

The socio economic forces tourism essay

[Sport & Tourism](#), [Ecotourism](#)



The tourism industry is a major contributor to the gross state product of many countries Reige and Perry, 2000 and in the last 50 years, tourism has developed into one of the world's most powerful, yet provocative, socio-economic forces (Sharpley and Telfer 2008). Travel & Tourism industry has become one of the world's most important and fastest growing economic sectors, generating quality jobs and substantial wealth for economies around the globe (WTTC, 2007). The recent global recession has not caused the tourism industry to grind to a complete halt, and the World Tourism Barometer indicated that the recession only caused a 4% decline in global tourism from 2008-2010 (UNWTO, 2011b) and now it is expected to grow again. WTTC President and CEO, David Scowsill (2011) says " Over the next ten years, its total contribution to GDP will rise by 4. 2% per annum to US\$9. 2 trillion, bringing with it 65 million new jobs, but for that growth to be achievable and sustainable, governments must work together with the industry towards smarter policies and legislation that will help Travel & Tourism to thrive." In Third world countries, governments encourage tourism investment because of the assumption that it will contribute to economic development of their countries (Hall, 1995). Third world nations and developing nations always seeks the potential benefits of tourism such as increased income, foreign exchange, employments and economic diversification (Sharpley and Telfer, 2008). According to Ferguson (2007) " The tourism industry directly provides around 3 per cent of global employment, or 192 million jobs - the equivalent to one in every twelve jobs in the formal sector". As with other industrial sectors and fields of academic study, tourism has also developed over the decades and has been influenced

by a multitude of internal and external factors. It is not surprising that many aspects of tourism are totally different than they used to be before because of the vast rate of technological change along with social, economic and environmental changes.

Bangladesh is one of the world's most densely populated countries, with its people packed into a delta of rivers that empties into the Bay of Bengal [BBC] (2011). It's implementing its developing plans for a long time. They are not only trying to secure their economic growth but also trying to improve their social living standards. In Bangladesh, tourism was almost non-existent at the country's independence from Pakistan in 1971. More recently tourism has seen as a means of the contributing to their attainment. Tourism contributes 4.8 % to Bangladesh's Gross Domestic Products (GDP) and employs over 1509100 which contribute 1.9% of direct employments (WTTC, 2011). According to Bhatia (1986 in Jenkins and Tosun, 1998), many countries in the third world do not know the importance of tourism and the impacts that it can have, and Bangladesh is one of those countries.

Essentially Jenkins and Tosun (1998) argue that, " tourism development took place in most of the places of this world as an unplanned activity" (p 102). " Like sustainable development sounds attractive" (Butler, 1992: 64), the phrase of sustainable tourism accepted immediately by this country even the meaning of this term is not understood fully. " Though " sustainable tourism" is the in thing across the world, Bangladesh, in spite of being endowed with nature's bounties and beauty, still struggles with the concept" (Mahmud, 2010). Several destinations in Bangladesh such as Chittagong hill tracts, the Sundarbans, Saint Martin coral island, Nijhum Island, Srimanagol Lawachera

rain forest, Tangua Hoar and Cox's Bazar, which could be used as sustainable tourist spots (Mahmud, 2010).

Cox's Bazar is the tourist capital of Bangladesh. By popular choice, Cox's Bazar has recently been ranked as one of the 'New Seven Wonders of the World'(Zamir, 2009), located conveniently on the east-west air-corridor making it a gateway to the Far East. It is endowed with resources and the potential for a tourism industry. In the southern edge of the country has a 125 km (77. 6 miles) long beach of soft silvery sand, the world's longest (Qadir, 2003) and a chain of hills that run parallel to the sea for almost the entire length, towering cliffs, colourful, ancient pagodas and Hindu temples (Anonymous, 2007), in a Riviera-like setting with crescent-shaped low hills overlooking the Bay of Bengal, and most visited tourist destinations in Bangladesh. The range of the hills covered in luxurious green groves is precious locations for tourists. Cox's Bazar is located at the head of this terrain. Cox's Bazar is also known as " Panowa", literature meaning yellow flower. " Palonkee" was its other name.

The daughter of the sea Bangladesh is a beautiful surprise for the tourist. Since the tourism is reported as a relatively easy way to earn foreign exchange, many countries are eager to enter international markets as fast as they can (Jafari, 1974) and Bangladesh is one of them. According to Jafari (1974), tourists and news media of a developed countries come to be a kind of promotional agents for a developing country or for a under developing country. Though Hasan in his book " development tourism in Bangladesh" blames the international news media for representing a wrong appearance of

the country and news media carefully avoid telling the world of the brighter side of Bangladesh than the rough side of it (Khairuzzaman, 2008) still there are some positive approaches from the international media. Lonely planet is one of them. The world leader in publishing travel guides and guidebooks 'Lonely planet' recommended Bangladesh as one of the top ten interesting travel destination in 2009 (Thomsen, 2009). This UK based publication 'Bradt Travel guide' is known as a " pioneer in tackling 'unusual' destinations, for championing the causes of sustainable travel and for the high quality of writing" (Thomsen, 2009). The first guide on Bangladesh published in 2009 and the back cover text states: " Bangladesh has a reputation for being poor and beset by flooding, but this 'republic of rivers' rewards those willing to look beyond the headlines. Leave luxuries behind and embark on the richest of travel experiences among some of the sub-continent's friendliest people" (Thomsen, 2009). This kind of positive focus on Bangladesh is not possible to buy for money. Lack of consistent strategy on cooperation, appropriate knowledge and sustainability; are the great barrier to a positive development of Bangladesh tourism sector.

Environmental resources are an important asset not only in Cox's Bazar but to other tourism destinations in all other third world countries. The tourism in Bangladesh is especially popular due to its coastal areas of Cox's Bazar. If environmental resources are important economic assets in Bangladesh, the immediate action that need is that of sustainable utilisation of resources to benefit for present and future generations (Mbaiwa, 2005). It is well established that the presence of tourism in destination always brings with it environmental, socio-culture and economic benefit and this is why it is an

effective development tool in any under developing countries and in the case of Bangladesh, A sustainable tourism strategy will have a major positive impact (Thomsen, 2009).

When carrying out a broad research on any substance, it is essential to become acquainted with contextual of that topic, by using relevant literatures. For this dissertation, it is most significant to obtain information in a number of different sources. Academic books, journals, newspapers, where available, will be used in the gathering of information for this dissertation. Here in this project, I will outline the history of sustainable tourism development first which will provide the context of how it is developing and will answer either it exists in the Bangladesh, particularly in Cox's bazar. In order to gain this knowledge I will look at different publications related to research issue will be collected from academic books, daily newspaper, projects, related archives and tremendously up to date journals. For this purpose it will be extremely useful to look at relevant internet websites such as the websites of different ministry of Bangladesh and tourism industry based websites. Internet websites will be an important source to fill in the gap by providing useful information where books and periodicals are not so unequivocal.

2. 0: Literature review

All tourism includes some travel but not all travel is tourism (Page, 2007). Tourism used to be recognised as an activity undertaken by those who travelled away from home for holidays, to visit relatives or to carry out professional business, in the past. Tourism is a composite of activities,

services and industries that deliver a travel experience: transportation, accommodations, eating and drinking establishments, shops entertainment, activity facilities and other hospitality services available for individuals and groups that are travelling away from home (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2009). Therefore it encompasses a wide variety of purposes. The officially accepted definition by UNWTO (1993) is: " Tourism comprises the activities of person travelling to and staying places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, businesses and other purposes". This definition challenges the commonly held perception that tourism is purely concerned with recreation and having fun (Holden, 2008). But according to Gunn (1994) the best working definition of tourism is that of by Mathieson and Wall (1982 in Gunn, 1994): " Tourism is the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs". At the present time, tourism is even more far reaching with wider implications. Specialists have distinguished between 'mass tourism', which involves those features just mentioned, and 'alternative tourism', which can include cultural, educational, social, environmental, agricultural and political tourism (Wearing and Neil, 2009). Tourism promotes better cross culture understanding. For any third world and developing countries, tourism is seen as an important tool of their regional development, culture, environmental and in most cases; the tourism portfolio is attached to Economy. This provides us with an initial insight into the impact of tourism within all countries it has.

In addition to social, political and economic concerns, tourism has become a vastly important and global feature of environmental argument. Tourism development which consistently ignores environmental concerns is unlikely to remain viable in the longer term (Pigram, 1990). High volume of tourism can cause environmental including water, air and noise pollution which are extremely destructive to a location's sustainable well-being. It is as a significance of the growing awareness of the harmful effect that tourism has on the environment, as well as a general heightened understanding of how global warming is affecting our planet, that tourism has been given an environmental focus. Indeed, sustainable tourism is now a widely known outlet of tourism, with the state of the environment being given more and more consideration. The term 'Sustainable Tourism' has been introduced in the context of wider debate about environmental sustainability and logically implies a form and level of tourism which maintains a total stock of natural resources (Sinclair, 1998). The growing awareness of environmental damage in this modern technological world is the reason to address this term. Getz (1986) says that when tourism planning was first developed in the 1960s, the discipline's main focus came, " almost totally from the perspective of maximizing economic growth" (p. 21). Over the decades, the focus has shifted and is now, " more sensitive to non-economic issues" (p. 32). Murphy (1985) argues that it is the responsibility of the tourism industry to, " develop and protect its attractions, whether they are natural or man-made, and become a hospitality industry to make visitor experiences as enjoyable as possible" (p. 10). Though it is argued that too much emphasis is placed on relatively short term economic impacts at the cost of considering the long

term social and environmental impacts of tourism, thereby encourages in a better awareness of the problems that the industry creates (Holloway et al., 2009). The importance of sustainable development is to carry growing successes into the future in such a way that future generations are not troubled (Pearce et al., 1990).

Sustainability, sustainable tourism and sustainable development are all well-established terms (Liu, 2003). There are two components in the definition of sustainable development. The meaning of development and the condition necessary for sustainability are those two components (Miltin, 1992). Croall (1995) compares sustainability to the "link between development and conservation", which should not conflict to each other. According to Bartelmus (1986 in Tosun, 2001), "development implies a process that makes an effort to improve the living conditions of people". To meet human needs and wants is the main objective of development (WCED, 1987) which involves wider apprehensions with the quality of life (Pearce et al., 1990). When applied to tourism, as Godfrey (1996 in Gunn, 1994)) points out the concept of sustainable development relates to a form of environmentally friendly tourism. Aside, Rees (Gunn, 1994 p. 85) define "sustainable tourism development as a positive socio-economic change that does not undermine the cultural, ecological and social systems upon which local communities and societies are depended".

The concept of sustainability first appeared on the public sense in the report by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. The outline of sustainable development is that the economic growth and the

environmental conservation are not only friendly but they are partners and one cannot survive without than other. The Brundtland Commission Report defines sustainable development as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987). The Commission highlighted that sustainable development is not a fixed national agreement, but an active process of changes which 'are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations' (WCED, 1987: 46). A general weakness in the concept of the sustainable tourism development is that its principles and objectives have tended to manifest themselves in sets of guidelines that based on managing the limits of acceptable environmental and social change, which is unable to account for the almost infinite diversity of tourism development contexts (Sharpley and Telfer, 2008). In a research Liu (2003) found that sustainability is praised by Bramwell and Lane (1993 in Liu, 2003) and according to them " it is a positive approach intended to reduce the tensions and friction created by the complex interactions between the tourism industry, tourists, environment and the host communities to maintain the long term capacity and quality of both natural and human resources".

" Miles of golden sands, towering cliffs, surfing waves, rare conch shells, colourful Pagodas, Buddhist Temples and delightful sea-food - all this makes what Cox's Bazar is today , the tourist capital of Bangladesh" (NTO). Cox's Bazar is one of the most attractive tourist spots, not only in the Bangladesh but also in the world. " The warm, shark free waters are good for bathing and swimming & while the sandy beaches offer opportunities for sun-bathing"

(NTO). The tourist capital of Bangladesh includes conch shell market, tribal handicraft, and salt and prawn cultivation. According to a census of aquatic birds, a total of 15933 birds of 52 species have been spotted in Cox's Bazar (The Daily Star, 2009) can be seen as other attraction. " Aggmeda Khyang, a Buddhist monastery at the hills, Himchari picnic spot, just about 8 km from Cox's Bazar, Innani Beach 32 km away from the city, is one of the most spectacular sea beaches in Bangladesh which is very close to the world's longest sandy beach in Cox's Bazaar and it is situated within the Inani protected forest; Sonadia island with very little human visitation, Teknaf peninsula, some 80 km from town and picturesque St. Martin Island to the south at 13 km distance from mainland" are the around attraction of Cox's Bazar (Ahammed, 2010). All these places are located around Cox's Bazar and easily accessible by road and water sides what makes this place hub of tourism.

As an international destination, Bangladesh has a mixed image. Tourists from abroad perceive a negative awareness of Bangladesh from news media. People from outside perceive as place where the population is living in poverty, corruption and in natural disasters. Though the new seven natural wonders search 2009 have made the country attractive for tourism and is also charted as one of the top ten interesting destinations by new travel books (Quader, 2010). Bangladesh is still one of the countries in South Asia with the fewest arrivals and the lowest revenue earned from the tourism industry. WTTC (2011) predicts that the contribution from travel and tourism will increase 6. 3% per annum till 2021. According to Bari (FE, 2010), " At present, around 0. 50 million international tourists visit Bangladesh each

year, It employs one million people". Most of the tourists visited the country for business purpose, and " their stay in the country was brief as they had not been offered to explore the hills, seas and forests of the country brimming with natural beauty" (Mahmud, 2010). The only cause for this is the lack of awareness and proper arrangements. Though the economic contribution of tourism and the share of Cox's Bazar to the national economy are not studied with reliable statistics (Ahammed, 2010) still the tourism industry leaders said in Financial Express (FE, 2010) that Bangladesh can earn US\$2. 0 billion in annual revenue from the tourism sector if it can attract two million international tourists. According to the general manager of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, revenue earning from the tourism sector is experiencing a downward trend and the revenue from tourism sector was approximately £51 million in 2008, which came down to £47 million in 2009. Till June 2010, the revenue was £26 million (FE, 2010).

Tourism in Bangladesh is managed by Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and tourism. There is no doubt that tourism is an effective development tool, helps economy to generate revenue, country gets benefited as well as the private sector and local community, Consciousness on preservation of nature and protection of environment tends to increase. Though Cox's Bazar is easily accessible by road, still there is no rail links in this city. The government spending huge amount of money to get Cox's Bazar rail linked within 2 years. Government's infrastructure development planning includes the work on the upgraded submarine cable connection of Cox's Bazar Landing Station to increase the bandwidth (Unb, 2011). Development of major infrastructure to serve resorts

should be coordinated to meet the demands of the industry with boarder economic and social needs (Brohman, 1996). The presence of tourism in any destination always brings environmental, socio- culture and economic impacts. Less developed destinations like Cox's Bazar are more susceptible. Development of tourism in Cox's bazar brings external money flow which drives the living standard of the locals to higher level. Development of tourism in Cox's Bazar on a long-term basis is to give due importance to the above impacts for its sustainability. It needs a long term planning, continuous development work, avoid the negative impacts and investment timing have to be predetermined (Quader, 2010). The current growth in tourist numbers to Cox's bazar has led to the recognition that consideration needs to be given to a sustainable tourism development strategy if the site is to be maintained for future generations.

3. 0 Aims and objectives

In undertaking this investigation, this dissertation has number of aims and objectives. As sustainable tourism is a very well established term in modern tourism industry due to a heightened environmental awareness, it is important to understand how it functions and whom it targets. The goal of environmentally sustainability is a maximum level of desired outcome such as economic profit, quality of life what will maintain in a steady way, subject to constraints imposed by environment. Basis on this concept it can be said that environmentally sustainable tourism implies a key importance on maintaining a certain level of environmental quality. This is highlighting that, a sustainable environment and a viable tourism industry are essential

elements to make an environmentally sustainable tourism (Johnston & Tyrrell, 2007). In order to do understand the term and the function of environmentally sustainable tourism, it will first be necessary to outline the basics of the tourism industry in less developed country like Bangladesh and how it has changed over the years. By doing this it will be possible to better understand how the sustainable tourism industry fits into Cox's Bazar.

3. 1: Aims

The core aim of the social and economic perspectives of tourism is to inspire more international and domestic tourists to promote the growth of tourist value which focus on creating employment, achieving revenue, developing local engagement (Gilmore et al., 2007) and enable some members of the population to move from the informal sector to higher paid jobs in the formal sector (Sinclair, 1998). The environmental aim is often conflict between the economic and social perceptions which is to protect and to conserve both culture and the environment (Gilmore et al., 2007). The host population is itself a part of the tourism product. The rapid growth of tourism in any less developed countries and destinations raises questions of sustainable tourism development, particularly the access and economic benefits to local economies. For this dissertation, it is most important to know the various facets of the relationship between host population and tourism industry of Cox's Bazar of Bangladesh. The locals are subjects to be viewed and interacted with, or settings for tourist activities, and their attitudes and behaviour constitute the 'hospitality' resource of a destination (Smith, 1994). According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (1993), tourism is

sustainable when it " improves the quality of life of the host community; provides a high quality of experience for the visitor; and maintains the quality of the environment on which both the host community and the visitor depend". Cox's Bazar have limited opportunities and resources for agriculture or industrial development and are turning to tourism to create the major source of economy though a huge part of population are still involved in fishing, collecting sea foods and sea products for their livelihood. Traditionally, it is a conservative society and socio-culture, economy and the " quality of life" is still below than national average (Ahammed, 2010). The aim of this project is to critically assess whether Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh can be developed in a sustainable way.

3. 2: Objectives

Finally, having completed a thorough investigation and after evaluation of the data collected will leads up to the current prevalence of the sustainable tourism in Cox's Bazar, it will then be possible to imagine how the industry may develop in future.

Objectives are

f~ To evaluate and define sustainable tourism development in term of environment, economic and culture.

f~ To investigate and find the specific requirement for sustainable tourism development in Cox's Bazar.

f~ Critically discuss whether the people of tourism industry in Bangladesh really know the meaning of sustainable development?

f~ To illustrate useful conclusions and make effective recommendations on sustainable tourism development for Cox's Bazar that can be implemented by the tourism authority of Bangladesh.

4. 0: Methodology and Method

The following section of this dissertation shall outline the methodology and the method that shall be employed for the primary research section of this dissertation.

4. 1: Methodology

In tourism research there is an on-going need for statistical insights but qualitative research offers a great deal of understanding at social life from in a different way (Phillimore and Goodson, 2004). Phillimore and Goodson (2004) argue that tourism researchers are not bound to adopt a simple set of methods, and are therefore free to combine a wide range of approaches with a more sophisticated attitude to use qualitative research.

This project used both primary and secondary data resources. In terms of primary data sources, this dissertation relied on the research work that I have carried out on sustainable tourism development in Cox's Bazar. Priority was given to the semi structured interviews I took in April 2011 which resulted in to develop conclusions and recommendations based on the findings that could be implemented in Cox's Bazar.

In order to give concrete load to the primary research conducted this research will also contain some secondary research. Collecting data from people who are involved with the tourism industry in Bangladesh will give considerable ideas that will have been formed by looking at secondary literature. It will also provide the dissertation with a personal insight which cannot be gained from conducting qualitative research alone.

4. 1. 1: Primary Research

From the outset, I decided that my research objectives more easily lend themselves to more qualitative forms of analysis. This study is essentially attempting to determine how a number of complex concepts impact and relate to one another. It requires the subject area to be looked at from a number of different perspectives and for links between these separate perspectives to be determined. Britten et al (1995) suggest that employing qualitative methodology allows for the researcher to, " Address research questions of immediate relevance which are otherwise difficult to investigate" (p. 105). Flick et al (2004) go on to point out that the use of qualitative methodology can aide in, " the understanding of complex relationships rather than explanation by isolation of a single relationship, such as 'cause' and 'effect'" (p. 8). Sofaer (1999) further argues that this can result in, " rich descriptions of phenomena...it not only serves the desire to describe; it also helps move the enquiry towards more meaningful explanations" (p. 1102). It is for these reasons that this study will approach the research objectives from a qualitative, rather than giving practical weight to quantitative, approach.

4. 1. 2: Secondary Research

Secondary analysis has a well-established pedigree. This will provide the useful information in order to understand the background of the subject. Hakim (1982) state that, " secondary data analysis is any further analysis of an existing dataset which presents interpretations, conclusions or knowledge additional to, or different from, those produced in the first report on the inquiry as a whole and its main results"(p 1). Secondary data can embrace a whole range of experimental forms; it can include the data generated through systematic reviews, through documentary analysis as well as the results from government sponsored surveys (Smith, 2008). Secondary literature provides a considerable source for appreciative which is necessary when making decisions regarding any topic and placing advance theories to develop situations.

4. 2: Method

The first method that was considered was focus groups. MacNaghten and Myers (2004) suggest that this method is most useful for researchers who perhaps, " are not entirely sure what categories, links and perspectives are relevant" (p. 65). However, this method can yield data that can be difficult to understand and interpret. For an inexperienced researcher this could present a problem and could lead to data that is perhaps not as rich as it could be.

I finally chose semi-structured interviews as my primary research method. Kvale (1983) states that the use of this method presents the researcher with the opportunity to, " gather the life-world of the interviewee with respect to

interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena" (p. 174). It is this real world experience that will give my data real depth and will hopefully help me to understand some of the complex problems faced by my respondents. Another advantage of this method is outlined by Blee and Taylor (1995) who argue that semi-structured interviews places human agency, " at the centre of the movement analysis. Qualitative interviews are a window into the everyday world of activists, and they generate representations that embody the subjects' voices, minimizing, at least as much as possible, the voice of the researcher" (p. 96).

I had hoped to be able to conduct this research in Cox's Bazar. However, it became clear to me early in my research that this was not likely to be popular. Instead, I chose to focus my research on travel agencies in the UK who offer holidays to Cox's Bazar and other parts of Bangladesh. I chose to draw my sample group from agencies located in Bangladeshi communities. Tower Hamlets, Manchester and Oldham have arguably the highest concentration of Bangladeshi's in the country, so I chose to target travel agents here. As people working in the industry are answering my questionnaires, I assured them that they will remain anonymous to make them feel more confident to give honest answer.

I phoned round several agencies and managed to secure interviews with 5 travel agents. A few days before the interviews, these respondents were sent an outline of my study so that they could perhaps begin to prepare their responses. This would hopefully yield richer data for me to use. These interviews were mostly conducted face to face, although two was conducted

over the phone and Skype. I recorded the interviews and took extensive notes during them. I was conscious of the fact that, " in semi-structured interviewing, analysis and interpretation are on-going processes" (Blee and Taylor, 2002: 110). Unlike in quantitative data collection where one waits until all the data is collected before starting the analysis process, with qualitative data collection, the analysis is an on-going process. In the analysis of the data, I employed a fairly liberal interpretation of the grounded theory method. Stern (1994) suggests that this method is most helpful for researchers exploring new subject areas or who simply want to gain a fresh perspective on a familiar situation (p. 30). The use of this method demands that the researcher constantly re-evaluates the data collected and then categorizes and codes it. I decided that my codes would be the objectives set at the start of this dissertation. I re-listened to my interviews to my interviews a number of times to find parts of the data that best met my objectives.

The following section of this dissertation will present the findings from the primary research and discuss these in light of the findings from the literature search. The objectives of the study (see 3. 2) were used as markers in the interviews. Although the respondents were allowed to 'veer off track', I always tried to bring the discussion back to the four main objectives guiding this research.

Notes: I did not add references cause of the word limits. Once I finalised this work I will go through Gold proofread again.