

## **Sustainable Development of the Tourism Industry in Bangladesh: An Empirical Study**

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### ***Abstract***

The most amazing economic and social phenomenon of modern times is tourism. Its role is crucial in bringing people and nation's together, promoting understanding, and creating chances for income and employment.

The objective of this research is to pinpoint the factors essential for the continuous growth of Bangladesh's tourism industry. The study looked for important elements that attract visitors to tourist destinations.

An empirical approach was employed to carry out the research's objectives. Four locations were selected for primary data collection: the Sundarban Tourist Spot in Khulna; the Michael Madhusudan Dutta Memorial in Jessore; the Shat Gambuj Masjid and Khan Jahan Ali Mazar in Bagerhat; and the Lalon Academy and Shrine and Shilaidaha Kuthibari in Kushtia. To analyze the data and support the study's hypothesis, a number of significant statistical techniques were used.

This study found that security and safety, excellent attitudes of local people, good residential facilities, availability of emergency services, washroom and toilet facilities, tourist spot attractions, shopping facilities, tourist spot cleanliness, recreation opportunities, and good communication services are the key elements for sustainable progress of Bangladesh's tourism industry.

**Keywords:** Tourism, tourist spots, sustainable development, Employment and Bangladesh.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Early in the 1990s, the term "sustainable tourism" first appeared in the scientific community rather than in the travel business or in political circles. The emergence of sustainable tourism has necessitated a great deal of explanation and improvement of what is still a relatively new idea in our time (Lane, 2018). Sustainable tourism is produced and maintained in such a way and on such a scale that it is commercially sustainable indefinitely while also preserving and nurturing the physical and human environment (Harris, Williams, & Griffin, 2012). According to Scheyvens (1999), it is a collection of ideas, suggestions for legislation, and management techniques that plot a course for tourism growth while preserving the environmental resource base—natural, built, and cultural features—of a destination location for future development. Taylor (1995) marks that the idea of community itself cannot be avoided, but community involvement in tourism development has shifted closer to the heart of sustainable development. The nature of communities is changing because of globalization and localization, with increasing geographic and social mobility remaining major concerns for tourism development.

On the other hand, sustainable tourism development needs the active participation of all key players. Furthermore, strong political leadership is required to ensure broad engagement of all relevant players and the development of consensus (Kobra, Bhuiyan, & Zayed, 2018). Ban Ki-Moon, the former UN Secretary-General, emphasized the significance of providing more support to tourists in the twenty-first century and encouraging them to choose sustainable tourist sites that conserve the natural environment while also sustaining the built environment (Ban, 2009). Tourism refers to travel for the purpose of recreation, leisure, family time, or business, usually for a short period. Domestic and foreign tourism are both possible. In terms of the number of jobs it generates and its contribution to national GDP, tourism is the fourth-largest and fastest-growing business in the world (Davenport & Davenport, 2006; Hong, 2018). Bangladesh has a lovely natural environment as well as a number of historical and cultural attractions that might be leveraged to increase tourism (Rahman, Hossain, Miti, & Kalam, 2010).

This study aims to identify the key elements that govern and mitigate sustainable tourist destinations (environmentally, economically, and socially). It is crucial to look for the key components that draw people to popular tourist destinations.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Sustainable tourism is a continual process of coordinating and developing resources, facilities, products, and services that help host communities provide high-quality visitor experiences while also improving people's well-being (Harris et al., 2012). Bangladesh is a popular tourist destination for many foreign visitors, as the landscape and unique customs entice them to spend beautiful vacations here (Ali & Mohsin, 2008). Bangladesh's tourism has been revitalized for some time, and substantial steps are now being taken to strengthen transportation infrastructure and increase service quality. Small pensions and hotels with guests from all over Asia have arisen, rural tourism has become known and desired, and entertainment parks have opened (Pearce & Butler, 1999).

The three pillars of sustainability are social, environmental, and economic sustainability. These are challenges that communities, corporations, and people should all consider (Aronsson, 1994). To achieve an intelligible and long-term equilibrium between these three dimensions is the main objective of sustainable development (Swarbrooke, 1999). Bangladesh must strengthen its human resources in order to increase tourism marketing for both domestic and international visitors. This sector has a great deal of opportunity to increase its current level of revenue. If government and non-government organizations work together to promote the tourism business, it will generate significantly more money (Majumder & Hossain, 2011). In addition to the lack of attractions, Bangladesh's tourist industry has also struggled to expand due to weak and poor marketing efforts (Hossain & Firozzaman, 2007). As the public and private sectors work to establish their eligibility for lucrative business and marketing ventures, the development of the tourism industry is taking on more importance (Parveen & Rajon, 2008). Maintaining archaeological, historical, and scenically beautiful areas is necessary to draw both domestic and foreign tourists to various regions of Bangladesh, as is the development of advertising and promotional initiatives (Ali & Mohsin, 2008).

According to Hossain & Nazmin (2006), among foreign tourists to Bangladesh, scenic beauty came in first, followed by service costs in second, people's attitudes in third, and facilities in tenth place. Recreation is the most frequent motivation for engagement in tourism, which is a leisure activity involving the discretionary use of time and money. Tourism was born out of people travelling to and from various locations. The trip to the destination and the time spent there are the two fundamental components of tourism. In a nutshell, tourism is the industry

that provides information, travel, lodging, and other services to travelers (Singh, 2008; Kumar, et al., 2021).

Promoting employment, ensuring economic growth, upholding environmental purity, and ensuring long-term sustainability are the objectives and purposes of the policy (Siraj, 2009). Among its objectives are the preservation of cultural values, the protection of natural resources, and community benefit sharing, with an emphasis on the latter two. The law establishing "Protected Tourism Areas and Special Tourism Zones" was passed by the government of Bangladesh (Kabir, Jahan, Adnan, & Khan, 2012). Bangladesh's tourism sector has difficulties (Arif et al., 2011). Tourism depends critically on the state of the environment, both natural and man-made, according to (Kalam and Hossen, 2018; Kumar, 2018). A culture that values the environment may be able to build coastal Bangladesh's tourism industry sustainably. To better understand visitor expectations and create better plans, regional regulations, and a balanced approach to sustainable tourism development, planners, investors, destination managers, and other vested interest groups in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar sea beach should work together (Hassan & Shahnewaz, 2014).

Sustainable development, a crucial conceptual framework for societal and community growth, frequently views resource use from a long-term perspective. It is one of the best-known recommendations for strengthening a community (Edwards, 2009). The idea is that a community that has adopted significant sustainable development techniques will be more resilient than one that has not (Folke et al., 2002).

Khandakar (2014) argues that integrated planning and development are crucial for the tourism industry to expand responsibly and meet the needs of existing visitors without endangering the interests of the country's potential future visitors. In order to make Sylhet a sustainable tourism destination, Jahan and Amin (2014) examined the social, cultural, environmental, economic, political, and other factors affecting the city's long-term viability and offered suggestions on how to reduce and manage tourism's adverse effects on the city's environment, economy, and society.

In 2009, Rasul and Manandhar conducted research to examine the prospects and challenges of promoting tourism in the South Asian region. They were able to show in that study that, while having enormous potential, the tourism industry is nevertheless having difficulty. Complex travel procedures, safety and security concerns, a bad reputation, inadequate facilities, and substandard services are just a few of the issues. The study also shows that the

key problems in the South Asian region can be removed by strong political commitment and less bureaucratic regulation.

Sheikh (2020) found the barriers to the development of Bangladesh's tourism industry include security issues, underdeveloped road, transportation, and communication systems, neglect on the part of higher authorities, and poor management. It was also discovered that foreign tourists are not interested in visiting those sites due to parking issues and a lack of a safe environment. These are considered the primary downsides of the tourism industry in Rajshahi Region, along with political instability, unfriendly politics, illegal inhabitants, snatching, unethical situations, moral turpitude, and a competent work force. Moreover, the negligence of the competent government leads to the displeasure of many foreign and local tourists.

A detailed examination of numerous empirical studies on the tourism sector was deemed necessary to give a framework for understanding the necessity for Bangladesh's tourist industry to develop sustainably. Numerous issues and challenges plague the tourism sector. It is critical to identify issues and make practical recommendations for creating a sustainable tourism business in Bangladesh. Because of changes in tourist expectations, infrastructural development, technological advancements, increase logistic support of the tourist place, and the environment, this study is critical to ensuring Bangladesh's tourism industry's long-term viability.

### ***RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS***

H1: Tourist security and safety have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H2: The attitudes of local people have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H3: Communication services have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H4: Emergency services have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H5: Health and medical services have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H6: Toilet and washroom facilities have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H7: Tourist attractions have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H8: The cleanliness of tourist attractions has a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H9: Shopping centers have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H10: Recreational possibilities have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

H11: Residential facilities have a positive impact on the tourism industry's sustainable development.

### ***METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY***

To fulfill its analytical goals, the study used a quantitative approach. The relevant data was collected using simple random sampling. Primary data were collected in order to achieve the study's goal. A standard questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale was used for the survey. The researchers acquired each type of data independently. Tourists who worked in the tourism sector made up the study's participants. The sample size was established using the simplified Yamane (1967) formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n stands for the population size (10,000), e for the level of precision (5%), and n stands for the sample size. The sample size was at least

$$n = \frac{10,000}{1 + 10,000(0.05)^2} = 385$$

The population size, sample size, and level of precision are all "n," "N," and "e," respectively. Respondents from four districts, including Khulna, Jessore, Bagerhat, and Kushita, completed Six hundred and sixteen (616) structured questions. Six tourist hotspots were selected at random. All types of data were processed using the IBM-created Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Nie, Bent, & Hull, 1975). To support the study's hypothesis, a variety of statistical techniques was used to analyze the data, including descriptive statistics, factor analysis, regression analysis, and the t-test (Kumar, et al. 2021).

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND INERPRETATION OF THE STUDY**

*Table 1. Represents the socio demographic representation of the respondents*

	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18 to 24 Years	227	36.90
	25 to 34 Years	354	57.50
	35 to 44 Years	24	3.90
	45 to 54 Years	6	1.00
	55 to older	5	.80
Gender	Male	468	76.00
	Female	148	24.00
Occupation	Government Service	81	13.10
	Private Service	128	20.80
	Business	20	3.20
	Students and others	387	62.80
Monthly Income	Taka 1 to Taka10,000;	361	58.60
	Taka 10,001 to Taka 20,000;	62	10.10
	Taka 20,001 to Taka 30,000;	82	13.30
	Taka 30,001 to Taka 40,000;	64	10.40
	Taka 40,001 to above.	47	7.60
Education Qualification	PhD and Master	249	40.40
	Graduate	193	31.30
	SSC and HSC Pass	174	28.20
Tourist spot	The Sundarbans Tourist Spots	142	23.10
	Bagerhat Six Dome Mosque & Khan Jahan Ali Majar	119	19.30
	Michael Madhusudan Dutta Memorial	79	12.80
	Lalon Academy and Shrine and Rabindranath Tagore's Shilaidaha Kuthibari	276	44.80

*Source: Calculated by Researchers*

The above table shows the respondents whose age falls between 25 to 34 years, with a percentage of 57.50% for the highest and a percentage of 0.80% for the lowest for respondents aged 55 and older. Out of 616 tourists, 76% were men and 24% were women. According to the occupation, the highest 62.80% of tourists were students and others, and the lowest 3.20% were businesspersons. Most of the tourist 58.60% income range was within Tk. 10,000, and the lowest 7.60% tourist income range was Tk. 40,000 and above. From 616

tourists, the highest percentage (40.40%) was Ph.D. and Master Degree holders, and the lowest 28.20% were SSC and HSC pass. Finally, 44.80% of tourists visited Lalon Academy, the Shrine, and Rabindranath Tagore's Shilaidaha Kuthibari; 23.10% visited the Sundarbans Tourist Spots; 19.30% visited Bagerhat Six Dome Mosque and Khan Jahan Ali Majar; and only 12.80% visited the Michael Madhusudan Dutta Memorial.

*Table 2. Represents the Cronbach's Alpha value*

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.814	14

Source: Calculated by Researchers

In SPSS, the internal consistency of questionnaires is frequently measured using Cronbach's alpha. The study instruments must have a reliability of 0.7 or above in order to be used in this investigation. The Cronbach's alpha score for this study is 0.814 (Table 2), showing that all of the instruments used in this study are adequately reliable after transforming the responses into constructs in SPSS and doing the test.

*Table 3. Represents KMO and Bartlett's Test*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.825
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3207.527
	df	91
	Sig.	.000

Source: Calculated by Researchers

The computed value of KMO in this study is 0.825, which is statistically significant by Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p-value: 0.0001). The KMO test findings showed that the data were appropriate for factor analysis.yh

*Table 4. Represents Rotated Component Matrix*

	Component		
	1	2	3
Security & Safety	.765		
Local People's Attitude	.780		
Residential Facilities	.609		
Emergency Services	.735		

Health & Medical Services	.784		
Wash room & Toilet facilities	.769		
Tourist Spot Attractions		.634	
Shopping Facilities		.635	
Tourist Spot Cleanness		.744	
Recreation Opportunities		.802	
Communication Services		.572	
Sustainable tourism will improve economic condition of local people			.864
Sustainable tourism will make positive impact on natural and cultural heritage			.769
Sustainable tourism will create more employment for local people			.834

Source: Calculated by Researchers

Table 4 shows that, after the data was processed in SPSS with a set number of elements and a coefficient value of less than 0.5, the component correlation matrix is orthogonal.

*Table 5. Represents Model Summary of the study*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.996a	.993	.993	.08501527	1.832

Source: Calculated by Researchers

a. Predictors: (Constant), Residential Facilities, Tourist Spot Attractions, Communication Services (Internet & Mobile), Local People's Attitude, Tourist Spot Cleanness , Shopping Facilities , Wash room & Toilet facilities, Recreation Opportunities , Security & Safety, Emergency Services, Health & Medical Services

b. Dependent Variable: Sustainable Development of Tourism Industry

Table 5 displays the results of the multiple regression analysis. An R square value of 0.996 in this situation indicates a high level of prediction. The research shows that the R-Square value is 0.993. It displays the percentage of the dependent variable's variance that can be accounted for by the independent variables.

Table 6. ANOVA of the study

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	610.635	11	55.512	7680.593	.000b
Residual	4.365	604	.007		
Total	615.000	615			

Source: Calculated by Researchers

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable Development of Tourism Industry

b. Predictors: (Constant), Residential Facilities, Tourist Spot Attractions, Communication Services (Internet & Mobile), Local People's Attitude, Tourist Spot Cleanness , Shopping Facilities , Wash room & Toilet facilities, Recreation Opportunities , Security & Safety, Emergency Services, Health & Medical Services.

The total regression model's suitability as a fit for the data is determined by the F-ratio (see Table 6) in the ANOVA table.  $F(11, 604) = 7680.593, p < .001$ , indicates that the independent factors statistically significantly predict the dependent variable.

Table 7. Hypothesis testing of the study

Construct	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	comment
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	-3.655	.019		-194.712	.000	
H1: Security & Safety	-.081	.005	-.082	-17.703	.000	Supported
H2: Local People's Attitude	-.183	.004	-.193	-43.966	.000	Supported
H3: Communication Services	.211	.004	.219	51.996	.000	Supported
H4: Emergency Services	.047	.006	.048	8.451	.000	Supported
H5: Health & Medical Services	.008	.006	.008	1.471	.142	Not Supported
H6: Wash room & Toilet facilities	-.049	.004	-.053	-11.102	.000	Supported
H7: Tourist Spot Attractions	.252	.004	.240	58.143	.000	Supported

H8: Shopping Facilities	.234	.004	.247	58.777	.000	Supported
H9: Tourist Spot Cleanness	.296	.004	.323	75.608	.000	Supported
H10: Recreation Opportunities	.338	.004	.356	80.378	.000	Supported
H11: Residential Facilities	.038	.004	.039	9.186	.000	Supported

Source: Calculated by Researchers

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable Development of Tourism Industry

Table 7 depicts that security and safety, local people's attitude, communication services, emergency services, washrooms and toilet facilities, tourist spot attractions, shopping facilities, tourist spot cleanliness, recreational opportunities, and residential facilities have a positive influence on the sustainable development of the tourism industry. Because the p (p 0.001) values for H1, H2, H3, H4, H6, H7, H8, H9, H10, and H11 are less than 1%. On the other hand, health and medical services have no positive influence on the sustainable development of the tourism industry in Bangladesh. It is supported by H5:  $p < 0.142$ . The p value is higher than the 5% level of significance.

### ***DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY***

Bangladesh is an incredibly lovely nation. The country attracts visitors because of its stunning natural surroundings. It has the longest beach on the globe as well as magnificent beaches. It is proud of its magnificent past and antiquated artifacts. Bangladesh's tourist sector is growing every day. People now like to travel frequently for fun and to shake up their routine lives. In general, a favorable environment for tourists includes having access to food, excellent transportation options, convenient shopping options, etc. According to the research, the majority of tourists are under 30 and have low incomes. They look for high-quality recreation choices that are affordable. The tourist industry currently contributes significantly to sustainable economic growth by giving individuals a nice environment in which to find leisure and break up their routines. As a result, building a sustainable tourism industry and maintaining sustainable economic growth will be essential elements of the economy.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Communities all over the world depend more and more on tourism, and the need to expand tourism responsibly rises to the top of the priority list. The needs of the local community will be identified through brainstorming the idea of sustainable tourism (programmatically, politically, and practice-wise), allowing for sufficient addressing of such needs. This study found that convenient transportation, no travel limitations, information on a variety of tourist destinations, and new marketing methods all contribute to the contemporary market's overall increase in tourists. The study also found that security and safety, excellent attitudes of local people, good residential facilities, availability of emergency services, washroom and toilet facilities, tourist spot attractions, shopping facilities, tourist spot cleanliness, recreation opportunities, and good communication services are the important ingredients for the sustainable development of the tourism industry in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh must therefore build hotels, restaurants, efficient communication and transit systems, lavatories, parking facilities, and other amenities close to the nation's tourist attractions. The tourist sites in Bangladesh must all be modernized to meet international standards. Appropriate infrastructure construction, superstructure development, waste management system implementation, and tourism attraction sustainability for future generations are all critical. To attract tourists and persuade them to return, we need to vary our tourism products. Tourists' safety and security should be prioritized above all else. This recommendation is critical to Bangladesh's tourism industry's long-term viability. The promotion of community-based tourism, eco-tourism, increasing airline services for international travelers, giving correct information about tourist attractions, and stressing tourism marketing are among them.

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