

Multiplier Effect of Tourism: A Case Study on Sustainable Economic Development in Sonargaon

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Abstract: *Culture plays an important role for boosting up tourism. This study was conducted to understand how the culture of Bangladesh and sustainable development issues are showcased in Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation. The paper attempts to find out the tourist stream and for forming sustainable tourism and society. In this study, qualitative method, interviews, Key Informant Interviews (KII), and quantitative method, and analyzing software excel (time series analysis) were used. Moreover, 30 years' temperature was analyzed to understand the weather impact on tourist flow. It is identified that both the domestic and international tourist flow has been swayed over the last ten years because of the climatic condition in Bangladesh. Additionally, it is noticed that weather has prodigious impact in tourist's decision making of visiting the establishments of the foundation. This research helps to reshape tourism sector with sustainability by adding amenities. It also expedites the environment, society, economy and so on. The authors emphasize on developing sustainable 4As (accessibility, attractions, amenities, and ancillary services) to contribute to national economy of Bangladesh. Most importantly, community development and their economic benefits are the possible positive outcomes of focusing on the advancement of this destination. There is no doubt that without ensuring above facilities, it would be difficult to make sustainable economic development of the society.*

Keywords: Multiplier effect, Tourist stream, Local economy, Economic sustainability, Sustainable development, 4A management.

1. Introduction

In Bangladesh, the inhabitants have in-born quality to represent their lifestyle, originality and creations of art and craft. To foster the tradition and heritage, Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation was established on March 12, 1975 by the renowned Bangladeshi painter– Joynul Abedin. From the very beginning, it has been working with the people of all walks of lives to make them engaged in weaving Jamdani Saree, producing souvenirs and cloth business. Consequently, a huge number of local people have been enjoying the

scope to run their business (Akhundova, 2021). Recently, it has projected two plans, one is to build awareness about folk arts and crafts through training programs, and another one is for the growth of this foundation by adding facilities like-rest house, healthcare, transport and others. Participation and arrangement of fairs to manifest arts and crafts combined with national culture with distinction is one of its regular activities (Kobra, 2016).

2. Literature Review

Cultural tourism has turned into a well-known and appealing area to bestow mental amusement and as an instrument for training, and Bangladesh is a nation of rich culture endowed with social assets Rahman (2012). He tries to survey the accessible offices of social tourism, the history, part of tourism on the economy, and society in Bangladesh. Additionally, he recognizes the open doors and difficulties the nation may face to thrive in this industry. Cultural tourism is one of the potential and significant sectors in the tourism industry; it has various forms such as cultural villages, cultural routes, art, crafts, and local dances that are offered to tourists (Kobra et al., 2018). Bangladesh is a disaster-prone country and a lot of natural disasters occur, the number of tourists fluctuate all the year round due to these phenomena. It will continue to occur if we fail to ensure sustainable development in tourism (Cianga & Patrascu, 2010).

There are many researchers who have been conducting research on sustainable development in tourism sector of Bangladesh. Among them Khandakar (2014) purposely depicts the procedures and strategies for creating natural, financial, and socio-political supportability in tourism industry of Bangladesh and further tries to discover possibilities and imperatives to the advancement of reasonable tourism in Bangladesh.

Economic gains are major driving force for the growth of tourism sector in developing countries. The initial period of growth occurred in the late 1960's and 1970's, when tourism was perceived as a key activity for generating foreign exchange and employment generation through private as well as government organizations (Ahmed, 2016). Tourism is one of the world's most important sources of creation of employment and reduction of poverty level. It creates new avenues of investment in infrastructural development and may help improve the living standard of local people. Government of a country may earn substantial tax revenues from this sector. Insufficient tourism framework, lack of a thorough organization of insights on tourism ventures, high costs for territorial tourism items, outbound tourism's power and lacking financing of tourism business at both local and national levels must be set on with priority (Kobra et al., 2018). Shamsuddoha & Chowdhury (2009) showed in their study the chances of creating tourism industry in the light of existing resources.

Rahman et al. (2010) identified the issue of well-being and security of the travelers of

both household and remote starting points is additionally imperative for the improvement of tourism in Bangladesh. In spite of the fact that an arrangement has been embraced lately for guaranteeing reasonable advancement of this segment, the techniques received under the arrangement are not yet being genuinely taken up for execution, and in addition, the nation requires a solid physical arranging procedure to build up its urban and rustic zones, and national transportation framework to set up network to the tourism spots (Cater, 1993).

From the above discussion, it is clear that no such research has been conducted yet though there are several studies carried out focusing on different tourism spots and organizations in Bangladesh. Therefore, in authors' opinion, it is very decisive to perform such study in Sonargaon including Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation and Museum (Kobra et al., 2019). They presume that it is very essential to do such type of research in this area as it plays an important role in their country's economy, culture, and society. It is true that there is a lot of research, which have been successfully carried out in other areas of Bangladesh; however, it is exceptional for Sonargaon. To their knowledge, this study will help the bodies of folk arts and crafts foundation and other stakeholders to build a sustainable cultural society, which eventually will underwrite in national economy (Ali & Mohsin, 2008).

3. Objectives

Bangladesh has rich culture, tradition but there is a lack of adequate bodies to take care of its asset in a sustainable way. Hence, this study has been conducted to find out the tourist stream, analyzing existing sustainable work and to generate some fruitful ideas for future sustainability. Moreover, to emphasize on the tourist trend and experience to assert sustainable growth of Bangladesh folk arts and crafts foundation.

3.1 Secondary Objectives

- To find out tourist pattern.
- To highlight the changing tourist experience and sustainable issues.
- To dictate future potentiality of Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation as a sustainable tourism destination.
- To depict its economic sustainability.
- To recommend some amenities to be added to ensure sustainability.

4. Methodology

This research has been performed with the use of both qualitative and quantitative method for focusing on the tourist stream. The authors took interviews with the officials

and top management of this foundation to find out its role and future plan of extension. Focus group discussion was also conducted among 15 tourism experts to find out the way of sustainable development in this resource center of Bangladesh. Researchers also talked to the 50 local business people who have their permanent stall within the foundation premises. Moreover, the authors conducted 150 semi-structural interviews with tourists.

4.1 Data Collection and Analysis

In addition, to understand the tourist flow and seasonal variation, data diagnosis software, Microsoft office excel, were used. The data were collected in case of domestic tourist flow and its variations in two periods (January to June and July to December).

5. Results and Discussion

As it is seen that, seasonal variation has a great influence on the tourist flow of this foundation. National and International tourists' number must be consistent all over the year to ensure sustainable economic and cultural development of local community and the destination. There are many aspects by which sustainable tourism development are being ensured and will be maintained.

5.1 Trends Analysis of Tourism Stream: Variations by Seasons

It is inevitable to analyze the pattern of tourist flow in a destination to clarify the influential factors behind its growth, reduction, and fluctuation. Bangladesh folk arts and crafts foundation has provided the necessary data to the authors to find out the actual trend of domestic, international tourists along with the seasonal variations.

The number of tourists is dependent on the facilities of a destination as internal factor and climatic condition is traced as external factor. This is how the charts and graphs given below are illustrated to validate whether seasonal variations or weather and other situations have influences on the tourist run throughout the years.

5.1.1 Ten Year Analysis of Tourist Flow

The chart, which is shown in figure 1, demonstrates tourist flow in the Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation from 2007 to 2016. At a glance; it is obvious that tourist stream has been fluctuated over the years. Furthermore, the tourist flow was just under 4,00,000 in 2006-2007 whereas it increased gradually and reached its peak amounting 7, 00,000 in 2010-2011. After that, it followed downward trend having fluctuations from 2011-2012 to 2014-2015. It remained constant till 2015-2016.

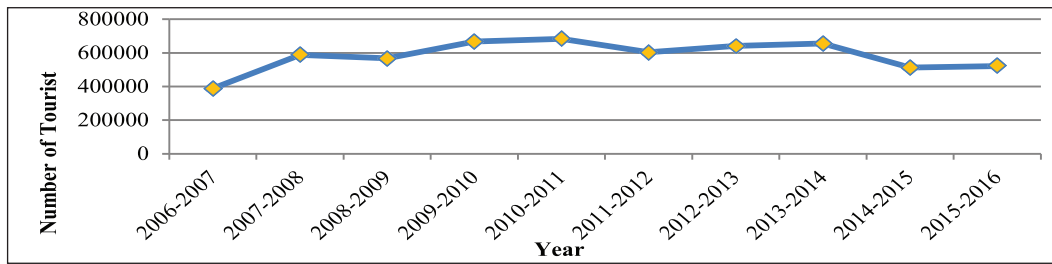


Figure 1: Showing Per Year Deviation of Tourist Flow in Sonargaon (*Source:* Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation)

5.1.2 International Tourist Flow

The bar diagram, in figure 3, dictates yearly deviations of international tourist stream in Sonargaon in the 10 years period. It can clearly be seen that, during the first four years, there was no international tourists due to lack of infrastructural facilities and promotional activities. Later on, from 2010 to 2016 it increased gradually and the figure was 1,096 and 3,000 respectively.



Figure 2: Demonstrating Yearly Difference of International Tourist Run in Sonargaon (*Source:* Bangladesh Folk Arts and Craft Foundation)

5.1.3 Seasonal Variation of Tourist Stream

The line graph, figure 2, shows domestic tourist flow and its variations in two periods (January to June and July to December). It is seen that between January and June the tourist stream was fluctuated across the same time frame. At the beginning, January to June, this period was standard; on the other hand, July to December, it was at lower point (about 250,000 and just above 10,00,000 respectively). Afterwards, the pattern of tourist flow, during July to December, showed upward as temperature was comfortable except last two years. In case of January to June, the tourist increased in 2007-2008, and

then it fell down. Again, it augmented gradually and got its highest accounting approximately 4, 00,000. Finally, it reduced steadily and overlapped with July to December Period in 2015-2016.

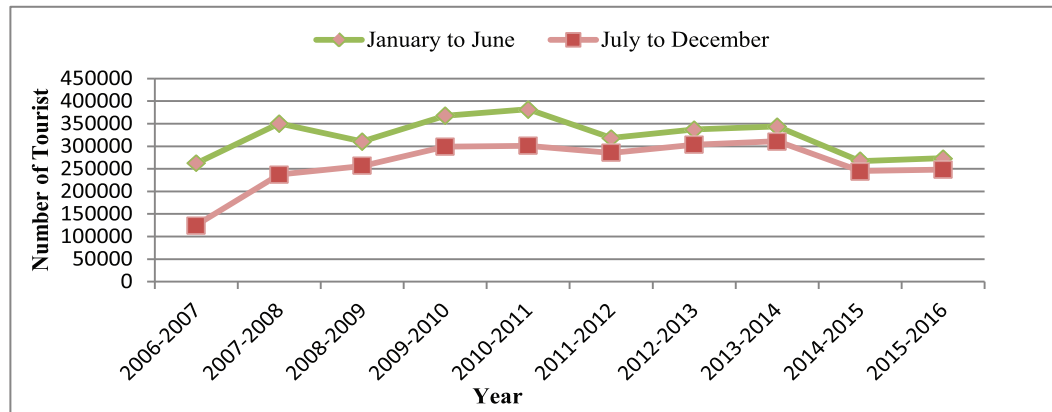


Figure 3: Illustrating Seasonal Variation of Domestic Tourist Stream in Sonargaon
(*Source:* Bangladesh Folk Arts and Craft Foundation)

5.2 Sustainability Perspective of Local Economy

The authors took interview from local people and tourists from sustainability point of view. Here is the summary of their interview relative to the Economic pillar of sustainability. Existing and potential means of Sustainable tourism development (Positive influence) in Sonargaon have been found out. Tourism development directly plays a revolutionary role to maintain the natural environment and to add beauties at a greater extent. As a precondition of sustainability, environmental issue is in the new height nowadays. Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation nurture the environment by planting trees of all types. It is surrounded by natural area which is not degraded rather enhanced by the eco-friendly and sustainable development. It has a great prospect to be an ideal eco-tourism destination by structured planning and zoning. On the other side, the picnic spot and museum is not properly presented. There should be adequate number of guides to educate the tourists and direct them properly. Tourism has multiplier effect. Accordingly, the development of Sonargaon as one of the mostly visited places has some direct, indirect, and induced effects, which are demonstrated in figure 5. As tourism advancement is highly interlinked with local and regional development, sustainable outgrowth should be ascertained to make it unfailing. Local community can be benefited from the progression of tourism services as they can enjoy the outcome of infrastructural enlargement, which may have been accomplished specifically for the tourists.

This is how, as a custom of direct effect sufficient amount of employment is generated.

Moreover, the living standard turns out to be advanced. Along with the direct and indirect effects, there occurs particular induced payback, for instance higher level of spending pattern of tourists and most importantly sustainable progression as a tourism resource.

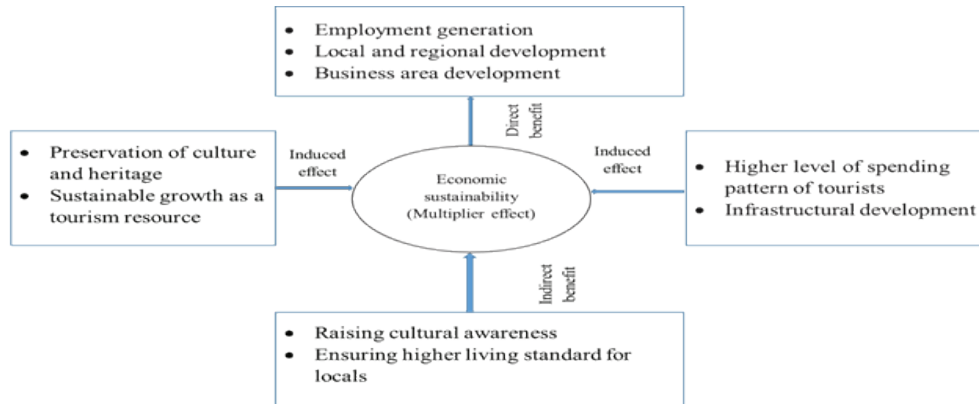


Figure 4: Delegation of Folk Arts and Crafts as a Source of Economic Sustainability by the Illustration of Multiplier Effect (**Source:** Authors' Compilation)

5.3 4 A Management for Economic Sustainability

To turn an ordinary place into tourism destination the inclusion of 4A, Accessibility, Attractions, Amenities, and Ancillary services, is imperative. Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts has been a source of economic sustainability for the community people. According to the experts, 4A development can go a long way to attract more and more tourists to this destination. According to the expert's opinion, the 4 A- Accessibility, Attractions, Amenities, Ancillary Services management should be in order to ensure economic sustainability of local community. The perspective of experts are outlined as the following points:

5.3.1 A-Accessibility (Primary Transportation to the General Location and Local Transportation)

Internal and external transportation development is prerequisite to ensure sustainable growth of a destination. In case of Sonargaon the authority may foster the tourism mobility by providing local transportation. The patronization of craftsmanship has been boosting up the cultural representation of Bangladesh. If the ministry of cultural affairs especially this foundation has been allocated with more budgets to motivate the craftsmen to produce a number of handicrafts as a form of souvenir, we may foresee the amelioration of Bangladeshi heritage. Community involvement can enlighten the social benefits in various ways as they can work as guide and can be engaged in providing products and services to the tourists to make them feel the local touch.

5.3.2 A-Attractions

The authority may add some attractions for the kids. There may have kids zone with 3D animal show, playground, and discrete picnic spots with adequate washroom facilities. There may have special photography zone. Museum might be enriched with variety of relics. Shopping facility is one of the attractions for tourists. Jamdani saree (a kind of women dress made of local thread), replica of architectural beauties, souvenirs and local food, and all these items can ignite cherish of tourists for shopping. The general tendency of tourists is to collect some objects as memory to their home country. In line with that, shopping tourism may become one of the attractions at Sonargaon which may remain consistent with proper management. Sonargaon museum can be highlighted through arranging cultural festivals like jatra, concert, drama, cake demonstration to recuperate the folklore and origin.

5.3.3 A-Amenities

To popularize the destination, it is needed to add some amenities exclusively for the tourists who are from far area. The addition of necessary amenities can generate huge income and some of the researchers can utilize research, yoga and meditation center for the fortification and preservation of national originality (culture, heritage, history). As a result, this foundation and its concerned tourism facilities may widely be stimulated. The crucial amenities are presented in figure 5.

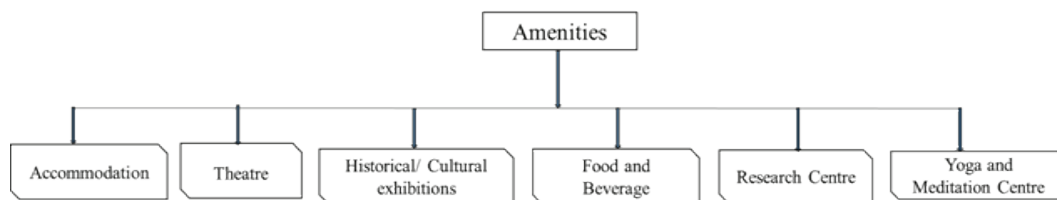


Figure 5: Crucial Amenities to Pick up Tourism in Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation, Sonargaon. (*Source:* Authors' Compilation)

5.3.4 A-Ancillary Services

Based on the requirements of tourists, the authority should have the capability to provide some ancillary services such as high-speed internet connection, different rides, zoning, and arrangement of educational seminars to acquire relevant knowledge and so on. Appropriate use of signage and information nameplate must be made certain.

6. Conclusion

Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation is a governing body to keep and promote Bangladeshi arts and crafts though it has been allocated with restricted budget. Addi-

tionally, the tourism stream shows fluctuating trend while there is a need of adequate manpower to serve the tourists of all sets. Moreover, climatic seasonal variations should be considered by authority. By strengthening the sustainable headway of 4A, the foundation can contribute a lot to the tourist inflow, cultural boost up as well as to the rise of local economy eventually.

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