

## A SCHEMA OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT MODEL: A CASE OF BANGLADESH

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***Abstract:** Tourism can be a sweeping agent of change. In consequence, tourism planning too often in this industry is based exclusively on isolated economic criteria. In recent years, tourism has become one of the fastest growing sectors of the world economy and is widely recognized for its contribution to national economic development. However, keeping these facts in mind the main aim of this study is to propose a development framework for Bangladesh tourism industry within which the impact of characteristics of tourism industry can be captured and analyzed. The paper corresponds to the significance of partnerships among the stakeholders and product characteristics approach with the cultural orientation of the host country to get a favorable out come considering the noticeable cost of tourism. Within the proposed model the characteristics of the tourism product/destination including quality of service, advertising and political instability are combined to generate a perception/feeling regarding the tourism destination in the mind of the tourists. The proposed model is constructed through studying and examining intensive literature review and challenges of tourism development in Bangladesh.*

**Keywords:** Tourism, Development, Challenges, Destination, Economy

### INTRODUCTION

A number of dramatic environmental movements occurred in the eighties and mid-eighties which moved the tourism industry much closer to the characteristics of the new economy (Weiermair, 2001). Consideration of the demand side suggests that the undifferentiated conservative and economizing mass customer (tourist) gave way to a much more travelled, experienced and quality conscious individualist as tourist; mass tourism seemed to have been replaced by the individualized mass (Poon, 1993; Opaschowski, 1993; Weiermair and Peters, 2000). The new tourist, who is used to more convenience, faster service and more options from his or her every-day-life, also insisted on more options, more entertainment and fun, more diversified sports facilities, and cultural variety in his or her trip and vacation (Weiermair and Fuchs, 2000). Thus the tourism industry and tourism enterprises feel increasing pressures to develop new products, services, and experiences.

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Many of the destination countries have marched forward to pick the full potentials of this industry. But, Bangladesh is lagging far behind with respect to the growth and development of its tourism industry, though the country has massive potentiality to develop tourism industry– possesses many rare attractions noticeably different from those of many other destination countries. Nevertheless, its tourism industry is still at the primal stage and has not taken the exact form of an industry.

The government of Bangladesh has already taken several commendable initiatives for the development of tourism industry. However, many of those are of very primary in nature and have created little impact on the growth and development of this industry. Therefore, it is crucial to find out the causes of the regress of this industry and discover the bottlenecks of the present policy measures and thus suggest effective courses of actions to be undertaken by the state and other concerned authorities to harvest the full opportunities from this industry.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Apparently the title of this paper indicates that the study has highlighted the tourism development model in setting tourism development framework for Bangladesh tourism industry. Thus, the objectives of the study are split into two clusters e.g., general and specific (Malhotra, 2007).

The general objective of this paper is to propose a tourism development schema for the development of tourism in Bangladesh.

On the other hand, to make this study more credible, convincing, and useful to concerned authorities, the researcher sets the following specific objectives:

1. to analyze the tourism development model in general.
2. to explore the relevant issues and constraints of Bangladesh tourism industry in particular.
3. to provide few course of actions for constructing effective framework for tourism development in Bangladesh.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology has been derived from Eisenhardt (1991) and the author, after assessing extensive literature review, suggested for a “qualitative research design” for tourism-related study. The nature of the study was basically explorative in nature. By definition, an exploratory research involves investigation of problems on which little formal knowledge is available (Malhotra, 2007). The study was designed to gain tourism knowledge with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it. A review of literature was

undertaken to assess and document the development of tourism model. Same procedure was followed to have a scenario of the present state of Bangladesh tourism industry.

The study tried to extent the tourism development framework in light with “development framework” in order to synchronize it into a broader aspect of tourism development. In this study, the author proposed an approach about how the tourism development should go with the objective of this paper. As we know, any approach to model formation is tentative and thus requires empirical testing by further researches which this study did not attempt.

The first phase of the methodology for conducting this study was initiated with the review of relevant literature on the issues indicated under the area of development of tourism as well as aspects under “Projection”, assimilation of relevant data available in the secondary sources, and then conducting a desk research. Qualitative research, which after consultation with the different stakeholders, yielded a pragmatic development model preceded by undertaking situation analysis, formulating development program as well as strategies and implementing an action plan.

In case of determination of stakeholders, a total of 10 industry members were selected purposively for the study. The members in the stakeholders included 2 private tour operators, 2 resort owners, 2 hoteliers, 2 travel agents, and concerned personnel of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism as well as Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation.

The sources of data were secondary. It involved collection of data about the characteristics of the tourism Industry in Bangladesh. Secondary information was gathered from websites, seminar proceedings, newspaper articles, journals of different organizations. This study used descriptive statistical tools rather than inferential statistical tools. However, the present study is a theory based research.

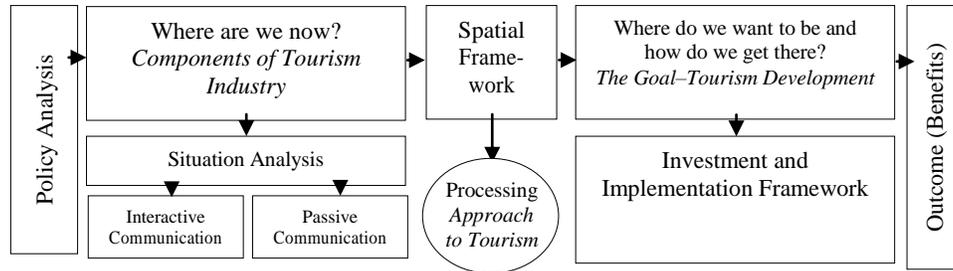
### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT**

Tourism and development have been linked to one another since somewhat simultaneous emergence as both phenomena of mass interest and mass activity in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are existed. The importance of understanding the phenomena and their relationship have received attention from a wide range of academic disciplines and public and private sector enterprises alike (Simms, 2005).

Tourism Development embodied **(a)** the sustainable development and maintenance of tourism attractions, facilities and infrastructure, **(b)** expanding the range of products and services available to meet the needs of tourists, **(c)** building a tourism culture and awareness, and **(d)** building capacity of local business to benefit from the opportunities offered through the tourism industry,

with special focus on spreading the benefits to the people of disadvantaged communities (CCT, 2005). A schema of tourism development is presented in Figure 01.

**Figure 01: General Tourism Development Model**



**Source:** CCC (2005), Tourism Development Framework, SA

The schema entails the whole gamut. However, tourism is an imperative root of economic growth and development in many countries around the world. Over the past several decades, travel and tourism has become a key sector in the world economy (Blanke and Chiesa, 2006).

The preliminary assumption of tourism as a vehicle for economic growth has focused mainly on their impact on a country's trade and industry. While today economic measurements are still at the core of debate. The interest in evaluating the impact of tourism as a vehicle for economic development has created a shift in research motives towards social sciences in the fields of anthropology, sociology, environmental studies, as well as political science from the traditional economic determinants. At the same time, public policy interests have become recognized for their integral role in development theory and international tourism activity, resulting in the creation of especially assigned Para-national organizations and intergovernmental agencies; most notably, the foundation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank's International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in 1945, the United Nations departments assigned for development United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1965 and for tourism United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in 1975.

The involvement of stakeholders from different interest groups therefore inevitably resulted in the production of dissimilar knowledge that can in principal be accredited to the positioning on the political spectrum or disciplinary perspective. Despite continuous challenging of the separate concepts of tourism as well as development in and Tourism: Creating a framework for a vehicle for economic development In underdeveloped societies of themselves, tourism's importance for development and development's importance for tourism has

tacitly been recognized and has largely gone unnoticed. This implicit understanding created the context for a research environment engaged in evaluating tourism's impact on its host societies from economical, sociological, anthropological, political, environmental and holistic perspectives.

In this global competitive era, it is quite impossible to grab the world tourism market without having proper marketing campaign for a particular product or service (Ishtiaque, 2010). In case of tourism, it is a critical issue to motivate the target market in a favorable way for the unknown, mysterious but exotic destinations to come and enjoy their free time for their leisure, business or other purposes.

The global tourism market continues to boost up (UNWTO, 2012 and Ruggia, 2012). In order to capture a significant portion of the tourism market, a country must remain competitive with other destinations. The government of that country must allocate the necessary resources for tourism development so that the country is on a level playing field with short-haul as well as long-haul destinations around the world. The development on behalf of a destination is the responsibility of several groups including the National Tourism Organization (NTO), regional and local Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) and private sector companies involved with tourism industry. The National Tourism Organization (NTO) is the key actor and works to coordinate country's development efforts home and abroad in order to drive visitation among various tourist spots.

In a nutshell, the economic potential of tourism is extensive and the appropriate development strategies intend to maximize the benefits tourism can generate. The destination aims to work alongside a dedicated and professional tourism industry sector to ensure the region maintains and grows its share of the lucrative tourism market. Key challenges to achieving it includes: **(a)** responding strategically and creatively to growing levels of competition, **(b)** responding to changing economic and social trends, **(c)** increasing tourism dispersal throughout the tourist destination, and **(d)** maximizing visitation, yield and visitor satisfaction.

### **CHALLENGES OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN BANGLADESH: ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS**

Bangladesh has an immense potential for the development of a sustainable tourism industry owing the significant and diverse natural, geographical, historical and cultural heritage assets. But considering the modest share in the world tourism market even in the regional markets and the concentration of tourism activity in the country, it seems that a large part of this inherent tourism potential remains unutilized. It has been observed in tourism related research study conducted in Bangladesh that the desirable levels of tourism development in the country as a whole have not yet been achieved.

The inherent tourism attractions of the country cannot, by itself, make a successful tourism industry unless properly planned and managed. Despite the initiatives undertaken by government and the private sector to develop tourism, the country has been facing a number of constraints and problems in all aspects of tourism development as tourism in Bangladesh is supply-led rather than a market driven industry (Anjum, 2005). It has been noticed that, different research studies published in the recognized academic journals and other business periodicals and magazines and proceedings of workshops, seminars, conferences, meetings and presentations have focused the challenges of tourism development in Bangladesh by raising a number of exciting issues and constraints exist in the industry (Ishtiaque, 2010). The development of a sustainable international tourism in the country is very challenging and diverse as the country has its own tourism features, level of economic development and national development priorities and policies. Historically, a fundamental constraint on the tourism industry has been found the negligence shown by policy makers due to priority attention which has gone to other sectors and tourism largely has been ignored. Yet, in case of tourism development, these challenges can be summarized as follows:

**Technical knowledge and well-built promotional activity:** Despite the fundamental awareness and basic cognizance of the economic importance of tourism as an industry and its positive impact as a potential source of foreign exchange earnings and employment, in many cases there is generally a lack of tourism knowledge and professionals. In case of tourism in Bangladesh, this is often accompanied by the absence or weak publicity, promotion and mass media exposure due, in many cases, to the poor communication systems and technological services.

**Tourism-related infrastructures:** The sufficient infrastructures are necessary for the development of a sustainable tourism industry. Primary amongst these are hotels and lodging services, transportation and communication services, and tourism information services. This makes it difficult for Bangladesh to provide the international standards of facilities and services which tourists require.

**Tourism investment:** While investment in services is well-established economic activity in the developed countries, it is still lagging behind in developing ones like Bangladesh. Investment in service-oriented projects, particularly in tourism, is often regarded in most developing countries as a high-risk task. Accordingly though they may have a natural tourism potential, it is still very difficult for Bangladesh to gain access to reasonable financing for their tourism projects even when they manage to tackle the problems of project identification and planning.

**Consistent tourism strategies and policies:** In Bangladesh there are still difficulties in reaching integrated tourism policy-making due, in general, to

policy conflicts between the government departments and the tourism private agencies. This is coupled in many cases with the lack of effective administration regulation and institutional frameworks of the tourism activity.

**Tourism diversification:** Modern international tourism activity has shown a growing tendency towards diversification and change. This makes it also difficult for Bangladesh due to a relatively developed tourism sector, to keep pace with the rapidly changing and complex requirements of international tourists. In a highly competitive international tourism market, considering the emergence of new tourism destinations and improving the conditions that foster modern tourism development is not an easy process.

**Tourism safety:** The safety of tourists is a primary factor for any successful tourism industry and should therefore be one of the basic objectives of tourism planning and management. Safety-related tourism problems, whether real or perceived exert a negative impact on the reputation of the host countries. In this regard, negative perceptions and political instability appear to play a detrimental role in the prospects of tourism in Bangladesh.

Furthermore, there are various reasons due to which tourism policy implementation has not occurred and these include:

**Conservative religious society:** Bangladesh is a Muslim country where Islamic traditions and practices are strictly adhered to religions norms and values. Such norms and values establishes many social constraints on foreign tourists including the absence of entertainment contents such as alcohol, nightlife or the dressing in western clothes especially for women.

**Public-private incorporation:** The lack of proper coordination and interaction between private and government agencies have negative impact on tourism development here in Bangladesh. Yet again, there is a lack of awareness among general public about the benefits and impact of tourism on their economic solvency.

**Proper training and knowledge:** Inadequate knowledge and training of tourism personnel such as tour operators, guides and tour planners are found in the industry due to insufficient training schools and university courses related to hospitality and tourism studies.

**Conservative visa policy:** The Bangladesh tourist visa policy often creates great obstacles to the development of tourism in the country. In 2003 the issuing of visas upon arrival was halted, thus many international tourists stopped visiting

the country. Further, the visa processing at Bangladesh missions abroad is expensive and often not tourist-friendly. Strict boarder and airport immigration and customs formalities also hamper the interest of the tourism industry.

**Incompatible hotel standards and charges:** There are no established policies for setting the hotel standards and charges in the country. Thus inconsistency has been reported in this area which discourages the tourists of Western and Middle Eastern countries in particular.

## **FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

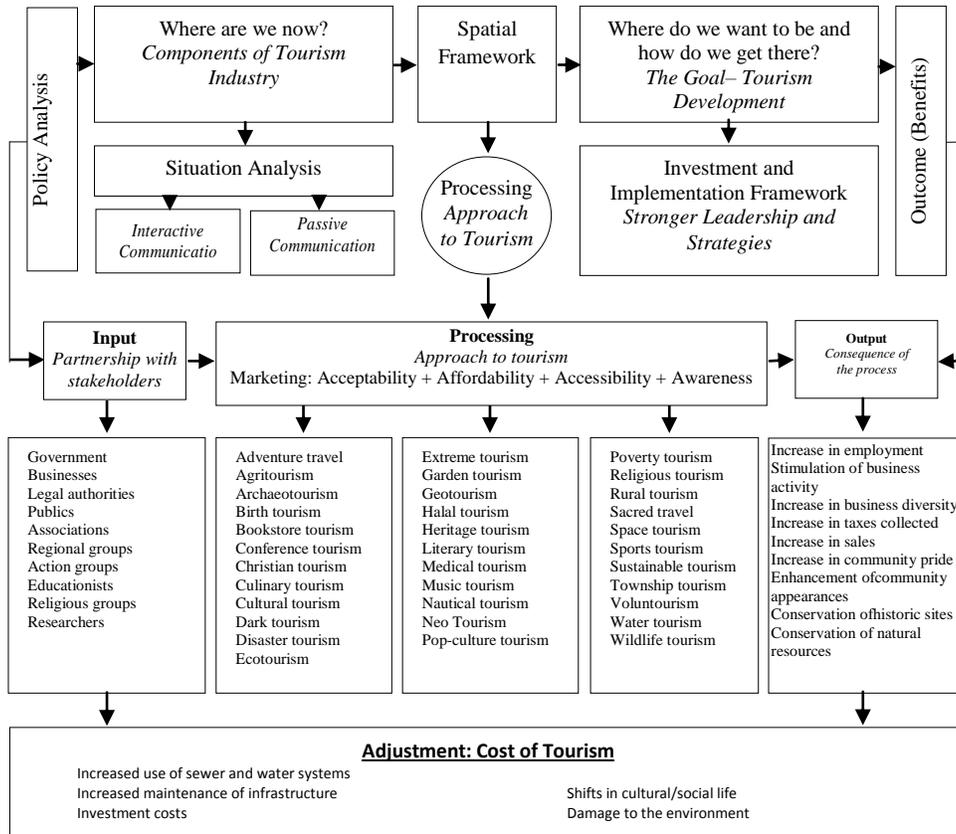
The main thrust of this study is presented in figure 02 where the researcher has proposed the analytical framework of tourism development model. The tourism development framework is developed at this point by exploring and adjusting the relevant issues and constraints of Bangladesh tourism industry in connection with the schema of tourism development model stated in the study. In addition, suggesting the courses of actions for constructing effective framework for tourism development in Bangladesh is also an added contribution of the study. These findings for the development of comprehensive programs for the tourism sector are analyzed below:

### **Model Development:**

To build up a development framework for Bangladesh tourism sector, the main focus should be on a dynamic and continuous process with interrelated and interacting variables. The frame work should begin with the tour operator/tourist (client) and should also end with the client.

The aim of a systematic planning process should be to focus attention on the relevant strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities of the tourist sector. A mechanism should be developed, which can bring longer-term plans together with annual and tactical planning activity for compatibility purposes. This can help to develop a tourism strategy which will be a unified, comprehensive and integrated plan. The degree of co-operation between the government and private sectors as regards the co-development of marketing strategies and tactics is an important and related issue in this regard. There may also be joint form of advertising campaigns and public relations exercises in major tourist-generating markets undertaken by NTO, private tour operators, and travel agents.

**Figure 02: Proposed Tourism Development Framework**



The Policy analysis provides a sketch of the principles, guidelines, and strategies contained in related documents at national, provincial, and city level. As we know, Bangladesh tourism industry is still an infant one, government should take a policy of nursing the industry along with the initiative to build partnerships among the all stakeholders– government authorities, businesses, legal authorities, publics, associations, regional groups, action groups, educationists, religious groups, and researchers. Meanwhile, government has developed tourism strategies, but not all have been well integrated and supported by action.

The tourism spatial framework recognizes tourism development areas all over the country. Each area has a distinctive character in terms of (a) the types of tourism products and resources found there, (b) the types of tourist experiences presently offered, (c) the potential to develop new products, and (d) the characteristics of the population of the area. In addition to recognize the tourism development areas, the tourism spatial framework also provides recommendations regarding the actions that can be taken in each tourism development area in order to: (a) increase the attractiveness of the area by developing unique products and

experiences that build on the resources of the area, **(b)** make it easier for tourists to get to and move around the area, and **(c)** help local people to develop tourism businesses and share in the benefits of tourism. However, managing differentiation and offering diversified products with the traditional one can give Bangladesh a competitive edge. Few ways of offering diversified products instead of traditional tourism products are adventure travel, agritourism, archaeotourism, birth tourism, bookstore tourism, conference tourism, Christian tourism, culinary tourism, cultural tourism, dark tourism, disaster tourism, ecotourism, extreme tourism, festival tourism, garden tourism, geotourism, halal tourism, heritage tourism, literary tourism, medical tourism, music tourism, nautical tourism, neo tourism, pop-culture tourism, poverty tourism, religious tourism, rural tourism, tribal tourism, sacred travel, space tourism, sports tourism, sustainable tourism, township tourism, voluntourism, water tourism, and wildlife tourism.

Stronger leadership and strategies are needed in order to achieve the goals as public money is invested in tourism infrastructure development. The tourism community continues to face significant challenges in awareness building and education and actively working against green washing within the tourism industry.

Different focuses are required for both inbound and domestic tourism. For attracting foreign tourists to Bangladesh, discussion of problems with productive suggestions and solutions must be presented through media, and there must be an appropriate committee at government level for initiating discussion and drawing conclusion. Bangladesh tourism industry may attract growing number of tourists if the country can initiate and undertake proper marketing plan with the understanding of demarcation line between the tourists– domestic and international.

#### **Courses of actions for constructing effective framework for tourism development in Bangladesh:**

The certain observations of the researcher after assessing intense interview with the stakeholders have been recognized for drawing attention to the concerned quarters of the Bangladesh tourism industry to boost up the tourism potentials in Bangladesh. These are revealed below:

1. The tourism quality is to provide for all types of tourist should be in a top class to make sure tourism sector in Bangladesh is in a right track.
2. Bangladesh has to formulate and develop environment-friendly tourism products, and promote its cultural and natural heritage to ensure the sustainability of its tourism industry.
3. Ethical integrity is to maintain for allowing tourists to have a more authentic experience as well as ensuring the local communities to have more benefit.

4. The responsible planner must take into account the life of the community as a whole.
5. Cultural tourism which refers to travel directed towards experiencing the arts, heritage and special character of a place is to be designed for the both local and foreign tourists.
6. Integrated marketing communications (IMC) is required for influencing potential tourist's attitude and behavior toward Bangladesh as a tourism destination.
7. In particular, there should be community involvement in the planning process.
8. Create tourism stakeholders' perceptions of the benefits and costs of tourism by social exchange theory that provides a theoretical foundation for identifying benefits and costs of tourism.
9. Be aware of tourist information search behavior to influence travelers for making travel decision.
10. Carry out research and development program on both theoretical and applied aspects of tourism to identify the main motivational factors that attract foreign tourists to visit the country.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Bangladesh today is a country at the crossroads in global market. The country is moving towards the 21<sup>st</sup> century while still maintaining a link with the past. Bangladesh is a country whose sights and sounds will delight a visitor and keep the visitor returning again and again to this land of green mosaic.

The economic globalization of the world has boosted up the tourism trade and created an opportunity for the developing countries to develop the sector in order to reap benefit out of this ever-growing industry. Bangladesh is also working towards this goal. Bangladesh is relatively nascent in the world of tourism. The tourism industry in Bangladesh recorded increase in tourist arrivals. Arrivals surpassed the ever peak figure in 2008. In term of foreign exchange highest BDT 8,232 million was earned in 2009.

In the recent past, Bangladesh has developed some moderate tourist facilities in its tourism potential areas. Improvement in road communication has connected north to south and east to west cities without much trouble and hindrance. Railway, especially inter-city train service has considerable network to cover the major cities with the capital city. The inland waterway facilitates, easy and cheaper sources of transportation possess a great potential for tourism development.

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