DO GREEN ATTRIBUTES OF DESTINATION MATTER?
THE EFFECT ON GREEN TRUST AND DESTINATION BRAND EQUITY

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Tourism industry is a part of an important sector that contributes to the economic development of any country in an effective way such that the tourism stakeholders are taking efforts to develop sustainable tourism practices in order to preserve the future generation needs and hold their perception towards environment. Extant research on environmentally sustainable practices has treated "Green" tourism as local environmental awareness and conservative activities, failing to identify the differences in the way tourists choose destinations based on green attributes and how these attributes effect the destination marketing. This study addresses this gap by exploring the relationship among attributes of green tourism and green trust and their impact on destination brand equity. Moreover, an important variable, greenwashing, is used to measure the moderation effects in the relationships proposed. Analysis was based on a sample of 739 Indian tourists having visited three eco-friendly destinations. Partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) technique exhibited the impact of green service attributes (green service delivery and green service support except green service policy) on green trust with significant moderation interaction effects from greenwashing and finally the consequent effect on destination brand equity.

Key words: Sustainability; Green tourism; Destination marketing; Brand equity

Introduction

Sustainable tourism has been a popular research domain since the late 1980s. Several studies have examined the area of environmental resources and its possible relationship with tourism and how the positive evaluation of such resources brings value to a destination (Mariotti, 1938; Planina, 1966). Consumers have become more sensitive towards the environment and are more aware than ever. They demand sustainable tourism practices and also pressurize the governments to make policies for tourism industry to meet environmental standards (Holleran, 2008).

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Tourism-related activities results in visible and profound change in global climate compared to that of the other services (Ringbeck & Koch, 2010). Many economies are trying to integrate both economic benefits and environmental costs of unsustainable tourism. Among both, it's the latter that have been a significant concern for destination marketers. Quite a few studies in the past have given importance to destination marketing (Fotiadis et al., 2014; Florek, 2011). Given that hospitality sector, especially tourism, accounts for more than 10% of global GDP in 2019, stakeholders are increasingly more aware to demand eco-friendly tourism practices, which must be sustainable in nature to avoid possible threats to the future generation (Joshi & Rahman, 2015).

Touristic green policies adopted by various nations are the subject of multiple studies that explore the relationship between such policies and its' impact on societal and cultural view of the respective countries (Giorgi et al., 2019). It is strongly believed that tourism and other hospitality services must contribute towards ecological environment by giving due importance to the green attributes when evaluating its quality (Ayala, 1995). Despite the apparent benefits of having green attributes, a gap between attitude and action in the tourism sector is prevalent and it may be due to the facts that service is inseparable and this attribute definitely affects the choice of potential solution to the environmental concern to be adopted by tourism marketers (Foster et al., 2000; Kassinis & Soteriou, 2008).

It's indeed required to service the customers with environmental-friendly practices and ensuring balanced allocation of resources towards environmentally sustainable ventures apart from their productive use. Consequently, sustainable practices have resulted in increased customer trust and therefore establishing the destination image (Králiková et al., 2020). Responsible travelers appreciate local features and try to minimize their ill behavior towards the surroundings (Ceballos-Lascuráin, 1996). Further, this underlines the concept of "green" tourism, which includes sensitizing the tourists towards environmental protection and preserving it for longer (Honey, 2008; Page & Dowling, 2002; Wallace & Pierce, 1996). Thus, green tourism is the sustainable way to preserve the resources for better environment (Weaver, 2004).

The past few years have given a lot of consideration to the environmental quality and the role of tourism (Erdogan & Tosun, 2009) focusing on the need of green practices. Despite the ever-increasing rush and the benefits of green activities, many firms do not implement green practices. Thus, they do not contribute to minimizing the negative environmental impact and may be just engaged in greenwashing (Kahle & Gurel-Atay, 2015). Reduction in greenwashing behaviors is associated with an enhanced destination brand image (Chen et al., 2016). Although previous literature has widely discussed around the elements of brand equity and the idea of a green destination, brand equity and greenwashing remain unexplored.

Nowadays, tourists are very particular about environmental issues, which impacts the destination choice; destination marketers are positioning the respective destinations as brands and choosing the appropriate marketing strategy for it (Bianchi et al., 2014; Kim et al., 2017; Živoder et al., 2015). Destination marketing organizations recognize the value of destination branding and their input in creating the equity of the brand (Nam et al., 2011). However, destination marketers cannot influence the experiences of the individual visitor's and above all have less capacity to increase the portfolio of the destination. Tourists emphasize the significance of green activities and branding in formation of trust towards the destination (Weis, 2017).

Despite the increased interest of academicians in sustainable development and ecotourism, researches in green destination brand equity models are limited (Hankinson, 2004; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). Recently, Moise et al. (2019) examined the environmentally conscious activities undertaken by hotels and its linkage with elements of satisfaction, brand equity, and word-of-mouth in developed economies (Moise et al., 2019). Still, the survival of green destination as an area of research has been relatively unexplored. This article attempts to incorporate the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) framework to investigate the association of green trust, green tourism, and destination-based brand equity.

The S-O-R framework is quite a conventional method that is widely accepted to draw the relationship between the (S) stimuli (external) received its evaluation in the customer psychology (O), and

their following responses or attitudes (R) (Russell & Mehrabian, 1974). An integrated model has been developed based on S-O-R paradigm, representing the relationships among precursor of green attributes (green support and green image), green trust, and destination-based brand equity.

The contribution of this study is threefold. Firstly, the study establishes a relationship between the green service delivery, support, and policy with trust, which adds a new dimension in the literature revolving around green trust; further, how green trust help in creating awareness, perceived quality loyalty, and image of a destination. Again, greenwashing adds new avenues in the literature of destination branding and it is worth mentioning S-O-R framework has been represented with a "green" badge.

The article is organized in the following way. The subsequent sections elaborate on the conceptual background of the research and present viewpoints resulting in inferences. Further, the study develops the conceptual frame, which is dedicated to the development of hypotheses. The next section highlights the methodology used in this study followed by a subsequent section that presents the analysis and the interpretation. Finally, the last section presents the theoretical as well as managerial implications and concludes with the limitations of the present study and scope for future study.

The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework advanced here (Fig. 1) is carried out using the S-O-R framework established by Russell and Mehrabian (1974). In this framework, the external stimuli presented by the organizations in the form of various attributes are assessed to measure the customers' perceptions (Su et al., 2016). The process of evaluating the stimuli based on customer psychology and characteristics act as mediator and then results into response. It involves "perceptual, physiological, feeling, and thinking activities" (Bagozzi, 1986, p. 46). The response by the customers reflects his/her attitude and behavioral intention towards the stimuli (Bagozzi, 1986). Many researchers in the past have used the S-O-R framework to measure the relationships among variables (Kaur et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2010; Mazaheri et al., 2011). On the basis of the previous studies, this research presents a unique proposition in tourism research: the association between the green attributes of destination and green trust of the tourists to further develop the tourist-based brand equity. Many scholars in the past have provided trust as an important variable to measure consumer emotional state as explained in S-O-R framework (Ahn & Seo, 2018; Chang, 2017). A detailed review of literature had been performed to identify the dimensions of green attributes of tourism explaining destination brand
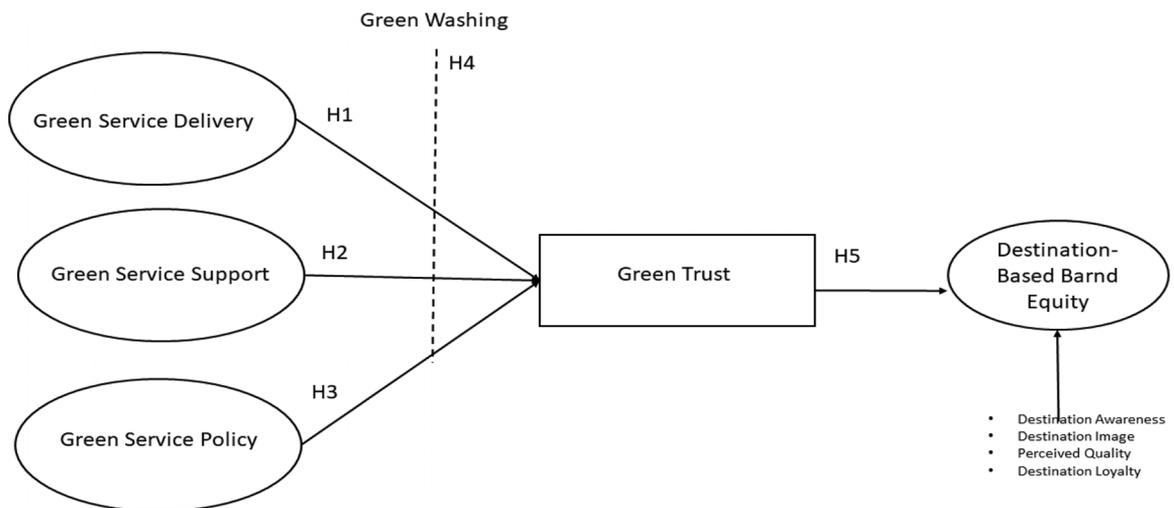

Figure 1. Conceptual framework built on the S-O-R framework (Russell & Mehrabian, 1974).

equity and to measure related variables (Boo et al., 2009; Keller, 2003; Lindermann, 2004). To summarize, the proposed research framework presents the green attributes of the destination (stimuli) implying the consumers' intrinsic states/evaluations of green trust (organism), resulting in destination-based brand equity (responses).

Green Trust

Trust is the basic constituent that is essential for long-lasting business and its sustainable development and facilitates long-term relationships among stakeholders. Trust also depicts the belief about the other party's behavior (Hart & Saunders, 1997). Previous researches have acknowledged that the green trust presence in the model of the environment protection explains its predicative power. Ganesan (1994) explained trust as a degree of faith in the opposite entity or individual based on the expectation about that entity's perceived performance, dependability, and benevolence. Thus, green trust is also the extent of believing other party for their ability, reliability, and benevolence regarding the environmental performance (Chen & Chai, 2010). From the last few years, business owners have started fabricating about environmental practices and performance of their products or service operations and that is where consumers have lost their trust (Kalafatis et al., 1999). Therefore, green trust assumes a lot of importance nowadays.

Green Attributes

Attributes are normally implied as the dimensions of product or service. When consumers evaluate the performance of any product or service, it basically gets influenced by the attributes of an offering (Oliver, 2010). American Hotel & Lodging Association [AHLA] (2011) described "green attributes" as unique and those satisfy more than ego-utilitarian needs. As more and more concern is raising towards environmental protection, all major industry players in hospitality are gearing towards a more "green" way of running a business. The hospitality sector seeking to increase profits, become a good citizen, and to beat competition needs to be concerned about their green operations (Li et al., 2010). Various green practices that organizations can adopt include minimizing use of nonrecycled products, resource overuse, and use of chemical products (DiPietro et al., 2013). Many studies in the past have investigated the origin of green attributes from the distinctive nature of a group of attributes. One such group provided attributes in restaurant business as meal-focused, environment-focused, and operations-focused attributes (Dutta et al., 2008). Jang et al. (2011) described other attributes applicable to hospitality sector that includes reclaiming salvage and composting, water and energy efficiency services, biodynamic and sustainable ingredients, policy regarding waste management, conserving energy, and reduction of pollution.

A prominent aspect of green practices has been provided by Wong et al. (2014) in the service industry. There are two broad dimensions that need to be included in the study as "green service delivery" and "green service support." Although the former represents extension of services in an environmental consciousness phase, the latter constitutes peripheral services such as inquiry through online mode, maintaining the products, and managing the product life cycle in eco-friendly ways. However, the most broadened scope of green attributes has been provided by an earlier study by Harter and Sova (2010) that suggested four components of green service practices, namely, "supply chain," "internal operations and governance," "green offerings," and "marketing and communications." This classification includes a wide range of activities such as adopting renewable energy-based items, leveraging new green technologies in business, lowering down the use of material support (e.g., paper, plastic), lessen the travel requirements (e.g., teleconferences), driving the efficient programs towards e-billing, managing waste and salvage reclaiming, developing package of green practices, minimizing carbon footprints, developing green shop, assessing the technology life cycle and creating brands as green partners, launching green campaigns, and finally undertaking environmental audits. In addition to these, researchers have referred to various other green attributes, such as assessment of carbon credits earned, paperless transactions, use of renewable energy sources in operations, funding green projects, construction of green buildings, planting trees, and environmental

awareness generation programs, which have been adopted by firms in the service sector. Guided by the green marketing and responsibility towards society, scholars have proposed three dimensions of green practices: health concerns, environmental concerns, and social concerns (Kwok et al., 2016).

Previous researchers have studied the association between green attributes and customer satisfaction and between green trust and customer satisfaction (Slevitch et al., 2013). As Oliver (2010) suggested, attributes migrate from one classification to another because of competing services sometimes duplicate each other's features and that creating "new" essentials to be perceived greener by the consumers. The service literature already extend support in understanding the anecdotal evidence about green service practices when considered to be different than competing services of competitors, generates more customer satisfaction towards improved environmental performance and ecotourism is the perfect example of how environment conscious consumers value the green service delivery provided by business owners (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007).

We argue that embedding green service delivery into the organizational processes and tourism industry's strategic decisions will reduce the adverse impact on environment; thus, would be able to provide the evidence of enhanced environmental performance to generate and restore the faith of tourists into destination as a brand. The above theoretical argument posits the following hypothesis:

H1: Green service delivery of tourism services positively affects the green trust of the tourist.

The environmental impact caused by "sustainable production and consumption" can be reduced with green service support. This may include using the digital service channel that will be innovative and web based with easy user interface (Smith & Eroglu, 2009). It could be online service provided to tourists in arranging their visits to the destinations. Organizations practicing the green service support tend to improve the customer satisfaction by way of improving service quality of allied services (Kassinis & Soteriou, 2003). This will also help in understanding the tourists' needs and gives them clear picture to believe that firm's green support service reduces the adverse environmental

impact while managing tourist destination programs. Based on the above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Green service support of tourism services positively effects the green trust of the tourist.

Another approach discussed by Chou (2014) in context of hotel business is to have green policy and eco-specific task training among employee as when the employees work in tandem with the environmental policy, customers will be aware about such practices. Hunter (1997) pointed out that the green policy advocates two levels of environment protection; in other words, light greeners (ensuring sufficient environmental quality) and dark greeners (actively protecting the natural environment). Many studies in the recent past have measured the relationship between green policy and customer satisfaction (Robinot & Giannelloni, 2010; Slevitch et al., 2013). Further, the concept that green policies are perceived favorable by customers has been studied. If customers perceived the green policy as favorable, they may have trust in the organization's services. The above argument can be best explained with the following hypothesis:

H3: Green service policy of tourism positively effects the green trust of the tourist.

Moderating Role of Greenwashing

Greenwashing is termed as false information dissemination about ecological practices to set an eco-friendly public image. Lippert (2011) mentioned greenwashing as precursor to whitewashing, which is value creation illegally. Many studies previously used variety of research measures to study greenwashing as deceptive manipulation, selective disclosure that includes confusing labels and authorization (Jerónimo et al., 2020). Some authors seconded this point that competing labels and environmental practices of different business owners creates confusion and provides an opportunity for greenwashing (Lyon & Montgomery, 2015). Though authorization of the green standards over product/service labels may control the problem of greenwashing but it cannot eliminate its possibility completely. The concept of greenwashing has been

examined in many industries in developed nations; however, its applicability in tourism remains under-researched in emerging markets.

Many studies conducted in the green service domain to investigate the green purchase intention identified the role of perceived greenwash moderating all the significant antecedents in the frameworks established (Guo et al., 2014; Rejikumar, 2016). Leonidou et al. (2013) provided an argument that greenwashing negates the effect on the reputation of firm by the consumers evaluation and attitude towards the service. As greenwashing messages will generate the doubt in the mind of the consumers (Parguel et al., 2015), consumers tend to evaluate the green service attributes firmly and be suspicious about them and once they turn out to be false marketing, there will be negative impact on firm's credibility, perceived organizational performance, company's market value, purchase intention (Du, 2015; Hwang & Zhang, 2018), and green trust (Chen & Chang, 2013). Based on the notion that not every tourism service provider offers "green services" and taking into consideration moderating role of greenwashing affecting the relationships between green attributes and green trust, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H4: Greenwashing moderate the negative relationship between green delivery, green support, green policy, and green trust.

Destination Brand Equity

Destination offers experiences with its five constituents: attractions, varied facilities and services, ease of access, perceived image, and cost to the visitor (Middleton & Clarke, 2001). Previous studies estimated that destinations among all the offerings are more difficult to manage and markets as it involves complex associations among its stakeholders (Buhalis & O'Connor, 2005). Thus, destination brands are at high risk as what it constitutes are easy to manipulate, sometimes intentionally and most of the time just natural. Despite that, destinations are evolving themselves as a destination brand in order to compete in today's competitive environment because the major contribution to country's economy comes from tourism sector (Tasci & Gartner, 2007). Further, Tasci and Gartner

(2007) highlighted the need for market or tourist to understand the effects of advertisement on tourists' experience, knowledge, and awareness that are built by advertisements. Moreover, destination image has to be managed by the marketers by taking necessary actions and also to attract tourists' attention that creates loyalty ensuring tourists' revisit (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Thus, García et al. (2012) posited that the destination branding can be explained with the traditional components of image, awareness, loyalty, and perceived quality. These elements have been defined by David Aaker (1991) in the brand equity model. Further, Keller (2003) identified the contribution of marketing program in establishing the brand equity and defined brand equity as "the different effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (p. 63). There have been many studies around brand equity and brand loyalty in the literature of marketing (Aaker, 1996; Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Keller, 2003); however, the destination brand equity has got little attention. This research has incorporated findings of the destination-based brand equity conceptual models (e.g., Chi et al., 2020; Dahiya & Batra, 2017; Gartner, 2014). Kim and Kim (2005) defined tourism-related brand equity as perceptual equity (image, awareness, perceived quality) and later on perceived loyalty also became the important factor of brand equity. Over a period of time, tourism marketers have reflected upon the important role of brand equity in marketing destinations. Measuring brand equity directly will be challenging for a destination as it is complex and involves both tangible and intangible elements and it can be measured only with the application of brand equity dimensions (Boo et al., 2009).

Destination Image

An understanding about destination image is important as it influences the process of decision making undertaken by tourists all the time. Boulding (1993) identified the image components of cognitive (things we know already), affective (how we feel about something), and conative (the actions we take based on what we know). Destination image is conceptualized as the individual's opinions and impressions about a particular destination (Papadimitriou et al., 2015). There has been an extensive

literature developing the concepts and measurement instruments of destination image. Majority of these studies consider destination image as multidimensional variable with two components; cognitive evaluations and affective evaluations of a place, a combination of which produce tourist's general image (Chen & Tsai, 2007).

Destination Awareness

Aaker model of brand equity explains brand awareness as the possibility for customers to recall and be aware of a brand. The activities related to destination marketing aims to generate awareness and impact positively the other dimensions of brand equity (Lee et al., 2015). In tourism, awareness has an important role to play for tourists' intentions. Destination marketers must provide information as a part of promotion regarding visuals embedded in the destination marketing to create awareness (Jago et al., 2003). Previous empirical researches also show that destination brand awareness contributes to brand value (Ruão et al., 2016).

Perceived Quality

Assessing brand equity is a very difficult task. Perceived quality is defined as customer perception towards superiority of brand and its performance when compared to other competing brands (Aaker, 1996). Researchers believed that quality is a psychological assessment that depends on perceptual gap between tourist's expected level of experience and actual level of experience (Saleem et al., 2015). Many researchers in the past have referred perceived quality as a variable to measure brand equity in tourism field (Baalbaki & Guzman, 2016; Boo et al., 2009). The quality evaluations are changing as leisure standards have been rising with the increase in the level of experience of travelers. A study on quality, meeting or exceeding expectations of tourists, is an important driver to measure brand equity.

Destination Loyalty

Aaker (1996) defined loyalty to be one of the most sought dimensions of brand equity because it helps in analyzing vulnerability to competitor's actions. There has to be emotional and rational appeal to satisfy when acknowledging the brand loyalty (Veríssimo et al., 2017). Destination loyalty in tourism research has been a new phenomenon that was developed in a conceptual manner by researchers (Boo et al., 2009; Han et al., 2009). In this article brand loyalty is studied as a resulting variable influenced by the green tourism attributes. Previous studies considered tourist's experiences and their repetitive visits as key attribute of brand loyalty (Razzaq et al., 2017). Thus, the emotional aspect of loyalty involves observation of tourists and rational aspect involves repurchasing intentions (Härtel & Russell-Bennett et al., 2010).

A debate around whether nations can and should be branded is in existence for a long time and unlike corporate image, it is different to build and defend the nation's brand equity (Insch & Florek, 2008). Despite the challenges, nations have benefited from implementing destination branding strategies and it has led to improved standard of living and they find it's quite hard to reflect the nation into single positioning statement that would appeal to tourists around the world. In regard to this, green position of the destination offers the opportunity to the nations to be unique and organizations in the tourism industry have been investing to follow practices to become green destination brand by influencing the perception of customers towards its image, preference, and loyalty (Lu & Cai, 2011). Another study by T. B. Chen and Chai (2010) identified that a green image resulting from green branding efforts got the significant impact from the trust that people have towards the company being environment friendly. Further, it was mentioned that brands having high awareness is due to the trust and loyalty of the consumers. Thus, a destination needs to have a positive green brand developed from the tourists' trust if the green services fulfill the criteria to increase the trust by eliminating greenwashing. Following the above argument, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H5: Green trust of tourism services positively influence the destination brand equity.

Measures

The constructs formulated in the present research includes multiple items and each of the item is

measured on a 7-point Likert scale. The measurement items of each latent construct have been carefully adopted from the previous researches and modified properly in language to make it more understandable for the target audience. The six measurement items for green service delivery, seven items of green service policy, and six items of green service support were adapted from the work of Robinot and Giannelloni (2010). Four items to measure green trust have been taken from Chen and Chai (2010). The dimensions of destination brand equity, namely destination image, awareness, loyalty, and perceived quality were adopted from the study of Boo et al. (2009). Items used to measure greenwashing were adopted from the study of Horiuchi et al. (2009) and Laufer (2003).

Methodology

Quantitative research methodology was adopted to analyze the data collected through questionnaires. The survey focused on Indian travelers who have visited green destinations of India (as mentioned by greendestination.org). The research team strategically selected three eco-friendly destinations of India, namely Khangchendzonga National Park in Sikkim, LahaulSpiti in Himachal Pradesh, and from Goa, Parambikulam Tiger Reserve. The selection of these destinations is based upon the green attributes of the destination that attracted tourists. The data were collected taking the help of 15 local travel agencies in these three different cities. The responses were obtained by these agencies from mid-January to mid-March 2020. In carrying out the research, pens, keyrings, and diaries were provided as tokens of appreciation to the respondents. Prior to final data collection, a pilot study was conducted to check the internal reliability of the items with the help of a sample of 27 respondents who had visited the green destination and also from the expert of tourism studies. All 27 respondents were requested to assess the length, statements, and format of the scales of the instrument. The pilot study resulted minor necessary changes in the wording of some statements, and after getting the constructive feedback was also included in the final questionnaire. In total, 1,100 forms were distributed, and 739 responses were received back. The responsive rate is calculated as 67.18%, which

is better as compared to those of other surveys in the same industry (Canina et al., 2010). One-way Anova was conducted to test the differences among these samples (Armstrong & Overton, 1977), as the participants to the survey were the tourists from different cities who visited green destination, and the results provided that there are no significant differences.

Analysis

PLS-SEM technique using Smart PLS-3 has been undertaken for this study. PLS-SEM is considered to be a well-substantiated method for studying the complex cause–effect relationship models in social science research (Gudergan et al., 2008). Further, where the model consists of reflective and formative modeling, the PLS-SEM in SmartPLS offers high degree of elasticity in complex models and that is why it is widely used multivariate analysis (Hair et al., 2017, 2020). PLS-SEM provides results in two stages, consisting of Stage 1, which examines the measurement model giving varied results depending upon the model being reflective. If the model is good fit, then the second stage involves evaluating the SEM (Hair et al., 2014). To summarize, first-order measurement provides whether the model if fit for further analysis and second-order measurement integrates the entire model to prove whether structural relationships are significant and relevant while testing the hypotheses.

To access the minimum requirement of the sample size for statistical power, G*Power (Faul et al., 2009) was used, which indicated the sample size to be 189 responses is required to achieve a statistical power of 95%. Thus, a sample size of 739 was good enough to be reliable when they certainly exit in the population.

Reliability and Validity

Four components were considered to assess the measurement model: individual item reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. To evaluate the reliability of the measurement model for PLS-SEM, tests of indicator and construct reliability or internal consistency should be conducted accordingly. All internal reliability checks were examined through Cronbach's

Table 1
Scale Items & Construct Reliability and Validity

Dimensions/Items	Loading	VIF	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Green service delivery			0.876	0.876	0.907	0.619
GSD1	0.765	1.818				
GSD2	0.808	2.143				
GSD3	0.824	2.403				
GSD4	0.811	2.204				
GSD5	0.808	1.994				
GSD6	0.696	1.433				
Green service policy			0.876	0.803	0.886	0.529
GSP1	0.647	1.941				
GSP2	0.701	1.988				
GSP3	0.844	3.335				
GSP4	0.812	3.517				
GSP5	0.732	2.992				
GSP6	0.649	3.824				
GSP7	0.905	3.124				
Green service support			0.743	0.416	0.641	0.673
GSS1	0.709	1.564				
GSS2	0.724	1.38				
GSS3	0.818	1.477				
GSS4	0.841	1.523				
GSS5	0.865	1.408				
GSS6	0.701	1.25				
Green trust			0.734	0.774	0.821	0.536
GT1	0.755	1.455				
GT2	0.736	1.741				
GT3	0.763	1.557				
GT4	0.769	1.007				
Greenwashing			0.621	0.464	0.618	0.327
GWA1	0.773	1.332				
GWA2	0.791	1.459				
GWA3	0.836	1.26				
GWA4	0.875	1.049				
GWA5	0.817	1.172				
Destination brand awareness			0.644	0.642	0.643	0.578
DBA1	0.812	2.534				
DBA2	0.873	2.442				
DBA3	0.763	1.285				
DBA4	0.714	1.293				
Destination brand image			0.754	0.789	0.841	0.573
DBI1	0.814	2.076				
DBI2	0.818	1.981				
DBI3	0.731	2.786				
DBI4	0.761	2.734				
Destination brand quality			0.614	0.648	0.717	0.638
DBQ1	0.788	3.058				
DBQ2	0.781	3.947				
DBQ3	0.774	4.017				
DBQ4	0.864	1.592				
Destination brand loyalty			0.781	0.846	0.869	0.642
DBL1	0.827	1.166				
DBL2	0.759	1.409				
DBL3	0.774	1.323				
DBL4	0.861	1.006				

Table 2

Discriminant Validity (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

	DBE	DBA	DI	DQ	DL	GSDS	GSP	GSS	GT
DBE	0.615								
DBA	0.652	0.565							
DI	0.256	0.559	0.662						
DQ	0.559	0.915	0.342	0.757					
DL	0.383	0.892	0.384	0.758	0.801				
GSDS	0.826	0.647	0.298	0.596	0.607	0.786			
GSP	0.511	0.804	0.297	0.944	0.597	0.557	0.653		
GSS	0.511	0.514	0.453	0.417	0.508	0.517	0.416	0.536	
GT	0.578	0.539	0.551	0.529	0.608	0.593	0.545	0.483	0.711

Note. DBE, destination brand equity; DBA, destination brand awareness; DI, destination image; DQ, destination quality; DL, destination loyalty; GSDS, green service delivery support; GSP, green service support; GT, green trust.

Table 3

Discriminate Validity Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT)

	DBE	DBA	DI	DQ	DL	GSDS	GSP	GSS	GT
DBE									
DBA	0.675								
DI	0.532	0.689							
DQ	0.671	0.558	0.587						
DL	0.455	0.629	0.439	0.702					
GSDS	0.782	0.758	0.402	0.570	0.503				
GSP	0.538	0.541	0.459	0.437	1.06	0.64			
GSS	0.607	0.122	0.142	0.053	0.052	0.063	0.049		
GT	0.201	0.153	0.237	0.074	0.06	0.132	0.062	0.109	–

Note. DBE, destination brand equity; DBA, destination brand awareness; DI, destination image; DQ, destination quality; DL, destination loyalty; GSDS, green service delivery support; GSP, green service support; GT, green trust.
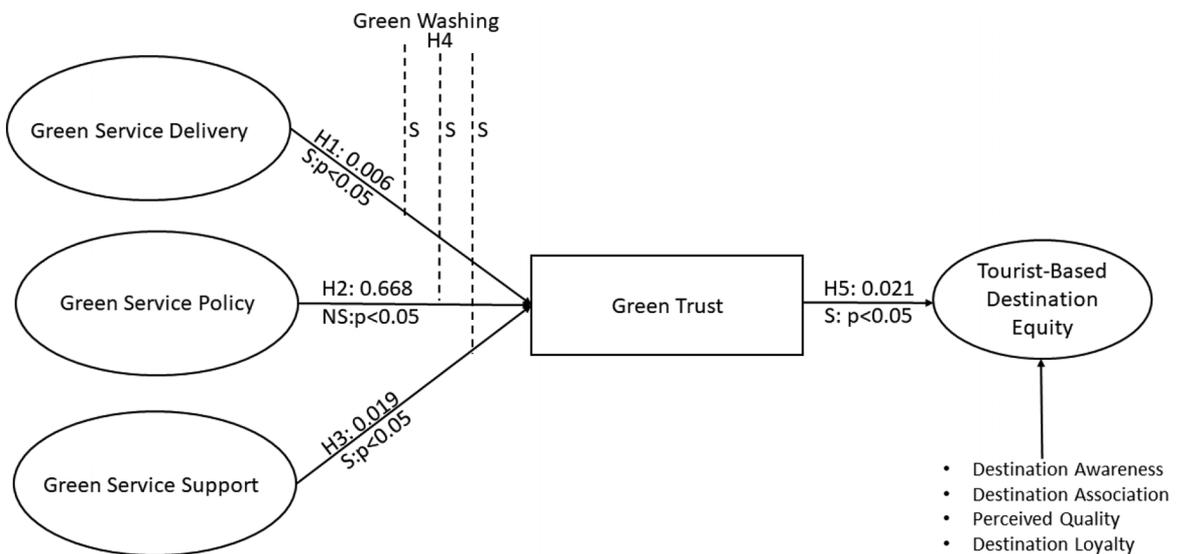
Figure 2. The structural model of antecedents and moderators moderation interaction effects. S, supported; NS, not supported.

alpha, Dijkstra and Henseler's rho (rhoA), composite reliability (CR) found to be above the threshold limit of 0.70 (Ali et al., 2018; Hair et al., 2017, 2020). The findings of internal reliability and convergent validity are explained in Table 1. The table shows that the CR and Cronbach's alpha for each of the latent variables in the measurement model are greater than 0.8. Therefore, the measurement model has internal consistency and acceptable reliability.

The discriminant validity was assessed by inspecting the outer loadings as per Fornell–Larcker criterion (Table 2) and the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations (Table 3). Firstly, no cross-loadings reported and the square root of the AVEs was found to be higher than the correlations among the variables. Moreover, the HTMT ratios of correlations were below the recommended threshold of 0.90 (Gold et al., 2001). The latest criterion clarifies that all HTMT values >1, as suggested by HTMT inference method, nevertheless, to be on a stricter note HTMT ratio of correlations with a maximum ratio of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015; Voorhees et al., 2016) and 0.9 are permissible limits (Gold et al., 2001).

Structural Model Assessment

The structural model is finalized with examining the measurement model results carefully. PLS-SEM does not have a standard goodness-of-fit statistic, and an attempt to establish a corresponding statistic is a daunting task (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013). The underlying criteria have been finalized for the model assessment: coefficient of determination (R^2), cross-validated redundancy (Q^2) and the path coefficients. Prior to this assessment, the researchers tested the structural model for potential multicollinearity among the constructs. The examination

Table 4
Structure Model Analysis

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Q^2 (= 1-SSE/SSO)
Green trust	0.018	0.006
Destination based brand equity	0.005	0.002

Note. The cross-validated redundancy Q^2 was obtained using blindfolding procedure with an omission distance of seven.

of the endogenous constructs' predictive power (Fig. 2) shows that green trust and destination brand equity, the primary outcome measure of the model, has a substantial R^2 value 0.018 and 0.005. Blindfolding procedure was used with an omission distance of seven to have better prediction for each of the latent construct. Further, the analysis was done to check the relationship between latent variables. The R^2 value check measures the strength of the least-squares fit to the latent variables. Further, the Q^2 value generated by a blindfolding procedure was larger than zero, indicating the predictive relevance of the structural model (Hair et al., 2010) (Table 4).

The association between the testing variables and their predictive sig. was investigated in the model created (Hair et al., 2017). The bootstrapping process was conducted with recommended 5,000 bootstraps without sign change in order to access the required p values for the hypotheses framed in the study (Hair et al., 2020). The t value significance of the path coefficients at 5% significance level is 1.96. This value for all the corresponding path coefficients should be above 1.96. The path analysis indicates that family well-being is positively related to resilience ($p < 0.01$). The results show a positive impact of green attributes of destination on green trust, it means green attributes created more trust of tourist on destination, except the green service policy attribute of destination. The path coefficient

Table 5
Hypotheses Testing

Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	*T* Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	*P* Values
H1: Green service delivery support → Green trust	0.129	0.126	0.046	2.781	0.006
H2: Green service policy → Green trust	−0.03	−0.014	0.069	0.429	0.668
H3: Green service support → Green trust	0.094	0.056	0.116	0.808	0.019
H5: Green trust → Destination brand equity	0.078	0.076	0.05	5.553	0.021

$(\beta = 0.46, t = 1.781, p < 0.01)$ and $(\beta = 0.11, t = 8.80, p < 0.01)$ are significant; therefore, H1 and H2 are supported, which shows that green service delivery and green service support at destination positively related to green trust. The results verify the hypotheses connecting green trust $(\beta = 0.33, t = 5.55, p < 0.01)$ to destination brand equity. Surprisingly, the findings imply that the third attribute of green destination green service policy "does not" support to build green trust of tourist. Therefore, hypotheses H1, H2, and H5 are accepted, while hypothesis H3 is rejected (Table 5).

Moderating Effect of Greenwashing

Drawing on Hair et al. (2017), greenwashing role in the model was taken as a moderator variable that assumed to negatively influence the relationship between attributes of green destination and green trust. The measurement models of green service support, green service delivery, green service policy draw on three reflective items each, whereas greenwashing is measured with five reflective items. Using the product-indicator approach with unstandardized data produces highly divergent results. In the context of interaction effects, all three effects were moderating the relationship as the p value is less than 0.05. Therefore, greenwashing significantly moderates the proposed relationship in the study (Table 6).

Discussion

This article provides sufficient explanation to the notion that the green attributes of destination delivery and support has a significant influence on building the green trust of the tourist towards the green destination, thus supporting H1 and H3. Similarly, results proved significant relationship of green

trust with the destination brand equity, therefore supporting H5. This particular finding supports the similar research setting carried out by Wang and Hsu (2010). Regarding the succeeding hypothesis, alike previous studies, analysis also shows direct relationship among the green attributes of destination, which when implemented leads to indirect association with the destination brand equity of the tourist. Similarly, the empirical results depict a direct relationship among green trust and destination brand equity.

This study employed both the factors that were identified through previous studies and the factors that are generated from responses of travel agencies in order to predict the tourists' response towards green attributes. Our study explored people's perception towards green attributes of destination and how it affects the dimensions of brand equity related to destination marketing. The findings are consistent with the previous literature that shows tourism organizations like destination marketing organizations (DMO) and Indian Tourism Development Corporation always feel pressure from different stakeholders, such as the government, local residents, and tourists to adopt green management practices for overall managing the destinations (Bagur-Femenias et al., 2015; Chan & Wong, 2006; Clark, 1999; Rodríguez-Antón et al., 2012). Recent researchers suggested that environmental beliefs in form of green attributes for destinations may partially decide the choice to engage in proenvironmental hospitality consumption behavior (e.g., readiness to pay extra for sustainable products, staying at a green hotel, etc.) (Kang et al., 2012; Ryu & Han, 2011), but such ideologies underestimate the complete understanding of the factors impacting consumer behavior towards green destination and its impact on destination brand equity (Barber & Deale, 2014; Griskevicius et al., 2010).

Table 6
Moderating Effect of Greenwashing (Interaction Effect)

Interaction Effects	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Effect 1: Green service delivery → Green trust	0.024	0.013	0.062	0.386	0.020
Effect 2: Green service support → Green trust	0.029	0.019	0.063	0.461	0.040
Effect 3: Green service policy → Green trust	0.027	0.023	0.041	0.659	0.010

One interesting finding of our study is that the green attributes of destination, which is an independent factor, can significantly influence the trust of the tourists if the marketers' effort towards sustainable development of tourism is genuine, not fake. This has been supported by measuring the role of appropriate moderation by greenwashing. One possible explanation is that if the organizations do not produce substandard solutions to the concern of ecotourism and their efforts towards adoption of green services, practices, and policies are genuine, this will enhance the trust and also lead to develop the positive destination brand equity.

Prior studies have indicated that travelers have become more environmentally conscious, and this study gives more clarity in identifying those travelers based on their motivation. The study indicated that the more involvement of the tourist makes them feel like home, implying greater emphasis on the green attribute in external space. Destination and hotel managers better sell their property by bundling location, price, and green attributes into an attractive package to encourage this behavior. Broadly speaking, the results suggest that attributes of green destination is significantly affected by the consumer's perception of the destination and its attributes.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

Although the idea of sustainability towards nature and ecotourism destinations is not novice, fewer studies have been done on the application sustainability concepts in urban tourism (Miller et al., 2015). This research contributes to extend the theory and literature in multiple ways. First, this article provides an alternative theoretical lens to study the current context. More than 60% of the publications on tourism and hospitality research have used "theory of reasoned action" or "the theory of planned behavior" or as the theoretical viewpoint (Guo et al., 2018). This article used the S-O-R framework to propose the association of "green attributes & green trust" with destination-based brand equity. This framework built on strong theoretical foundation can help refine and strengthen future research on the green trust and destination-based equity of tourists in the context of green destinations. Second, this study empirically

investigated the influence of green attributes with destination brand equity. So, the findings indicate that (1) green attributes of a destination result in an increased level of green trust, (2) which translates into improved destination brand equity, and (3) greenwashing inhibits the tourists' trust towards the destination. The finding about greenwashing is particularly important because, on the one hand, tourists appreciate the destination marketers' intent to implement green activities positively; only pretend to follow green practices and faking it will strongly affect the tourists' attitudes and dampen their trust towards the destination.

Consistent with our predictions, our research has significant managerial implications for destination marketers. Our results establish the drawbacks of not honoring the commitment (greenwashing). Tourism organizations must walk the talk. They need to talk about the green attributes only if they implement green activities. Failure to enforce green activities may do more harm and will reduce tourists' trust, which is vital for positive destination brand equity.

Future Research Directions and Limitations

The article notes several possible limitations of the research. First, we investigated three attributes of green destinations, although there may be more attributes one can consider for future research. For example, we haven't considered the impact of destination crowding or perceived enjoyment, which may impact destination brand equity. Second, our data is cross-sectional. Hence, we may have missed out upon the temporal changes in the "green satisfaction," "green image," "green trust," and the "destination brand equity." In subsequent studies, a longitudinal design can overcome this limitation.

Third, the data collection for this study happened at three destinations in an emerging economy, where destination marketers may not be penalized for greenwashing. However, it is possible that in a developed market, the impact of greenwashing is minimized due to government regulations. Thus, it would be motivating to replicate the current study in a developed economy.

Future studies conducted considering other avenues of green attributes such as green channels that contribute and enhance the future studies. The

studies like moderating effect of green attributes can add new dimensions in the literature. The mediating effect greenwashing can also be a scope for future studies.

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