Hence, the tested hypothesis is accepted.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The study findings reveal that the targeted international tourists have shown a significant difference between their expectations and their experience regarding destination attributes of brand image. To summarize, Tourists have shown positive perceptions regarding its variety of landscapes and biodiversity richness. Tourists also have positive perceptions of its friendly and hospitable people. Additionally, the majority of the tourists were impressed by its quietness, safety for travellers, and pleasant weather. More significantly, tourists expressed that they were satisfied with accessibility to the destination through the air flight of Air Arabia that comes directly from Abu Dhabi to Socotra.

In contrast, tourists were not satisfied with its tourism infrastructure, lack of flights, and the high cost of flight tickets. More importantly, tourists were not at all happy with the accumulation of garbage, especially in the main city of Hadibu and some tourist destinations. The current study's findings also supported the view that tourist expectations and experiences should take a multi-attribute approach. Additionally, empirical findings also confirmed that there were significant differences between tourists' expectations and experiences regarding the brand image of tourist attractions. This is consistent with the results of the studies conducted by Apritado & Borbon (2020), Kamble & Sawant (2020), Moon & Han (2019), Nkwanyana et al. (2018), and Sheng & Chen (2013). The study also shows that the majority of the tourists were Europeans, Americans, and Asians, and the lowest records were from the Middle East, GCC countries, and Africans. Based on the above conclusions and findings, the study recommends the following:

- Providing the required financial resources and infrastructure for the Island's protected areas is essential to handle an influx of Tourists.
- Expansion of accommodation and service capacity of tourism service establishments.
- Intensification of awareness and media campaigns that ensure awareness of solid waste management.

- Rehabilitation of all the campsites in the protected areas massively damaged because of the cyclones."
- There is a need to improve Accessibility by attracting other aviation as only one flight reaches Socotra for the time being.
- Encourage the Government to improve the quality of tourist services utilizing opening tourism hospitality training institutes and carrying out training courses for tourist guides as one of the top priorities.
- Yemen Tourism Promotion and The Socotra Government should take the initiative to recycle solid waste management and create awareness on managing solid waste.

### **Implications for Theory and Practice**

The results of this study add to the aspects of destination branding and considerations facing the branding and rebranding of Socotra tourism. This study is significant from the theoretical perspective as it applies proven branding theories to products, services, and management. Additionally, the study has reviewed numerous reviews related to tourists' perceptions and brand image. The study is important from a practical point of view, as it examines the international potential tourists' perceptions regarding the brand image of the study area. This has given an idea about the destinations of visitor experiences urgently needing improvement by various tourism stakeholders. Furthermore, it sheds light on an in-depth analysis of the tourists' demographic profile and reveals insightful information for segmenting Socotra's tourism market and developing destination brand messages.

Ultimately, this study will enormously benefit tourism planners, policymakers, DMOs, tourism stakeholders, researchers, academicians, the Yemen Tourism Promotion Board, and other Tourism Organizations for developing strategies related to enhancing the brand image of Socotra tourism and Yemen.

### **Limitations and suggestions for further studies**

A limited amount of literature on the branding of Socotra Tourism was one of the major constraints in studying the concept in depth. The study was conducted with foreign tourists who visited the study area during October and December of 2022. Therefore, results may not capture data on the brand image of the destination in general. Hence, further studies should be carried out in other seasons to identify how to best position the destination in each respective segment. Furthermore, the present

piece of work gives new direction to future researchers in which they can do a similar kind of study by taking other aspects such as brand awareness, destination brand loyalty, etc. Taking such aspects into account may help tourism planners identify the potential target market and frame the appropriate branding and marketing strategies.



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