

E-policing and ICT Based Tourism Industry: Opportunity or A Challenge to Cox's Bazar Tourist Police?

Md. Zillur Rahman
Superintendent of police
SP, Cox's Bazar Region

Abstract:

Recent past has witnessed much expansion of science and IT. This expansion has led to the concept 'Digital Bangladesh' where the vision of Bangladesh government is making an e-state. Such vision and digitalization compelled the police sector in going virtual especially for tourist police as all sectors including tourism has become ICT based. This study focuses on the perception and knowledge of Cox's Bazar tourist police about using E-policing in booming ICT based tourism industry. It investigates the readiness of them to solve, tackle and manage aroused problems in this tech-based industry to serve tourists more quickly and effectively. Research found tourist police having little knowledge on the concept with lack of training and mental readiness to accept new technologies.

Date of Submission: 26-10-2020

Date of Acceptance: 06-11-2020

I. INTRODUCTION:

Focusing on the political campaign "Charter for Change", Bangladesh Awami League developed their ninth parliamentary election manifesto in 2009. One major vision of the "Charter for Change" was to reach the goal of a "Digital Bangladesh" by 2021 which worked well for them to win a convincing success in the election. Since then, 'Digital Bangladesh- Vision 2021' has become a buzzword which attracted the whole nation especially youths creating bigger hope and enthusiasm to have a digitalized country.

Vision 2021 has a lot in it, but in simple terms digital Bangladesh means it will be an e-state. All activities from governance to commerce, from education to agriculture will be empowered by technology and internet. Here, core emphasis will be given to ICT sector implementing the promises in education, health, job placement and poverty reduction. It also assures to build such a system, where every citizen will receive corruption and hassle-free services in local, national and international spheres.

Both Information and communication are important keys for tourism sector. People travel for business, leisure or recreational purposes to world's largest sea beach, Cox's Bazar. Not only for Bangladeshi travelers, Cox's Bazar is a popular destination for foreigners as well. To cope up with the increasing interest of travelers and to boost the tourism sector, the present government has introduced a tourist police unit under the surveillance of Bangladesh police. Tourist polices are not only dedicated to the physical protection of travelers, they have the mission to prevent mistreatment and harassment. From modern age cybercrimes to provide updated knowledge about tourism police personnel needs wide ranging forms of information in the quickest way possible with the help of ICT.

E-Policing is not a new concept. In US, it has been in practice since 1997 (Thoyyib, 2019). According to chiefs of police (2014), 95% agencies in US use virtual policing in maintaining law and order in country. In Bangladesh, E-Policing concept is not popular, but activities like software use, CCTV surveillance and tracking are not new. It just didn't get the shape and form naming as the term 'E-Policing'. But, of course, these activities are not well practiced by every wing of Bangladesh Police.

Therefore, it is very important to digitalize the police force of Bangladesh alongside the special wing tourist police to facilitate safety, prevent crime and maintain law and order in a prominent tourist place, Cox's Bazar. This research aims to analyze the current knowledge-based perception of tourist police about e-policing and IT based tourism sector alongside the facing challenges to understand the overall condition of this newly inaugurated special wing. Also, it will explore the mental readiness of tourist police to solve, tackle and manage aroused problems in this tech-based industry to serve tourists even more quickly and effectively.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Swadia (2011) did a secondary study to analyze the new tourism policy of Government of Gujarat, India to make Gujarat one of the five topmost travel destinations. Analyzing five years data for this study, he tried to find out the key factors that worked for the growth of Gujarat tourism in this specific time frame.

Study found the use of ICT specially the mobile applications launched by tourist police and agencies are very much beneficial as per the new tourism policy. It highly appreciated the innovative practices took by the government to develop the tourism sector by coping up with globalization and new trends in ICT.

Bethapudi (2013) examined the importance of ICT in tourism industry and showed how ICT can shape and reshape the existing condition of E-tourism in India. He did a purposive sampling of 112 people related to tourism sector and explored how ICT is helping in business expansion, maintaining security of local and international tourists and minimizing suffering in just one click.

Findings gave more focus on recommendation part as most hotels and agencies are struggling to upgrade their booking and reservation systems. He found most agencies are not mentally prepared to accept ICT as a part of their professional activities. He suggested intensive training of the employees to make them comfortable enough with the use of technology.

Similar research has been done by Farkhondehzadeh et al (2013) in context of Iran. Using the buzzword 'E-Tourism' they also found enormous importance of ICT based tourism industry to attract the tourists worldwide. They focused more on marketing and branding their country and tourism sector internationally by using E-tourism especially with the help social media.

They have not only given general suggestions but also three success factors while accumulating IT in tourism industry. Those three factors are: Integration, Customization and Pro-activity. Integration of all variables that can be beneficial to tourists, customization of variables according to tourist need and then having an trial and error can make the industry capable enough in tourism. According to them, accumulation of these three factors will attract more tourists online and will help in boosting the economy of Iraq and can work in earning foreign currency in near future.

Researchers have conducted studies on the challenges and opportunities of tourist police also. Pradeep (2018) did a case on study paradigms in tourism where in chapter 2, he discussed the challenges faced by tourist police especially in preventing crime and harassment against tourist. He suggested several measures where he emphasized on security cameras and e-policing in maintaining discipline in tourist areas.

Several studies have been done on the importance and professional development of tourist police, no doubt. But majority of the studies are giving emphasize on increasing language efficiency (mostly English) to have smooth communication with tourists (Orellana et al, 2011; Pat, 2006; Aldohon, 2014). Very few researches have been done accumulating E-tourism and E-policing. Keeping that research gap in consideration, this research has been conducted to explore the e-policing challenges and opportunities of Cox's Bazar tourist police in modern ICT based tourism industry.

Research Objective:

It is quite evident that in this fast technologically driven world, ICT based tourism industry is also rapidly expanding. It is very important for the tourist police to have proper knowledge and understanding about this sector to ensure quality service, prevent harassment and crime and thus ensuring tourist satisfaction. The main objective of this study are as follows:

1. Understanding the current knowledge and perceptions of tourist police on ICT based tourism industry.
2. To find out the mental readiness of tourist police to learn newer ICT skills to solve, tackle and manage problems aroused in this sector.

Research Questions:

To meet the objectives of this research, answer to the questions below are worth finding:

1. What is the perception of tourist police towards ICT based tourism industry?
2. Are they mentally ready to accept this technology driven industry and to face newer problems?
3. What challenges are they facing in solve, tackle and manage aroused problems?

Theoretical Framework:

To analyze the opportunities and challenges faced by tourist police in E-policing and ICT based tourism industry, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is taken as the theoretical framework. This model is taken in reference to the work 'Artificial intelligence (AI) in Journalism: Is Bangladesh ready for it?' where the researchers (Goni & Tabassum, 2020) tried to find the readiness of Bangladeshi students in accepting newer technologies. This research is also exploring the technological acceptance of tourist police as ICT based tourism industry in is boom.

Introduced by Davis (1986) this model tries to explore how newer technologies are accepted by users. Foundation of this model is derived from Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) where they stated how beliefs influence attitude which change intention and thus create new behavior. This model gets modified by Venkatesh and Davis in 2000 where different variables has been mentioned which worked in accepting newer technologies.

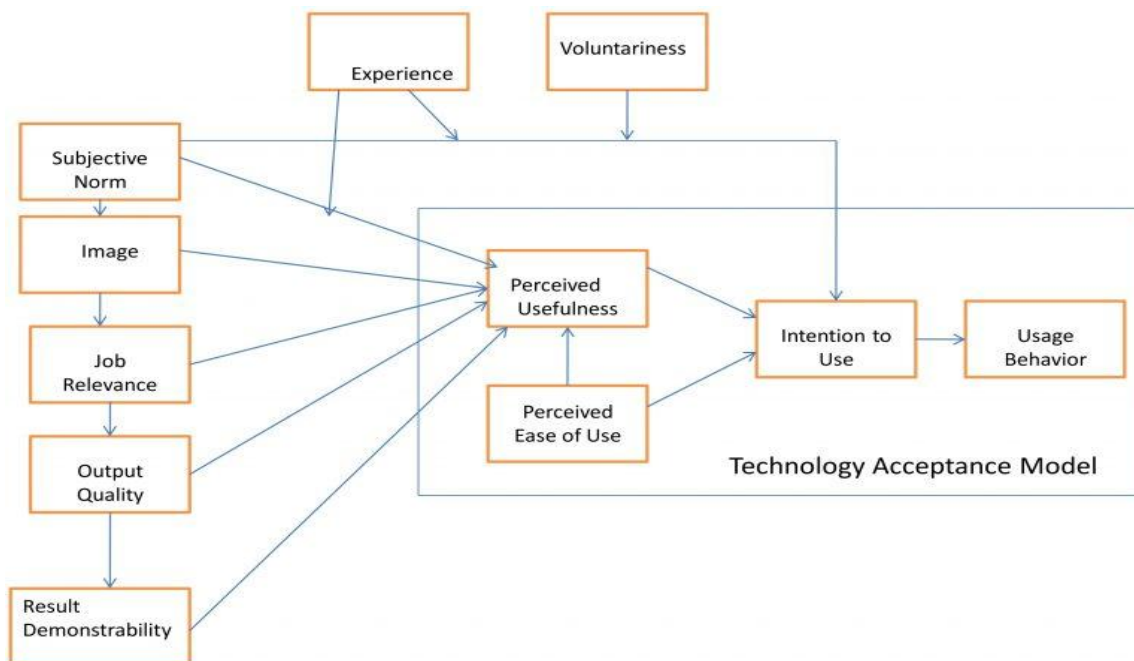


Figure 1: TAM 2 model. (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000)

Seven external variables got utmost importance in here to have influence in 'Perceive Usefulness' of a system use. The elaboration given by scholars are as follows:

Subjective Norms: A perception that an influential person is using the system, so user must use it also. (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 302)

Voluntariness: Users own perception of using it, not mandatory usage. (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000, p. 188)

Image: The usage may increase someone's social or professional status. (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 195)

Experience: The increased amount of orientation that create experience. (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000, p. 189)

Job relevancy: The individual perception how system learning can be beneficial for his/her job, can add value in resolving professional problems and increasing competency. (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000, p. 189)

Output Quality: The perception of individual how is the quality of the work that gives the maximum output. (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000, p. 189)

Result Demonstrability: Tangible results that can create maximum benefit now/in the long run with consistence system usage. (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 195)

All seven variables can greatly contribute to create a perception of usefulness among individual and thus can make the whole model successful in any particular system use. This study has analyzed the mental readiness of Cox's Bazar tourist police in accepting the system usage in their professional activities, how they are perceiving the usage of newer technologies.

Study Design (Research Method and Sampling)

This study followed a mixed-method approach to understand the mental readiness of tourist police to learn newer ICT skills to solve, tackle and manage problems in the tourism sector. The researcher applies a survey method to collect the quantitative data and Focus group discussion (FGD) for qualitative data. 20 survey questionnaires were asked among 123 respondents based on random sampling to prove the unbiased representation of the population (Hansen and Machin 2018)

This is a representative sample because all the participants represent all the necessary features for this research. For example, there are participants from different educational background, gender and age group. Most of the participants are from different designations and economic background. All 123 participants of this survey represent necessary diversity and background information related to this study. There were only 4 female participants meanwhile 119 participants were male. This ratio is also representative because there is only 7 female who worked for Cox's Bazar tourist police in Bangladesh.

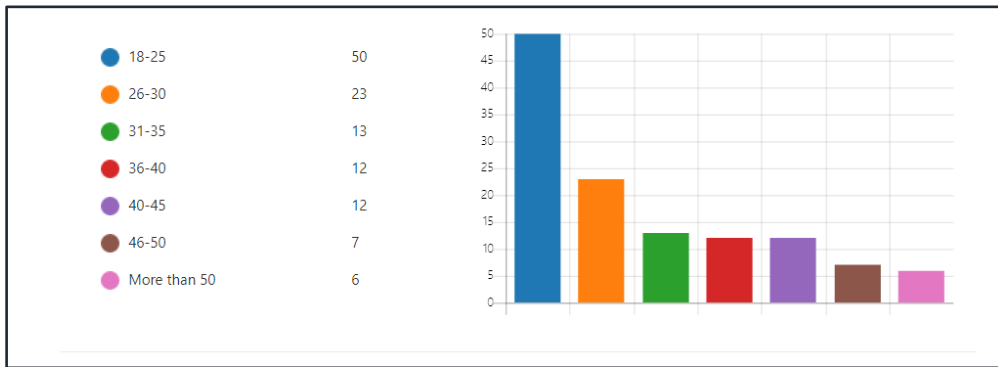


Chart 1: Representation of different age groups in the Survey sample

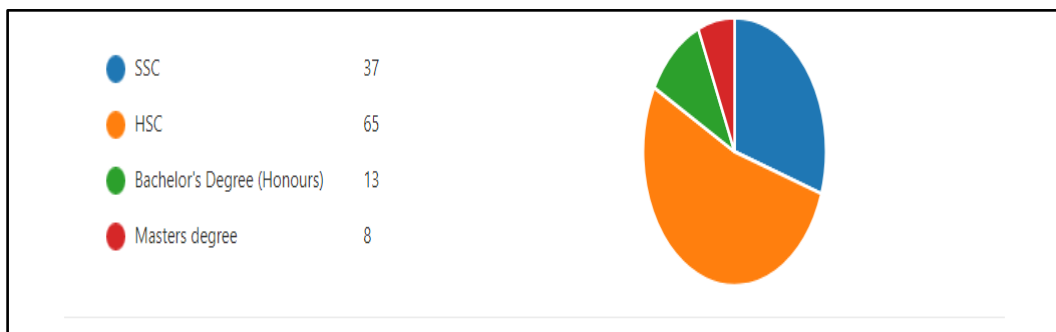


Chart: 2: Representation of different educational backgrounds of this survey sample

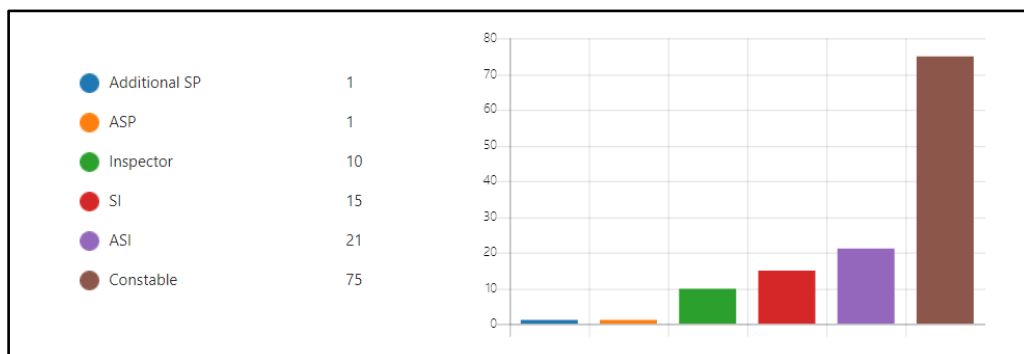


Chart: 3: Representation of different designations of this survey sample

The researcher has collected the individual respondent's data using an online survey form (MS form). To analyze the survey data researcher has used MS forms and computer data analysis programme (Microsoft Excel). The researcher selected the sample group for the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) from the survey data.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method was used for analyzing the perception of tourist police towards ICT based tourism industry and their challenges in this field. (O. Nyumba et al.2018) There were 20 respondents who had training on ICT and tourism and researcher have selected 10 individuals from them for Focus Group Discussion (FGD). There were 9 male and 1 female in this group.

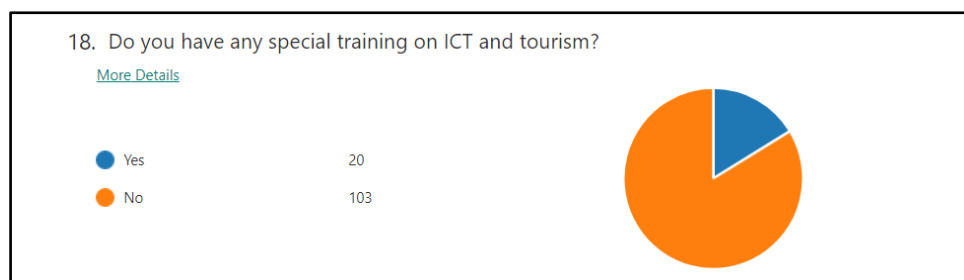


Chart 4: Selection of the member of FGD

With the consent of all FGD members focus group discussion was recorded in a mobile device and later researcher did a qualitative analysis of this discussion.

Data representation and findings of the study:

To have a better understanding of findings this study will present analysis the data into four phases.

1. Analysis on the uses of ICT among tourist police
2. Analysis of knowledge about 'e tourism' and related topics among the tourist police
3. Analysis of the challenges in 'E-policing 'and ICT based tourism sector
4. Are they mentally ready to accept it or not.

1. Analysis of the uses of ICT among tourist police

This study finds that almost every respondent (98%) in tourist police use internet and 81% of them use the internet on daily basis. These findings indicate that tourist police are using internet facilities and 81% of them are heavy user because they use the internet on daily basis. There is only 14% tourist police who use the internet once in a month and 5% of the respondents use the internet once in a week.

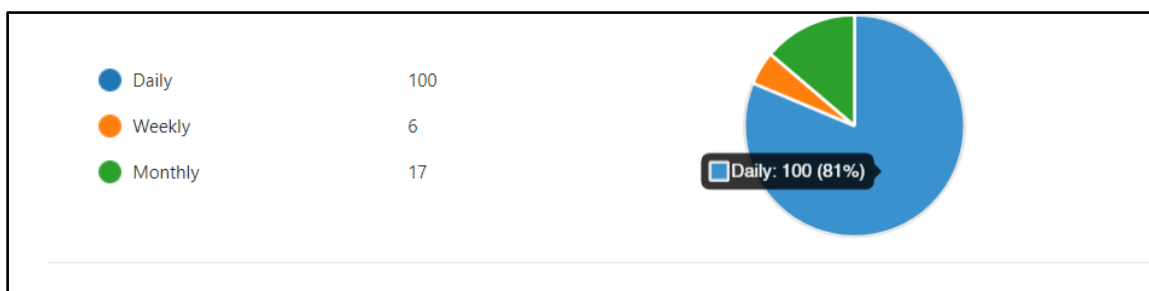


Chart 4: Using the tendency of the Internet among tourist police

If tourist police are using internet then the next question arises what they are doing on the internet? And the answer is most of them are using social media on the internet. The study finds that 94% of the respondent are using social media and all of them are using Facebook. Facebook is the most popular social networking site in Bangladesh and it ranked 3rd in the top sites in Bangladesh, just after Google and YouTube (Alexa 2020). . The other most popular apps among the tourist police are IMO and YouTube. Around 88% respondent use the social communication app IMO and 77% of the respondents use YouTube. The study also finds that the professional social networking site LinkedIn is the least popular among the tourist police. Less than 10% of respondents are using Twitter, Snap chat and Tik Tok meanwhile around 50% of the respondent are using Whats App for their social communication.

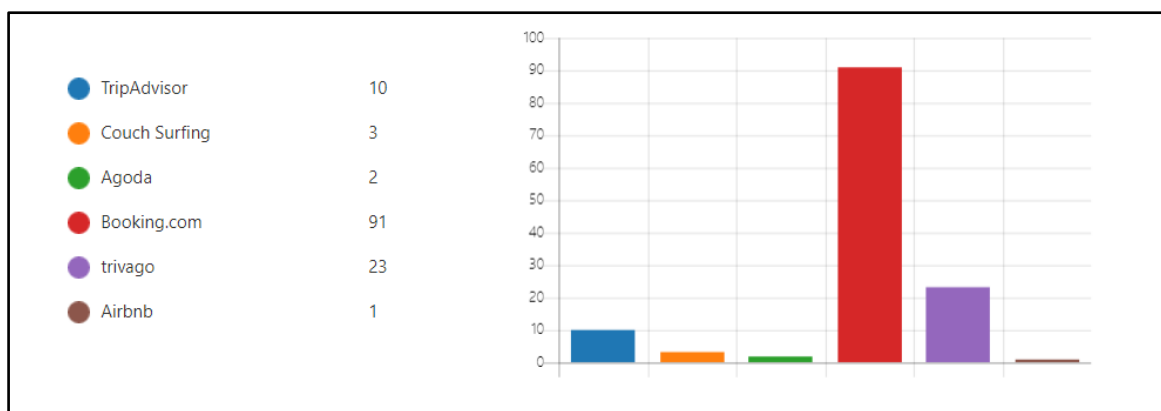


Chart 5: Popular social media among tourist police

The findings indicate that tourist police are using the mainstream social media in Bangladesh and they are an active citizen of digital culture. This findings also indicate that most of the tourist police are familiar with the recent ICT based development and they are familiar with the popular apps that have been used by the mass population of Bangladesh.

2. Analysis of knowledge about 'E- tourism' and related topics among the tourist police

One of the objectives of the study was to understand the tourist police knowledge and perceptions of ICT based tourism industry. The findings indicate that though a large number of tourist police are using the internet and social media they have less understanding of 'e tourism' and ICT based tourism industry. The study finds that 54% of the respondent have heard about the term e tourism meanwhile 46% of the tourist police have no idea about e tourism. Though 97% of tourist police have Facebook accounts only 11% of them are a member of any travellers group or tourist-related group on Facebook. The findings suggested that tourist police are less interested in travel-related issues in social media.

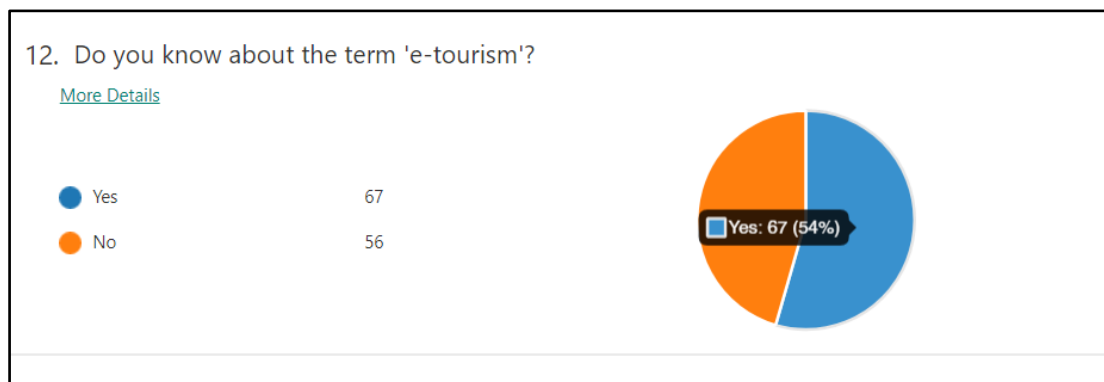


Chart 6: Primary knowledge about e tourism among the tourist police

The findings indicate that tourist police have less knowledge of tourism-related websites and apps. Booking.com is the most popular app among the tourist police and around 90% tourist police know about this app meanwhile less than 5% respondent know about Couch surfing, Air BNB and Agoda. This survey result indicates that tourist police have less knowledge about the recent development of app-based tourism though a large number of people are using online platform to book their holidays in Cox's Bazar.

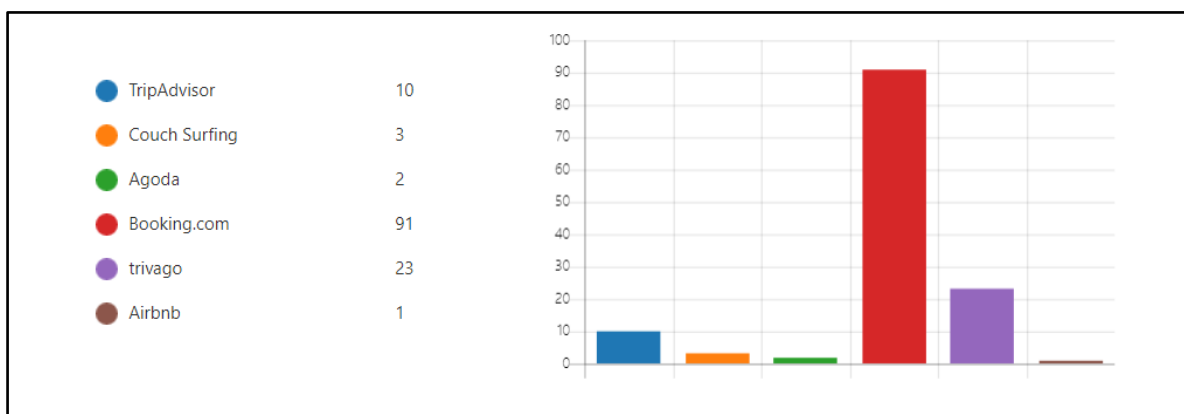


Chart 7: Primary knowledge about tourism-related websites and apps among the tourist police

The study finds that there is only 3% respondent who has worked in a cyber-security cell. This indicates that there only a few people who have training in advance ICT related issues. This study also finds that there is only a 16% respondent who had training in ICT and tourism. With these findings, the researcher explains the less knowledge of tourist police about tourism-related websites and apps. This study indicates that most of the tourist police don't have sufficient knowledge and training on ICT based tourism but 85% of respondent thinks that training on ICT and tourism will help you to provide better security and service to the tourist.

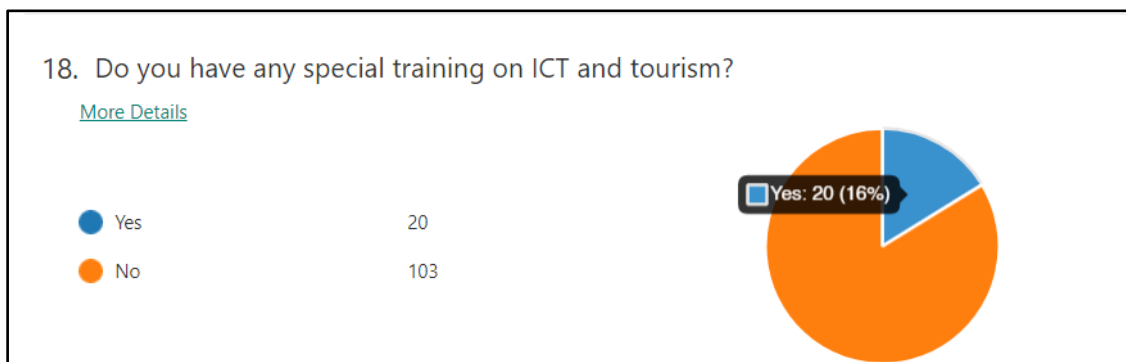


Chart 8: Training on ICT based tourism among the tourist police

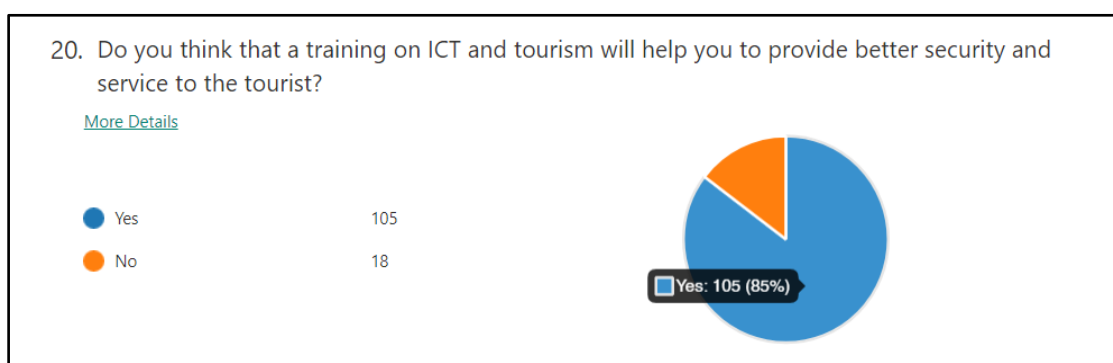


Chart 9: Mental readiness for ICT based tourism among the tourist police

The findings indicate that most of the tourist police don't have any training in ICT and tourism but they are mentally ready to take this challenge and adopt new technologies. In the focus group, discussion researcher will analyze prospects and challenges of ICT based tourism among the tourist police.

3. Analysis of the Challenges in 'E-policing' and ICT Based Tourism Sector

A focus group discussion with a group of tourist police revealed what challenges they are facing in solve, tackle and manage aroused problems which are discussed below.

As sated earlier, most of the tourist police are very much unaware about the recent development of ICT based tourism. While discussion, they could highly speak upabout some fraud agencies and hotel owners who post attractive advertisement on social media. According to them, tour operators are deceiving more via online media by giving fake offers of discounts and quality services. 50% of those offers are fake and creating tourist harassment.Irony is, they have no control over the information of tourists coming to Cox's Bazar. They hardly have any idea about online booking and service sites.Whenever something happens, there is no other way for them to know about the incident unless victim makes a call.

To make tourists feel safe and secure, Cox's Bazar tourist police launched one mobile app hello tourist on the year 2017 (Dhaka tribune, 2017). Not just with enriched contacts, hello tourist app got one SOS button in case of emergency for the tourists. But irony is, in spite of being a running app easily available on play store, tourist police themselves do not know how to properly utilize the app because of no prior training. One of the respondents said in three years they have only got two complains. Tourists do not know such an app exists, because of poor marketing and promotion.

Although survey found most of the tourist police as active users of social media, the official face book page lacks sufficient contents and page developments. Most of the respondents feel satisfied with the fact that, some tourists are calling them directly with the number provided in that page. They respondents have little idea about creating contents for social media, especially much needed information and latest updates.

The tourist police lack in 'E-policing' also. There is no surveillance camera across the city, the ship services to Saint Martinis also out of surveillance. There is no tracking device for them. They got contacted using the phone number when in danger. Ways of communication are still traditional and manual in nature. 'We demanded 360 degree cameras and night vision cameras for virtual monitoring, but do not know any update' one correspondent says.

One mentionable fact is, most of the respondents who are working manually (over phone and physical monitoring) cannot even feel the necessity of E-policing and how E-policing can make a big difference. One

respondent says, they know about some software used by Dhaka metropolitan police for tracking and E-policing services. They heard those software will be available to them soon, but that 'soon' is not even near.

4. Discussion on the mental readiness of tourist police:

From the survey and the focus group discussion, overall findings are not difficult to analyze. Although using social media, tourist police are actually not mentally ready to use 'E-policing' and the total concept of ICT based tourism industry.

According to the TAM 2 model, seven variables can work positively in creating perceived usefulness which will create the intention to use the technology and thus the usage behavior will get changed. In liner terms:

Variables → Perceived Usefulness → Intention to Use Usage → Behavior

Going with this liner representation of TAM 2 model, variables are not present here to get perceived usefulness. Seven variables work as a catalyst to create the necessity of using a technology and thus create the change. Tourist police of Cox's Bazar do not feel the urge to use technology, even to know about it because of the absence of variables that stimulate the readiness of learning and using a new technology.

According to the survey and FGD, majority of the tourist police confesses that ICT based policing is needed, but mostly do not have clear idea about what it actually means. They know that ICT can save their labor and save time, so 'Job relevance' variable is present here. But other six variables (Experience, Voluntariness, Subjective Norm, Image, Result Demonstrability and Output Quality) are not at all can be visible to create such necessity to learn and practice E-policing and IT knowledge.

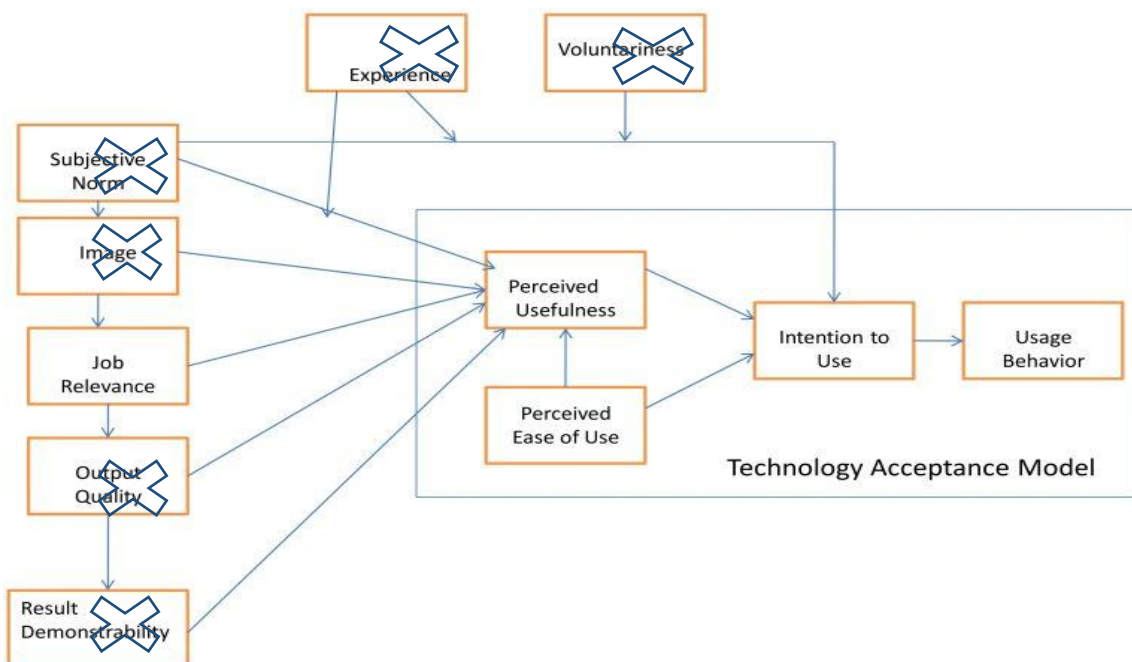


Figure 2: absence of variables among Cox's Bazar Tourist police

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Above discussion concluded that, E-policing and ICT has enormous importance in the field of tourism and tourist policing. In spite of having so many challenges, no alternative is there to keep pace with modern ICT based tourism industry. But to make it possible first tourist polices need to be trained well. To make them enthusiastic to learn and practice E-policing, proper motivation is needed. They need to be mentally ready by understanding the usefulness of ICT usage. All these will not come overnight. New Projects and Initiatives for tourist security and ICT based tourism should be implemented as soon as possible. Proper planning is needed from the grassroots level alongside infrastructural development to get the best outcome of system use.

The Bangladesh Police of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is a law enforcement agency, operating under the Ministry of Public Affairs. It plays a crucial role in maintaining peace and enforcement law and order within Bangladesh. Tourist police are facing multifarious problems to provide safety and security to the tourist especially online hotel booking, online purchasing travel ticket for going to Saint Martin, Credit Card fraud, secret video capturing by the miscreants and post to YouTube, cheating of street food sellers, illegal drugs business by tourists, snatching parts, money bag, mobile etc. from tourist. Tourist police not yet cover the tourist

area by CC Cameras and other infrastructures are not tourist-friendly. Tourist police personnel should be trained on a different scale and their get up should be smart, young and energetic. Tourist police should have an ICT cell which led them to e-policing. Almost all the members of tourist police don't have ICT knowledge & training and they are not well acquainted with e-policing. It is the time to adopt modern technology and enhance ICT the knowledge of Police personnel is the frantic requirement of tourist police as well as the Bangladesh police.

REFERENCES:

- [1]. Aldohon, H. I. (2014). English for Specific Purposes (ESP) for Jordanian Tourist Police in Their Workplace: Needs and Problems. *International Education Studies*, 7(11), 56-67.
- [2]. Alexa. 2020. "Alexa - Top Sites in Bangladesh - Alexa." Retrieved September 27, 2020 (<https://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries/BD>).
- [3]. Bethapudi, A. (2013). The role of ICT in tourism industry. *Journal of applied economics and business*, 1(4), 67-79.
- [4]. Davis, F.D., Bagozzi, R.P. & Warshaw, P.R. (1989). User Acceptance of Computer Technology: A Comparison of Two. *Management Science*, 35(8), 982- 1001.
- [5]. Farkhondehzadeh, A., Robat Karim, M. R., Roshanfekar, M., Azizi, J., & Legha Hatami, F. (2013). E-Tourism: The role of ICT in tourism industry. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*, 2(3 (s)), pp-566.
- [6]. Fishbein, M. & Azjen, I. (1975). *Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behavior*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- [7]. Hansen, A., & Machin, D. (2018). *Media and communication research methods*. Macmillan International Higher Education.
- [8]. Moore, G.C. & Benbasat, I. (1991). Development of an Instrument to Measure the Perceptions of Adopting an Information Technology Innovation. *Information Systems Research*, 2, 192-222
- [9]. Goni, Md Ashraf, and Maliha Tabassum. 2020. "Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Journalism: Is Bangladesh Ready for It? A Study on Journalism Students in Bangladesh." *Athens Journal of Mass Media and Communications* Volume 6(Issue 4):209–28. doi: 10.30958/ajmmc/v6i4.
- [10]. O. Nyumba, T., Wilson, K., Derrick, C. J., & Mukherjee, N. (2018). The use of focus group discussion methodology: Insights from two decades of application in conservation. *Methods in Ecology and evolution*, 9(1), 20-32.
- [11]. Orellana Sánchez, N. N., Tambo Claire, J. I., Mamani Ticona, J. N., & Quina Mamani, R. T. (2011). *English for tourist police: a mechanism that enable communication between the police officer and the english speaking tourist* (Doctoral dissertation, Universidad Mayor de San Andrés. Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación. Carrera de Lingüística e Idiomas.).
- [12]. Pat, K. (2006). Deficiency of Communication in English a Major Hindrance for Tourist Police in Thailand.
- [13]. Pradeep, N. C. (2018). Policing Tourism: Challenges and Opportunities of Tourist Police System in India. *Evolving Paradigms in Tourism and Hospitality in Developing Countries*, 25.
- [14]. Swadia, B. (2011). A STUDY ON GLOBALIZATION ON TOURISM INDUSTRY OF GUJARAT.
- [15]. Thoyyib, M. E-Policing Systems: The Perspectives of Police Officers and Citizens in a Developed and Developing Nation.
- [16]. Venkatesh, V., & Davis, F. D. (2000). A theoretical extension of the technology acceptance model: Four longitudinal field studies. *Management Science*, 46(2), 186-204. doi:10.1287/mnsc.46.2.186.11926