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**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN BANGLADESH**

**A Case Study of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh**

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**ABSTRACT**

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<p>Bangladesh is situated in South Asia, it is bordered by India in the north and east Myanmar to its southeast. Bangladesh is the land of green countryside. Tourism destinations in Bangladesh is attracting thousands tourists every year from all around the globe. There are many popular tourist destinations. Among them Cox’s Bazar is considered as one of the most widely visited tourist destinations in Bangladesh but there has not been enough research, planning, advertisement and implementation for the development of this area. If it continues this way, it is not possible to save this beautiful region from manmade destruction and nature made destruction in future. Therefore, the practices of sustainability should be started there as soon as possible.</p> <p>The theoretical part of the thesis focused on the essential development ideas about sustainable development. Quantitative research method was used to achieve the result. It demonstrated how sustainable tourism development can play a constructive role to visitors and local people. The thesis was based on sustainable tourism development and its impact.</p> <p>In this thesis the data and information were collected from different genuine sources. The thesis was written with sources of the internet, articles and books. The aim of the thesis was to identify more effective ideas and procedures of sustainable tourism development and to realize the importance of sustainable tourism development at Cox’s Bazar in Bangladesh so that it can bring positive change in local people, tourism industry, and the tourists themselves.</p> <p>After this research, the author found that along with the Bangladesh government all local people and tourism related organizations should be conscious about developing sustainability in Cox’s Bazar and work together to receive more tourists from different parts of the world.</p>		
<b>Key words</b> Cox’s Bazar, destination, development, industry, management, sustainable, tourism		

## ABBREVIATIONS

BPC	Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation
BTI	Bangladesh Trade Info
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICOMOS	International Council of Monuments and Sites
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations
UNEP	United Nation Environment Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UN	United Nations
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WTO	World Trade Organization
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism development may have both optimistic and adverse impacts on destinations. Sustainable tourism development tries to make a balance in these influences in order to generate a better quality of life for the host municipality and the destination. The meaning of sustainable tourism is not just to protect the environment. It also involves with long term economic viability and social justice. By sustainable tourism development, we mostly understand all significant stakeholders who are educated and active participants as well as strong political leadership who make sure wide participation and union building. Attaining sustainable tourism, it is not just a constant procedure. It also needs continual monitoring of impacts and whenever necessary the corrective measures should be taken.

The aim of sustainable tourism is maintaining a great level of tourist gratification as well as confirming a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their alertness about sustainability matters and helping sustainable tourism practices among them. The idea of sustainability transparently involves the environment, people and economic system. This is because, it makes as an impact on the environment, local culture and helps to create more employment opportunities for local people in future and it also can bring more positive changes for local people, tourism industry, and the tourist themselves. So, sustainable tourism should not endanger the natural system which support life on Earth for instance, the atmosphere, the waters, the soils and the living beings. It should decrease the adverse impacts on the quality of air, water, and other natural elements in order to sustain the ecosystem and conserve plant and animal species.

Therefore, achieving sustainable tourism needs to think about more the critical calculation of existing and techniques fields of sustainable tourism region. Tourism planning, development and operation must be included in the sustainable development strategies for a region and agencies, corporations, different groups and individuals have to follow ethical behavior and

further moralities which show respect to the culture and environment of the host area, the economy and old-fashioned way of life, leadership and political forms. If they don't act willingly the government may have to regulate their activities and it needs to keep in mind that sustainable tourism development is an exclusive opportunity in order to support the impact of the tourism sector to the three pillars of sustainability such as economic, social and environmental.

Tourism should be sustainable in all three areas on the other hand we cannot consider it as sustainable tourism. So, this is high time for raising awareness of three pillars of sustainability of a sector which is often underestimated to many parts of the world. The government should care about sustainability because from the tourist point of view unsustainable tourism can be fine but there is no benefit which can protect the tourism destination and support the host community.

Tourism must be planned and managed in a sustainable way in order to ensure the security and suitable economic practices of the natural and human environment in host parts because its backgrounds lie in the wider idea of sustainable development which is with us for many years. The aim of sustainability is undoubtedly squeezing the environment, people and the economic system.

Sustainable tourism development which fulfills our needs without negotiating the ability of people in future to meet their requirements. For instance, support human right and democratic movement and share socio-economic benefits with local people. The government needs to make sure that local people get benefit economically from tourism sectors and provide direct financial support for conservation and support local economy for example, taking part in small business or purchasing goods service. It also creates environmental awareness, respect the local culture, protect ecosystem and seek out business that are environmentally friendly.

The outcome of this research will definitely assist the researcher to figure out the present situation of Bangladesh tourism sector and the possible things that should follow for developing this sector. Furthermore, it will help the people to get some strong ideas about the necessity of sustainable development in the tourism sector as well as they can also understand the benefits of this for example the economic, social and environmental. The purpose of the research is to be a messenger between native people, tourists, the government and tourism linked associations.



## 2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The idea of sustainable tourism is not only an environmental but also social, economic, cultural, political and managerial. This is because long term thinking is necessary like the planning and management of sustainable tourism should be appropriate so that sustainable tourism must be goal for all policies. Moreover, all stakeholders must be checked and permitted in tourism decision making process by informing about all sustainable development matters and necessary to put the ideas of sustainable tourism into practice. In this case, negative impacts on the environment should be reduced and have to have good concept of target market in order to attain innovation in design, attain authenticity, the balancing of cost and benefits, and develop the social and economic benefits for local people. For tourist needs to promotes environmental education like providing advice to the guest how to behave in an environmentally friendly manner. Above all these, introducing community value, increase local capacity, respecting natural and cultural values and delivering mutual benefits to visitors and hosts, minimize water and energy consumption are involved with the main principal which should follow into tourism practice. (UNEP, 2005.)

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has approved the adoption of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. The resolution, adopted on 4th December, recognizes the importance of international tourism, and particularly of the designation of an international year of sustainable tourism for development, in fostering better understanding among people everywhere, in leading to a greater awareness of the rich heritage of various civilizations and in bringing about a better appreciation of the inherent values of different cultures, thereby contributing to the strengthening of peace in the world (UNWTO, 2005.)

## 2.1 History of Sustainable Tourism Development

The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972 gave birth to the first true notion of sustainable development, which was called "Eco development" in those days. This founding conference was held in an atmosphere of conflict between the ecology and the economy. The integration of social equity and ecological caution were incorporated into the economic development models for North and South. This would result in the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme. (UNDP, 2005.)

The idea of sustainable tourism is a phenomenon since 1968 in Italy, think tank known as the Club of Rome. This group united scientists, economists, national and international civil servants, and industrialists from 53 countries. It studies the difficult problems that face all societies, whether industrialized or developing as it is observed from past few decades that many traditional agriculture systems were founded in the principal of sustainability. (Legrand, 2015.)

It is also observed that technological innovations and population pressures have brought social and economic change that led to the progression of industry and urbanization. For instance, the industrialization in the UK changed the economy, society and even natural environment. Some people say that if it were not controlled, the process might have devastated the physical environment which directed to the poor quality of life of the population. To realize these some industrialists established parks to ensure that future generation would have some green space to enjoy in the heart of industrial cities. Likewise, as industrialization directed to urban extension and decay in public health. This is in turn governments and local councils initiated to take action to the long term future of towns and cities. (Legrand, 2015.)

## 2.2 Definition

Sustainable tourism can be defined as it needs the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to confirm wide participation. Attaining sustainable tourism is a constant process and it wants continuous observing of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and corrective measures whenever necessary. Sustainable tourism have to also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and confirm a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and supporting sustainable tourism practices amongst them. (World Tourism Organization, 2004.)

Sustainable tourism is well-defined as tourism which appreciate both local people and the traveler, cultural heritage and the environment. It provides an exciting and educational holiday that is also of benefit to the people of the host country (UNESCO, 2010). Sustainable tourism which is economically, socioculturally and environmentally sustainable and its influences are neither constant nor temporary. ( Beech & Chadwick, 2005). Sustainable tourism states to a high level of tourism activity which might be conserved over long term because it creates opportunities for the social, economic, natural and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place. (ICOMOS, 2011.)

From the above mentioned sustainable tourism definitions it can be said that sustainable tourism is an industry which makes really a low impact on the environment and local culture and helps to create future employment for local people . It can reduce negative social, economic and environmental impacts and makes better economic benefits for local people and boosts the well-being of host communities as well as develops the working situation. The host community can involve in decision making which affect their lives and create positive influence to the protection of natural and cultural heritage.

### 2.3 Sustainable and Non-sustainable Tourism

The target of the sustainable tourism is to first planning then development. That is why this type of development are often more appropriate because it is slow, controlled and long term development that create jobs, foreign exchange earnings, new infrastructure while safeguarding cultural heritage and living culture and minimizing negative environmental and social impacts. It is qualitative, local control, and silent. It maintains the ecological process and conserve biodiversity and ensure viable, long-term economic operations. Local developers develop the area taking local employees with appropriate scale and some mental preparation. (Swarbrooke, 2002, 15-20.)

Non-sustainable tourism that destroy the environment and cultural identities and it doesn't make good business sense. It often creates great pressure on local resources such as energy, food, land and water that may already be in short supply. It is like developing the area without appropriate planning, starting rapid development which destroy forest, wild life and disturb the local people by making so much noise, air pollution and waste disposal. It is always uncontrolled development, short term, quantitative and remote control. It does not have high value because of having poor project schemes, outside developers, imported labour and it starts without mental preparation. (Swarbrooke, 2002, 15.)

### 3 THE PRINCIPLES BEHIND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The principal of sustainable tourism is to educate the travelers so that they can contract friendly manner in an environment and it involves traveling to the destination with the interest of nature and ecology under the guidelines of a naturalist if followed by tourist would help develop more form of sustainable tourism. For instance, educational campaign such as those relating to sex and drugs. Environmental protection should be established on an integral part of the development process in order to attain sustainable development, and it should not measure in isolation from it. (UNEP, 2005.)

Every nations has the independent right to use their own resources for their social and economic development, but have to make sure it does not make any environmental damage beyond their borders. Nations should develop international laws in order to deliver compensation for damage that actions under their control cause to areas beyond their borders. (UNEP, 2005.)

Nations have to decrease and eradicate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, and demographic policies should be promoted appropriately to the development and environment needs of present and next generations. Sustainable development needs generally better scientific understanding of the problems so that nation can share their data and advanced technologies to attain the aim of sustainability. Nations also should work together in order to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem. (Swarbrooke, 2002, 20-28.)

### 3.1 Global Significance of Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism can play an important role to be an effective tool for understanding the Millennium Development Objectives. It is proved to be significant in addressing the first objective linked to poverty alleviation: providing sustainable development opportunity to isolated, poor societies, even in the most inaccessible countryside regions. Globally tourism contributes significantly to the nations' gross national product (GNP). The sector produces approximately 4.4% of the total gross domestic product (GDP) and employs about 200 million people. That is why, the annual number of tourists to international destinations has increased continuously from 25 million to 808 million between 1950 and 2005 accordingly. (WTO, 2006.)

Moreover, this sector producing huge amount of revenue which is more than US\$800 billion (WTO, 2006a). It is observed from African continent that the arrival of international tourists has increased rapidly from 28 million to 40 million between 2000 and 2005 whereas the annual average growth is 5.6 % a year, compared to worldwide and percentage is 3.1 a year - resulted in a doubling of receipts from US\$10.5 billion to US\$21.3 billion. Tourism can play the vital role to improve the overall socioeconomic development through the facility of roads, telephones, piped and treated water supplies, waste disposal and recycling and sewage treatment and that may increase more opportunities for further development and create benefits for the sector and it may support in the sustainable management of protected areas and support the protection of natural resources as local communities are able to realize the price of their asset through benefit sharing. All exports of services which tourism makes that is nearly forty percent and making it one of the prime groups of international trade, with more potential that may benefit poor countries. (WTO, 2006.)

### 3.2 Benefits of Sustainable Tourism

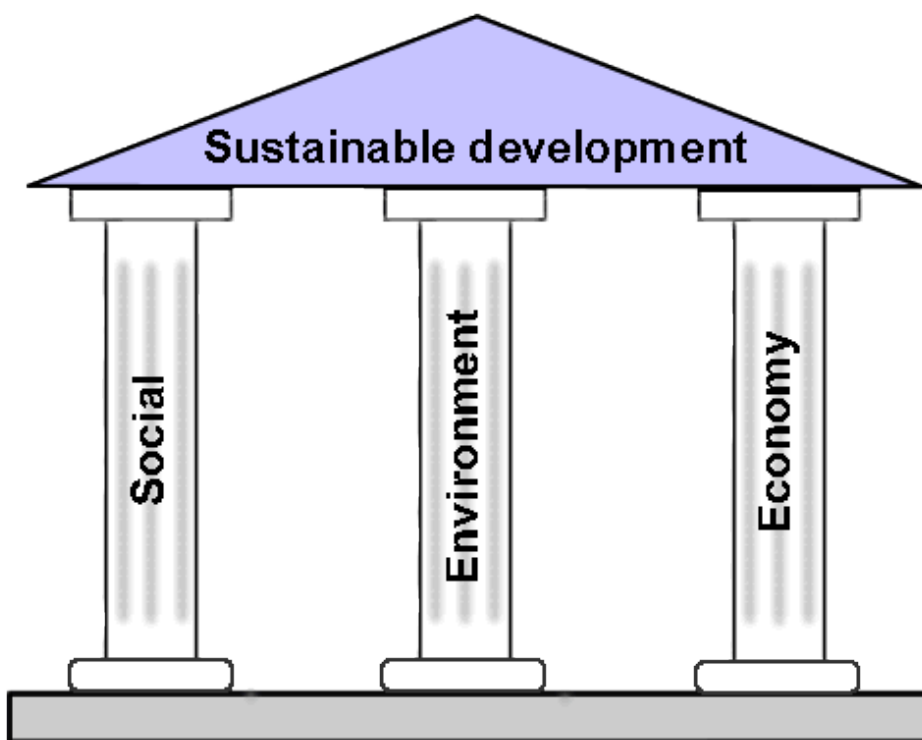
Tourism is not only the world's fastest growing industry but also a major source of income for many countries. Sustainable tourism provides many jobs opportunities for local people which improve the quality of life, reduce poverty and help local economies. ( Tourism Austalia, 2013.)

It defends and preserves biodiversity, preserve natural resources for future generation, retain natural cycles in marine coastal ecosystem and protect the quality of the environment by ecological system and decrease working costs by taking initiatives that diminish waste, water and energy consumption. Furthermore, it supports to promote innovation and new thinking in the development of sustainable goods and services and allow to take the improvement of future opportunities. ( Tourism Austalia, 2013.)

Moreover, it expands investment opportunities with long term sustainability plans as well as increase long term profitability by setting plans in a place. It preserves the destination attraction and attains productivity and saving business maneuver in activities. Except all these tourists can gather a great quality of experience in their life which refresh their mind and motivate to make the trip regularly. (UNWTO, 2005.)

#### 4 THE THREE PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY

As described in Graph 1, sustainability has three vital pillars which should be considered for the development of tourism. The concept of the three pillars of sustainability has been accepted all over the world. The tourism linked associations need to look at the three pillars of sustainable tourism. These are social, environment and economic sustainability. These three areas should be taken into consideration by communities, companies, and individuals. The main aim of sustainable development is to ensure an intelligible and long-lasting balance between these three dimensions. Sustainable tourism management could only be successful if the inter-relationships between all three dimensions are accepted. (Swarbrooke, 2002. 47.)



GRAPH 1. Principles of sustainability (adapted from thwink.org, 2014)



#### 4.1 Environmental Sustainability

The environmental sustainability is obviously one of the most important parts of tourism, mainly the natural, physical and its protection. The meaning of environmental sustainability is to make sure resources in an area and it should be well-maintained for use by future generations. (Swarbrooke, 2002. 47.)

Tourism associations have to think about the environment carefully in order to protect the environment especially the natural environment and their protection. Wildlife is a major attraction for the tourists all over the world but tourism is visibly harmful to the wildlife for instance, by the destruction of habitats, affecting feeding habits, disturbing breeding patterns, fires in woodland and people picking rear plants. (Swarbrooke, 2002. 47.)

Tourism generally use of a range of natural resources. The main attraction of a destination's product is the natural resources. For example, natural resources consists of clean, pure water, mountain areas, lakes, rivers, seas, beaches and natural woodland but natural environment is always effected by the action of people in many countries. This is because, there are only few natural landscapes left in this world. It is clearly understood that tourism is harmful to any aspects of the environment because tourism is an industry which changes the natural environment. (Swarbrooke, 2002. 47.)

Therefore, the government or tourism board should take various steps to protect the natural environment and wildlife because of its value as a tourism resource. Motivation is highly important especially in developing countries because if the tourism related organizations are unable to motivate the government more damage could be done to the environment and wildlife by industrial and residential development. Local people should create tourist awareness of environmental issues and lead them to campaign for environment protection. The government should not make unnecessarily new cities, towns, roads, airports infrastructures, dams destroying the natural environment. (Swarbrooke, 2002. 49.)

## 4.2 Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability is the capability of an economy to support a defined level of economic production indefinitely. Tourism is now one of the world's fastest growing economic sectors in the world. According to the World Tourism Organization, 698 million people traveled to an overseas country in 2000, and spend more than US\$ 478 billion. International tourism receipts combined with passenger transport currently total more than US\$ 575 billion which is making tourism the world's number one export earner, ahead of automotive products, chemicals, petroleum and food. (UNWTO, 2005.)

When tourism associations think about sustainability, they do not take into consideration the economic sustainability as an important factor but the truth is that this is the main key to making a tourism venture more sustainable. This is the reasons, it is considered as a main instrument for regional development in many developing countries because it is so important for economic progress, poverty reduction and motivating new economic activities. (Swarbrooke, 2002. 59.)

Tourism has a positive economic impact on employment, on gross income and production, but it also has negative effects, mainly on the environment. Unplanned and uncontrolled tourism growth cannot be the proper way to get the maximum output for a long term. The key source of tourist product is the environment, so it has to be protected in order to get the further growth of tourism and economic development in the future. (Ideas, 2015.)

The meaning of economic sustainability is building linkages and reducing leakages for instance, a hotel or company owned and operated by a foreigner and take away the maximum money from the host country and leak overseas. This is not sustainable because it does not contribute that much to the local economy. The community needs to be involved in tourism so that they can get the financial benefits from it. (Ideas, 2015.)

### 4.3 Social sustainability

The meaning social sustainability is the quality of life and capability of a social system for instance, a country, family or organization to improve processes and arrangements which not only fulfill the requirements of its current members but it can also support the capability of next generations in order to preserve a healthy community at a standard level of social well-being and harmony indeterminately. Difficulties for instance, war, extensive injustice, widespread poverty, and low education rates are symptoms a system which is often called “socially unsustainable”. There are a lot of famous tourism destinations around the world which attracts a large number of tourist from foreign countries every year. When a tourism zone starts being visited by tourists, there are some social and cultural impacts of those tourists on the host community. (landlopers, 2011.)

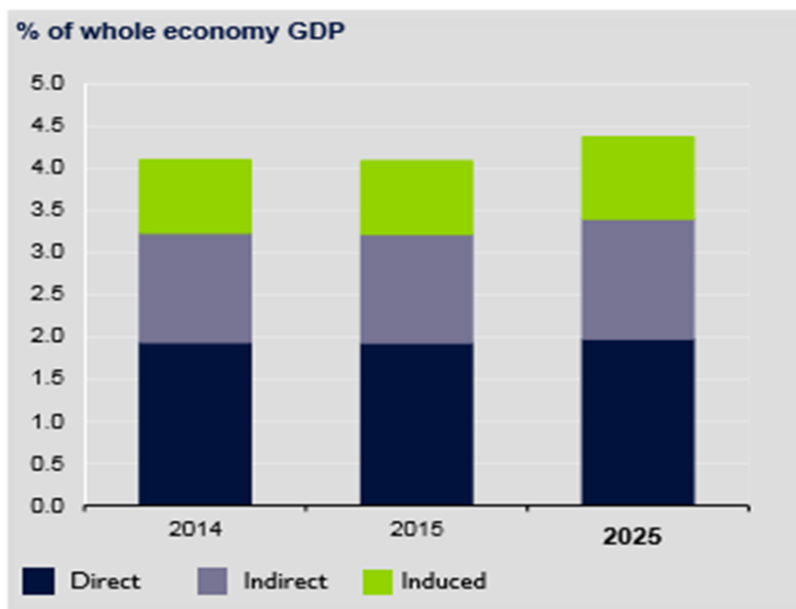
Tourist behavior may have a negative effect on the quality of life of the host community, for instance, crowding and congestion, drugs and alcohol problems, prostitution and increased crime levels may occur. Tourism may even invade on human rights, for example tourism industry can make pressure on local people being displaced from their land so that they can make new hotels, and cottages, parks, and resorts. Social sustainability minimize these negative impacts and focusing on more positive ones, like, supporting cultural exchange and conserving local traditions. This may generally be attained by getting the locals involved in the tourism industry. (Swarbrooke, 2002. 69.)

If the local tourism organization can involve host community in the tourism industry it can offer visitors a more genuine experience and the host part would be more expected to see the tourism in a positive way and they also will be proud of it. This is because, host community needs to change their attitudes towards and relation with the tourists and they can also try to conserve the society and culture for future generations. Tourism industry should raise their awareness about sustainability issues and promote sustainable tourism practices among them. (landlopers, 2011.)

## 5 TOURISM IN BANGLADESH

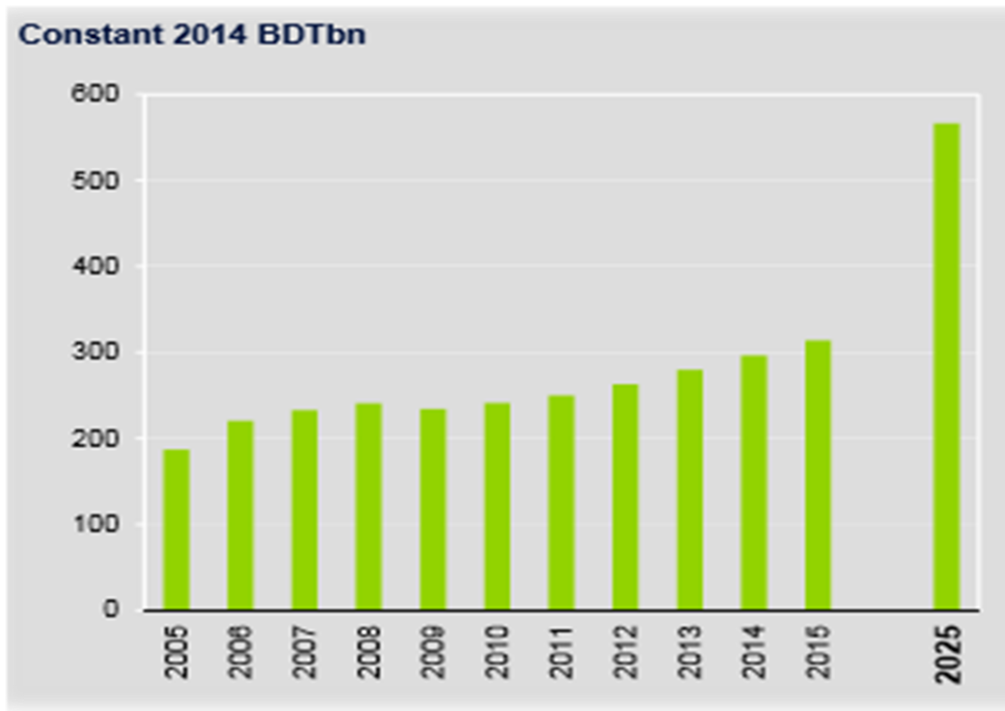
This is the place where there is green fields, natural wonders, colorful society life and also Serpentine River. It is a dream destination for the tourists because it has mind blowing sites which attract thousands of tourists every year. Bangladesh has numerous well known tourist attractions like historical buildings, beautiful landscapes, the biggest forest, the longest ocean shoreline, hotels and landmarks. That is why tourism of Bangladesh is attracting a large number of tourists from different parts of the world every year and the sector has significant direct and indirect impacts across the country. (Visit Bangladesh, 2016.)

Travel and Tourism is a vital activity for developing countries especially for Bangladesh. It has been growing faster in Bangladesh in the recent years. WTTC has been measuring the economic impacts of travel and tourism for 25 years. (WTTC, 2015.)



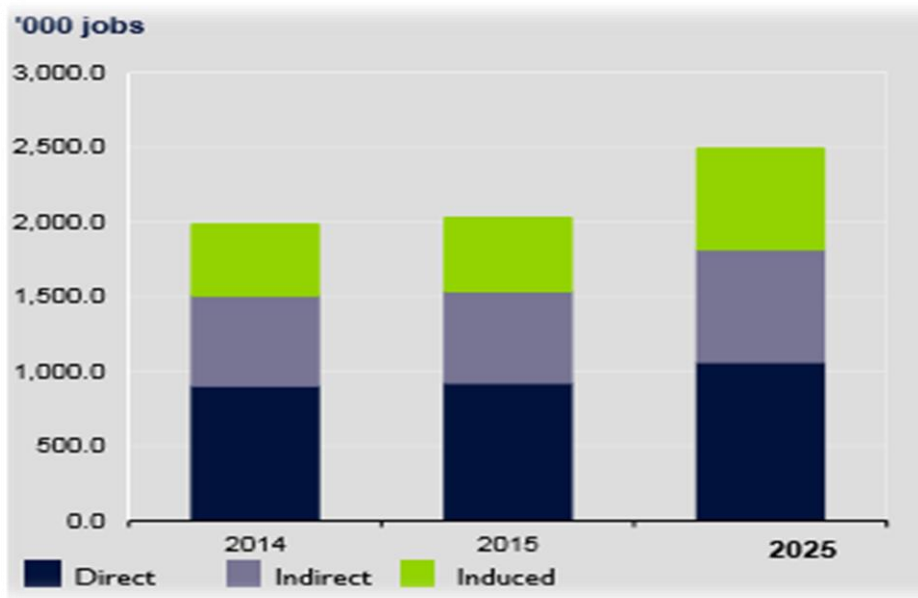
GRAPH 2. The total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP (adapted from WTTC Report 2015).

As it is observed from the chart (GRAPH 2) the total contribution of Travel and Tourism to the GDP is estimated to increase by 6.5 % per year to BDT 1,252.8bn by 2025 which is 4.4 % of total GDP but the total contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP was almost the same in 2014 and 2015 accordingly. (WTTC, 2015).



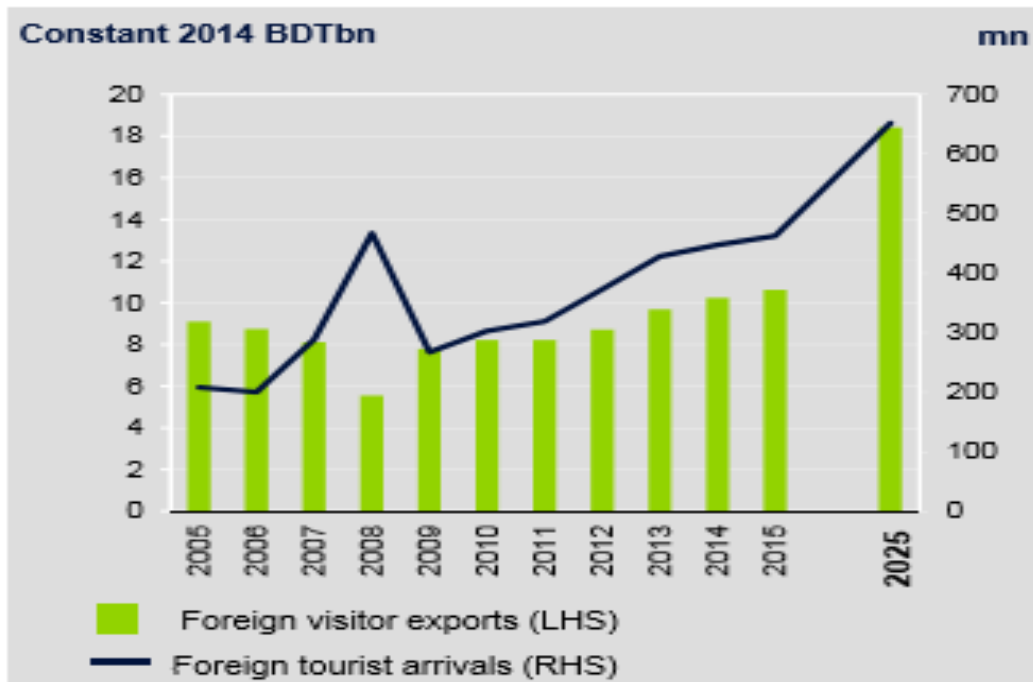
GRAPH 3. Direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP (adapted from WTTC Report 2015.)

From this column chart (GRAPH 3) the direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP in 2014 was BDT 296.6bn which is 1.9% of GDP. This is estimated to increase by 5.9% to BDT 314.1bn in 2015. This mainly reflects the economic activity produced by various industries for instance, airlines, hotels, travel agents and transportation services. (WTTC, 2015).



GRAPH 4. The total contribution of travel and tourism to employment (adapted from WTTC Report 2015).

The above mentioned column chart (GRAPH 4) displays the total contribution of Travel & Tourism to employment was 1,984,000 jobs in 2014 that is 3.6 % of total employment. It is estimated to increase by 2.2 % in 2015 to 2,028,500 jobs which is around 3.6% of total employment. Travel and tourism is estimated to support 2,492,000 jobs by 2025 which is approximately 3.6% of total employment per year over the period. (WTTC, 2015.)



GRAPH 5. Visitor exports and international tourist arrivals (adapted from WTTC Report 2016).

As it is observed from column chart (GRAPH 5) money paid by foreign visitors to a country is a significant factor of the direct contribution of travel and tourism. In 2014, Bangladesh produced BDT 10.2bn in visitor exports. In 2015, it is estimated to raise by 3.7%, and the country is projected to attract 463,000 international tourist arrivals. International tourist arrivals are estimated to total 652,000 by 2025. 4bn that is a growth of 5.7% per year. (WTTC, 2015.)

### 5.1 History of Cox's Bazar

The history of Cox's Bazar starts in the Mughal period in the early ninth century when Cox's Bazar was under the rule of Arakan Kings but was overtaken by the Mughals in A.D. 1666. That time (1616–1660) Mughal Prince was Shah Suhja. On the way to Arakan, when Shah Shuja went through the hilly landscape of the present day Cox's Bazar, he was fascinated to the scenic and captivating beauty of the area. He ordered his people to camp to the grounds there. A spot named Dulahazara, signifying "one thousand palanquins", still exists in the area. After the

Mughals, the spot went under the control of the Tipras and the Arakanese, trailed by the Portuguese and after that the British. Cox's Bazar was named according to the name of Captain Hiram Cox. That time he was a senior officer of the East India Company with the charges of the present day Cox's Bazar and its connecting zones. He was positioned to handle the conflict between the Arakan refugees and local Rakhains at Palonki. He made remarkable improvement in rehabilitation of the refugees but died before he completed his task. In honor of Captain Cox, Palonki was renamed Cox's Bazar, meaning "Cox's Market". (Cox's Bazar, 2013.)

The town of Cox's Bazar was built in 1799 as a market town to respect Captain Cox. The Region under the Bengal Presidency of British India Cox's Bazar had a Sub Divisional headquarter in Chittagong in 1854. After the end of British rule in 1947, Cox's Bazar stayed a part of East Pakistan under the Dominion of Pakistan till 1971. Chief Advocate Fazlul Karim was the first administrator after independence from the British of Cox's Bazar region. He built up the Tamarisk Forest along the shoreline to attract tourism to the town and protecting the shoreline from the tide. He gave many of his father-in-law's and his own property to build up an open library and town hall. In the year 1984, Cox's Bazar was updated into a District from a Sub Division under the Chittagong Division. (Cox's Bazar, 2013.)



GRAPH 6. The map of Cox's Bazar (adapted from BTI.)



## 5.2 Tourism in Cox's Bazar

The most visited tourist area in Bangladesh is Cox's Bazar and it is considered as the world's longest natural sea beach which is 120 km. It has become major tourist destination in Asia. The total area of Cox's Bazar is 2491.86 sq. km. It is situated at 21°35' N 92°01' E and is bounded by Chittagong district on the north and Bay of Bengal on the south. Annual average temperature is maximum 34.8°C and minimum 16.1°C. Annual rainfall is 4285 mm. (Cox's Bazar, 2013.)

Major rivers include Bakkhali Matamuhuri, Naf River Reju Khal, Maheshkhali channel and Kutubdia channel. The coastal region of Cox's Bazar frequently falls victim to sea storm, tidal bore, hurricane and cyclone. Leading offshore islands are Kutubdia Maheshkhali, Sonadia, Matarbari, Shah Pari and St Martin's. Key rivers are the Matamuhuri, Bakkhali, Reju Khal, Naf, Maheshkhali channel and Kutubdia channel. Chief forests areas are Range Phulchhari, Bhumaria-ghona, Meher-ghona Range, Bak Khali Range. (Cox's Bazar, 2013.)

Cox's Bazar is the tourist capital of Bangladesh mostly because of its scenic beauty. This sea beach has the amazing waves of grand Bay of Bengal. Surfing waves, miles of golden sands, towering cliffs, colorful pagodas rare conch shells, Buddhist temples and tribes and mouth-watering sea-food has made Cox's Bazar the tourist capital of Bangladesh. It has been an attraction to both international and domestic tourists over 15 years. (Cox's Bazar, 2013.)

Millions of foreigners and local people visit this beautiful and famous tourist spot every year. Tourism is the major source of economy in Cox's Bazar, as a result, there are a lot of hotels, motels, guest houses, cottages and beach resorts have been built in this region. This region shows negative sign of environmental impacts for instance, excessive crowds, poor waste management, security issues and unplanned construction of hotels to support excessive local and international tourists. (Cox's Bazar, 2013.)

### 5.3 The necessity of sustainability in Cox's Bazar

Cox's Bazar is the world's longest natural sandy sea beach and one of the most visited tourist destinations in Bangladesh but this region is now under great threat. It was a quiet beach town approximately two eras ago which fascinated mostly Bangladeshis trying to escape from the noise and pollution of the big cities like Dhaka and Chittagong but at present time there has been some unplanned growth in Cox's Bazar. The government is planning to double the number of foreign tourists arriving to nearly a million by 2021. (BBC, 2012.)

It will definitely put pressure on Cox's Bazar as developers can look for new sites for construction. The entire area is being changed and hundreds of high-rise hotels, motels cottages, apartment blocks and restaurants have been built already almost every part of the town especially in nearby beach areas as the construction boom continues in this region. There are a lot of shops selling clothes, souvenirs, toys, and fast food on the main beach area and people leave plastic, polythene and other non-degradable substances in the beach that cause harm to the sea and the sea beach. (BBC, 2012.)

As a result, the garbage is seen in many places which is polluting this beautiful place. Local people are not aware about the environment, they are cutting trees indiscriminately on the hillside as a result, many landslides during monsoon seasons killing many people. The experts says that deforestation, salt fields over-fishing, establishment of the shrimp hatcheries along the seashore, hill cutting, grabbing land from local people for unplanned construction, ship breaking industries and unplanned tourism management is accelerating the ecosystem damages which is going to threaten its environment and wildlife. (BBC, 2012.)

Moreover, a large number of Muslim people from northern Myanmar are living in Cox's Bazar as refugees. They were forced to flee across the border into Bangladesh because of religious violence in 2012. Such a vulnerable people are an easy target by criminals, particularly girls and women become trapped in a life of dark danger as their only means of survival. They

pushed into soliciting in the sex trade and become sex slaves in brothels or bawdyhouses in many areas when teen girls aged between 16 and 25 years. (Reported.ly, 2015.)

Besides the prostitution, drug smuggling is the booming business now on Bangladesh border in Cox's Bazar. Yaba pills have been getting popularity in young generation over the past decade. And this drug is now bigger than heroin. These pills are sold in this beautiful tourist spot and the young generation is the target consumers of the drug who get into the habit out of passion, frustration, depression and aided by the lack of guidance and care from guardians. Border guards seize millions of pills each year. According to Navy and Bangladesh Coast Guard sources, 1.1 million Yaba tablets were seized from smugglers in 2014. The smugglers generally take fishermen and trawlers to bring in supplies from Myanmar says Bangladesh Border Guard. (Vice News, 2015.)

Bangladesh has declared 2016 as "Visit Bangladesh Year". The main target of this initiative is to support potential tourism industries of the country so that it can increase tourist comings approximately 677,000 with a growth of 15 % by 2016. The government has the possibility to earn revenue around 126 million USD with a growth of 25 % and it is estimated to increase 300,000 new jobs from tourism. To achieve this target the tourism related organizations need to improve product, protect the environment and wildlife, raise awareness about drug and prostitution, provide information, increase service standards, promote marketing, develop effective communication, promote events and festivals, and increase tourism packages in a sustainable manner. (Ovserverbd, 2015.)

## 6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research method is the way used to make careful and systematic investigation on a specific matter and study of materials and sources or review present knowledge by discovering new facts in order to gather information about a specific topic and reach new conclusions. Research is making known something which was previously unknown to people. (Veal 2006, 40.)

It is improving human knowledge and making it more firm or better fitting. Basically, there are two kinds of research methods which are recognized as qualitative research and quantitative research. The writer of this thesis used quantitative research method for gathering data, information and facts by forming the set of questionnaires where the participants had responded the questions related to this thesis. The target of the research was to figure out the facts about sustainable tourism development in Cox's Bazar and the possible solution for developing it.

### 6.1 Quantitative research method

The quantitative research method is popular and reliable method to emphasize objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires and surveys for specific reasons. Quantitative research method involves statistical analysis and it depends on numerical evidence to draw the conclusion or to test hypotheses. Quantitative research including surveys and customer questionnaires help firms to develop their products and services by supporting them to make informed judgments. Quantitative research method is about asking people for their views in a planned way as it produces hard facts and statistics to guide. To get trustworthy statistical consequences it's important to survey people. (Veal 2006, 40.)

## 6.2 Validity and reliability

Validity refers to the extent to which the information is collected by the researcher that accurately reveals the phenomenon being studied for the research. Validity is divided into several parts such as, content validity, face validity, construct validity and criterion validity. To find out the data given by the interviewees is often difficult because empirical research is mainly concerned with people's behavior and their attitudes. This instrument is subject to a number of imperfections, which means that the validity of leisure and tourism data may rarely be as certain as in the natural sciences. (Veal 2006, 41.)

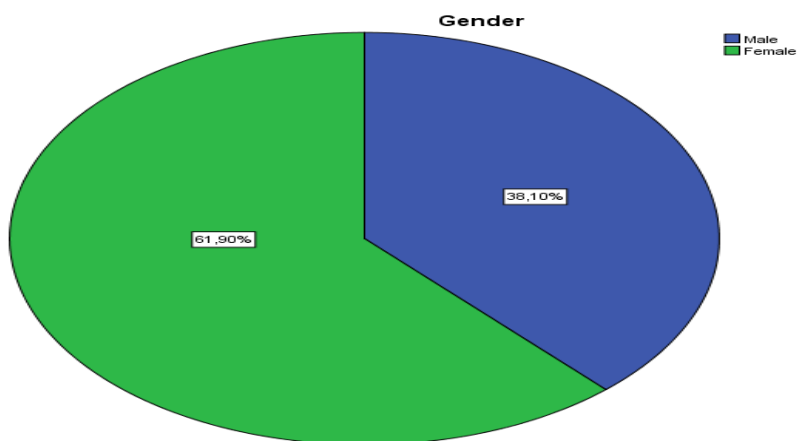
Reliability refers to the extent to which assessments are consistent, that means research findings would be the same even though the researcher practice a different approach or tools to measure at later or with a different sample of subject. Whenever and wherever the research is conducted if the model is taken from the field of social science it should produce identical results (Veal 2006, 41.)

In this research, the data was collected from different Bangladeshi people who are well educated and concerned about the practice of sustainability. For this research, the practice of sustainability, difficulties and results that were presented by the people would display the similar result by different methods or tools because it was based on real facts. The findings of the research involve people's awareness, skills, capabilities and character.

This research was not only prepared by interviews who participated in this research but also from other genuine sources for instance, books, articles, newspaper, magazine and websites. In this research, validity in outcomes is questionable because of knowledge, experience and time limit. The result of the interviews were expected to be same in the reliability aspects because of people's behavior and their attitudes.

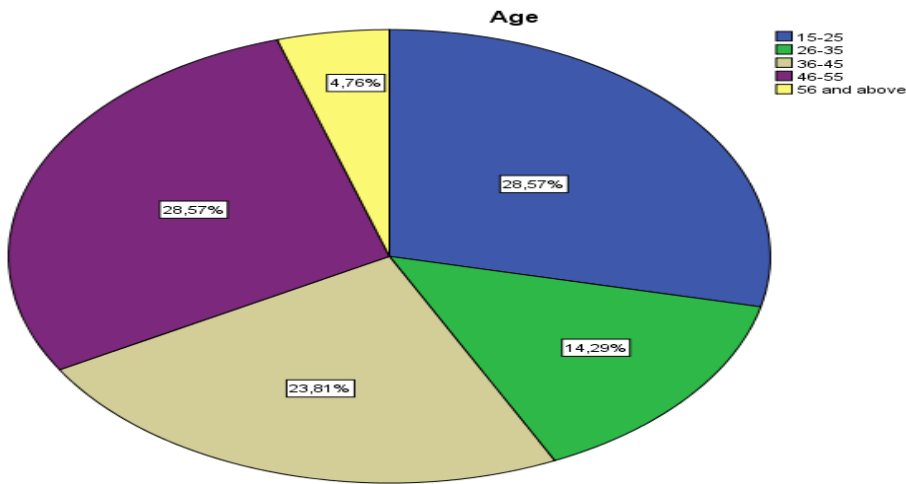
### 6.3 Data Analysis

The research of the thesis was conducted as a part of quantitative research method and in planning the research project the data was collected by asking different questions to get complete ideas from different Bangladeshi people who are educated and concerned about the sustainability and living in Finland. The questionnaire was prepared to reveal the sustainable tourism development activities in Cox's Bazar finding out probable ways to make it more sustainable for the next generation.



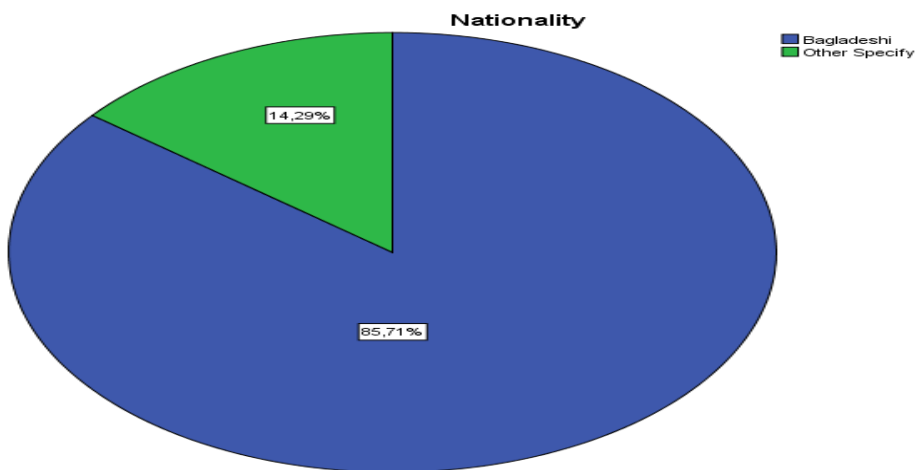
GRAPH 7. Gender of participants.

The above pie chart (GRAPH 7) provides information that both males and females were enthusiastically contributed during the research process. They were asked to answer about their gender. From graph number one it can be seen most of the respondents are male with 61.90 % whereas female percentage is only 38.10% respectively.



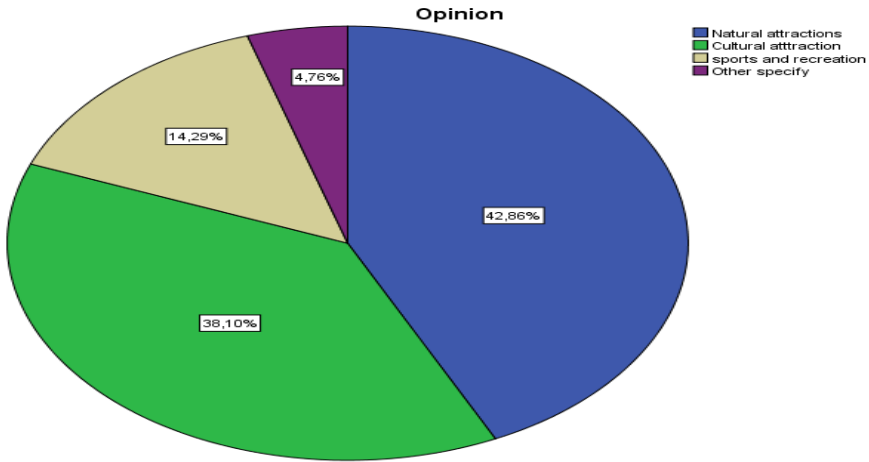
GRAPH 8. Age group.

The above pie chart (GRAPH 8) provides information about the age group. It demonstrates different age groups who actively participated in the study process. From the data it can be seen that 15-25 and 46-55 age group of participants was the most at 28.57% and 28.57% respectively whereas above 36-45 age group was the second in the position with 23.81%. On the other hand, the age group 56 and above was the lowest with 4.76%.



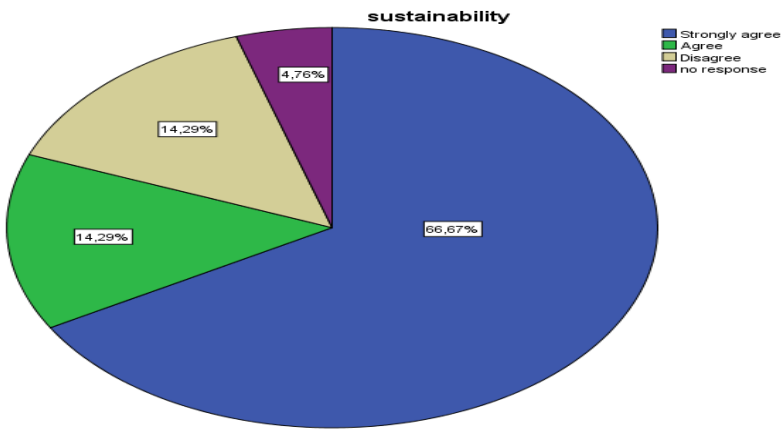
GRAPH 9. Nationality.

The above pie chart (GRAPH 9) explains the most of the respondents are from Bangladesh whereas the lowest percentage of people are foreigners which is 85.71 and 14.29 accordingly.



GRAPH 10. Opinion.

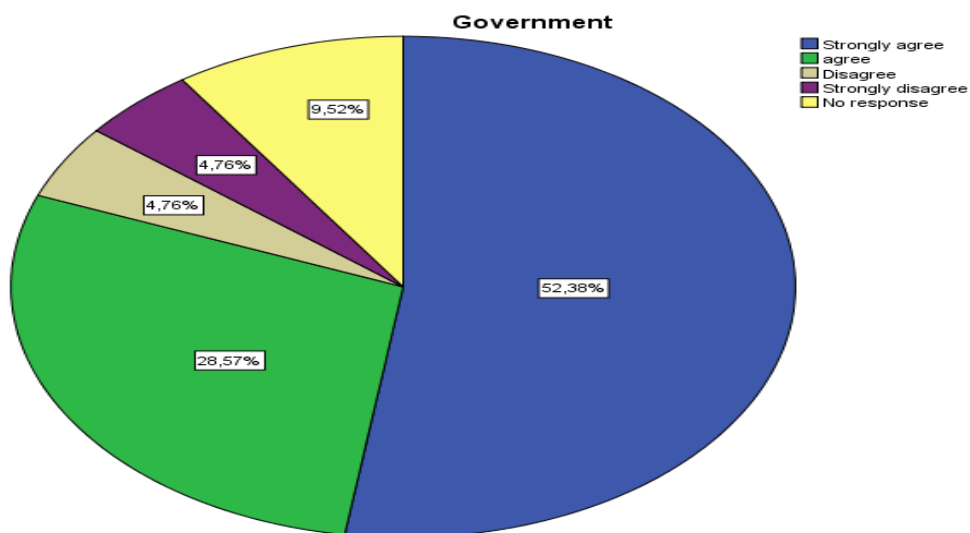
The pie chart (GRAPH 10) tells about the different kinds of natural attractions of Cox’s Bazar like natural attractions, cultural attractions, sports, recreation and other resources. In this research topic, most of the participants answered natural attractions whereas the lowest percentages of people answered other resources which is 42.86 and 4.76 accordingly. Moreover, it is also observed from this pie chart that 38.10 percent of people answered cultural attractions and 14.29 percent of people answered sports and recreation respectively.



GRAPH 11. Vital role of Sustainability.

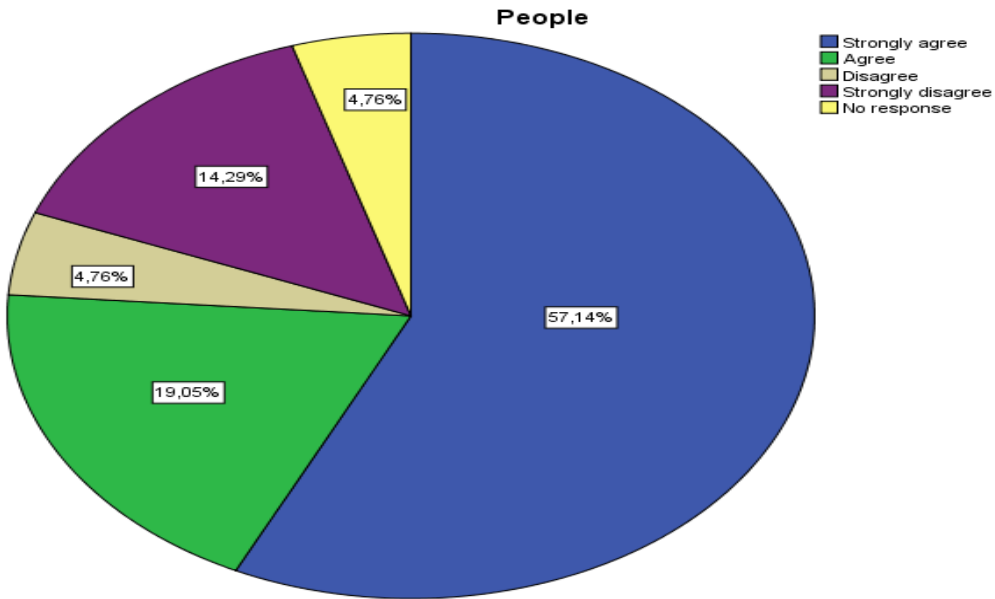


The above pie chart (GRAPH 11) explains most of the respondents strongly agree about this research topic with 66.67 percent whereas 14.29 percent of respondents disagree about this matter. They don't think that sustainability can play a vital role to the development of Cox's Bazar. Similarly, 14.29 percent of participants think that sustainability can play a vital role to the development of Cox's Bazar.



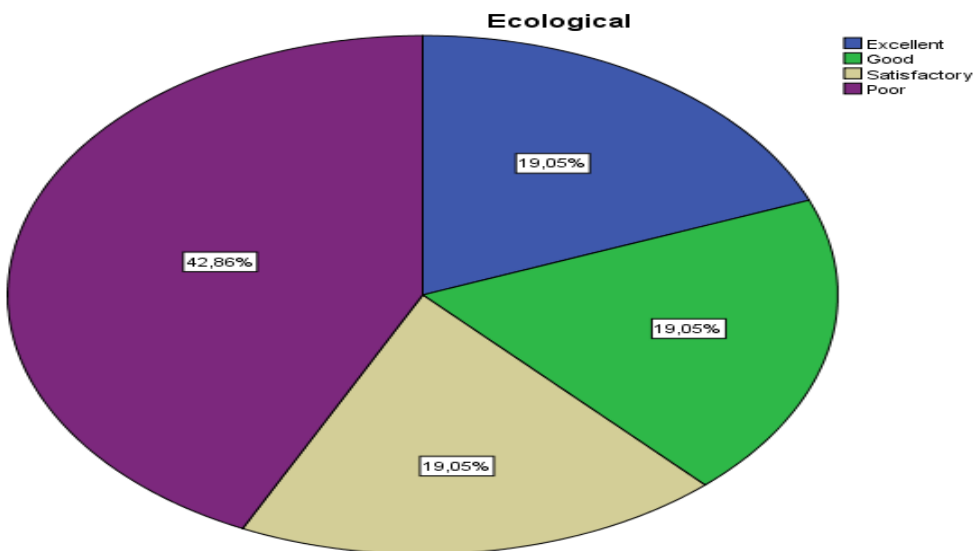
GRAPH 12. Activeness of Government.

The above pie chart (GRAPH 12) provides information about government activeness and conscious. In this research process, 52.38 percent of respondents think that the government should be more active and conscious in sustainable issues whereas 4.76 percent of respondents strongly disagree with this research topic. Similarly, 28.57 percent of respondents agree whereas 9.52 percent of respondents disagree with this topic. So, it is clear from this pie chart that most of the respondents agree with government activity and conscious in sustainable issues.



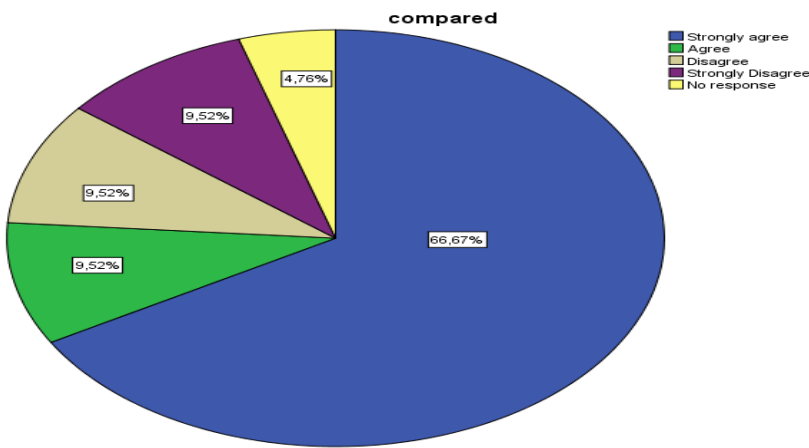
GRAPH 13. People’s responsibility and ethicality to nature.

As it is observed from the above mentioned pie chart (GRAPH 13) 57.14 percent of respondents strongly agree and they think people should be accountable and work ethically to the nature whereas 14.29 percent of respondents strongly disagree with this. Moreover, 19.05 percent of respondents agree and 4.76 percent of respondents disagree with this topic.



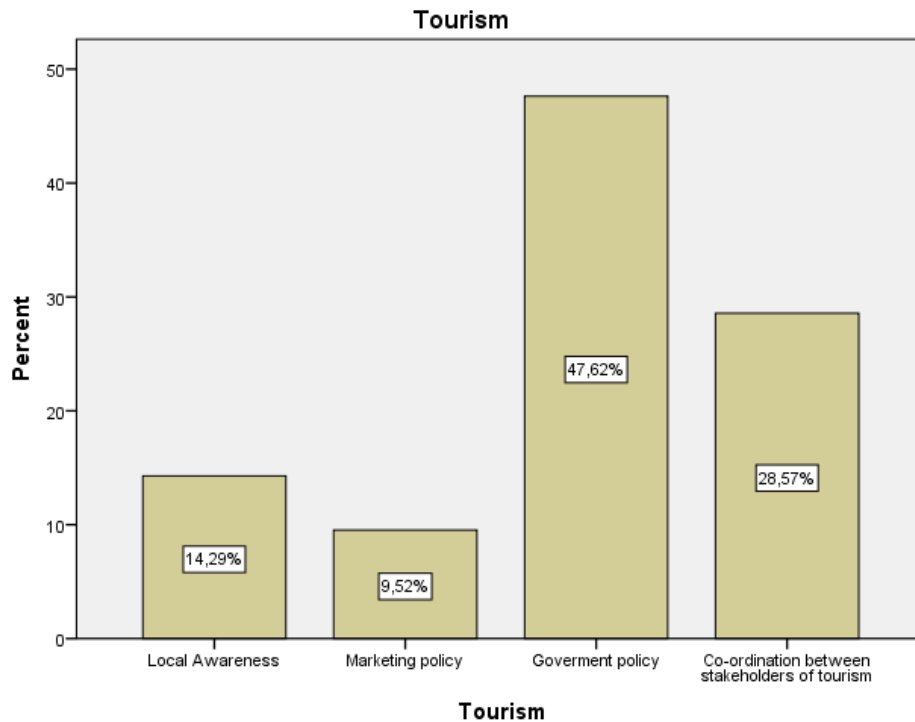
GRAPH 14. Ecological awareness.

The above pie chart (GRAPH 14) illustrates the ecological awareness in order to preserve the environment and natural issues. So that, the tourism related organizations can use them in a sensible way rather than being wasted. From the above mentioned pie chart it can be seen, 46.86 percent of respondents think that they are poor about ecological awareness whereas 19.05 percent of respondents think that they are excellent in ecological issues. Similarly, 19.05 percent of respondents think that they are good on ecological awareness.



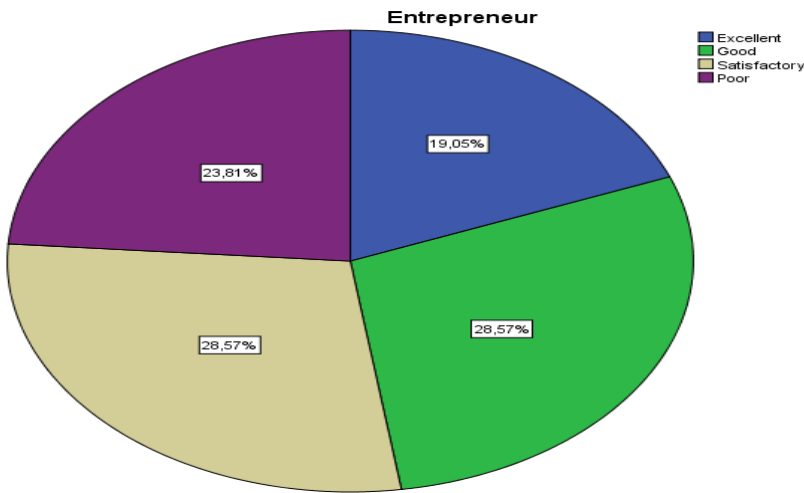
GRAPH 15. The practice of sustainability.

The above pie chart (GRAPH 15) explains 66.67 percent of respondents strongly agree with the practice of sustainability is satisfactory in Bangladesh compared to other countries while 9.52 percent of respondents strongly disagree with the question. Moreover, comparatively same percentage of respondents answered agree, disagree and no response.



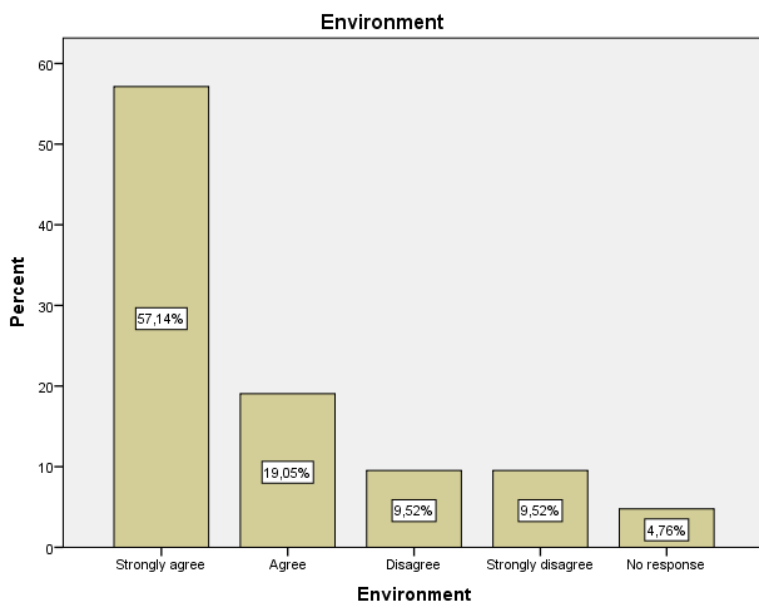
GRAPH 16. The factor that can create tourism business more sustainable.

According to the bar chart (GRAPH 16) as it is observed that 47.62 percent of respondents think that only the government policy can make tourism business sustainable in Cox's Bazar whereas 28.57 percent of respondents think that co-ordination between stakeholders of tourism can make tourism business sustainable in that tourism area. Moreover, 14.29 and 9.52 percent of respondents think that local awareness and marketing policy can make tourism business sustainable in Cox's Bazar.



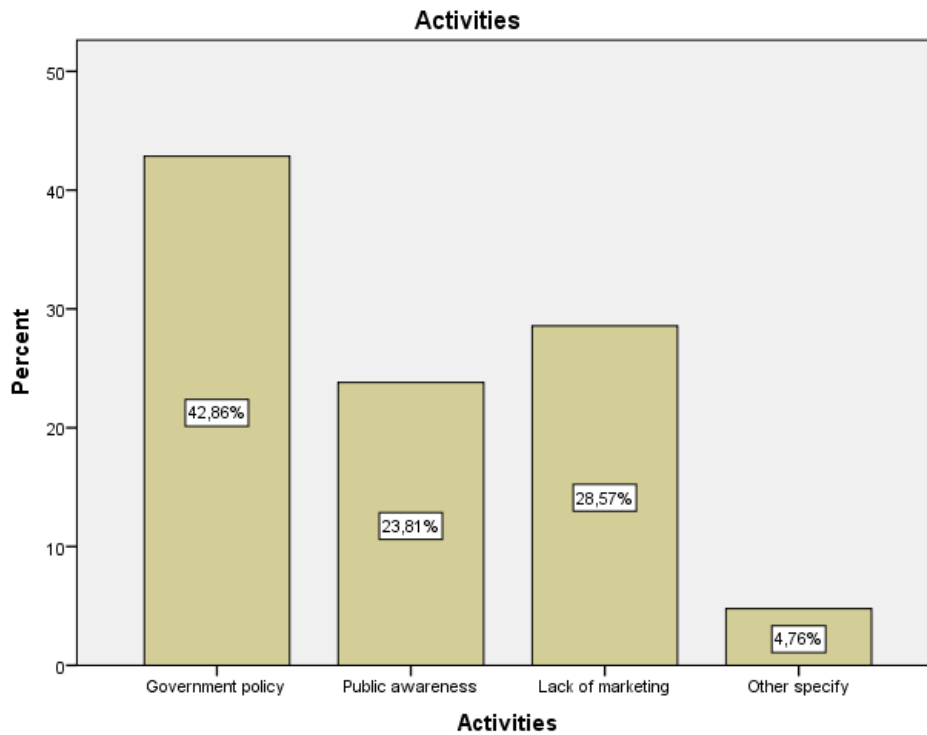
GRAPH 17. The rate of participation of private sectors and local entrepreneurs.

The above pie chart (GRAPH 17) provides information about the rate of participation of private sectors and local entrepreneurs in Cox’s Bazar. From the data as it is observed that 19.05 percent of the respondents answered that the rate of participation of private sectors and local entrepreneur is excellent whereas 23.81 percent of respondents think it is poor. Furthermore, the same percentage of people think that it is satisfactory and good.



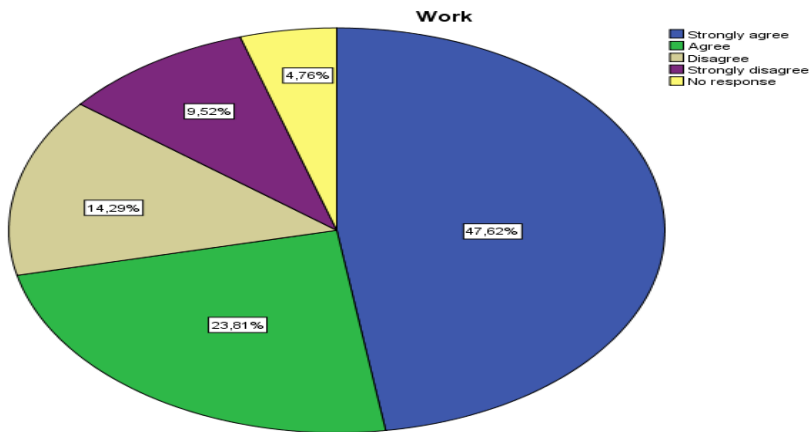
GRAPH 18. Adverse effects in the environment.

Graph 12 as it is observed 57.14 percent of the respondents answered that tourism activities in Cox's Bazar has adverse effects on environment while 9.52 percent of respondents strongly disagree with this topic. Additionally, 19.05 percent of respondents agree and think tourism activities in Cox's Bazar has negative impact on Environment whereas 9.52 percent of respondents disagree with this research topic. So, it is clear from the above mentioned bar chart that tourism activities in Cox's Bazar has adverse effects on the environment.



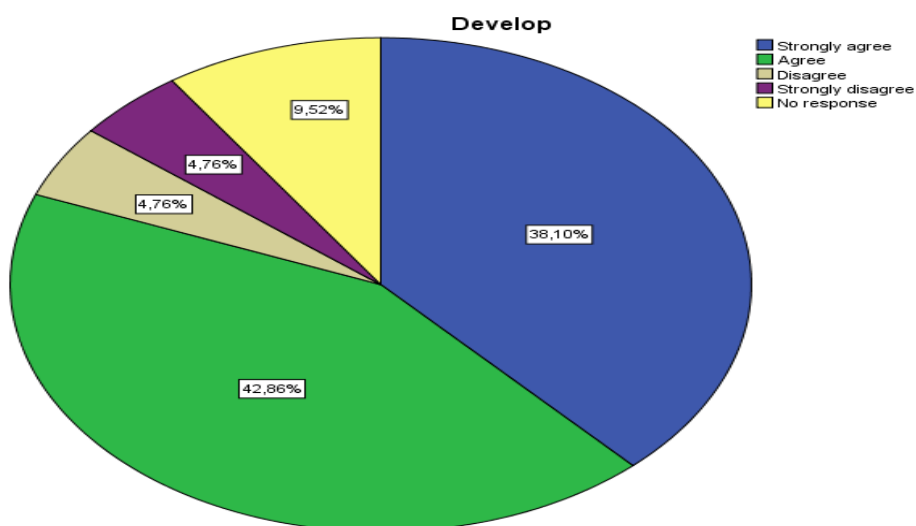
GRAPH 19. The main bottlenecks in promoting tourism activities in Cox's Bazar.

The above bar chart (GRAPH 19) tells about the main bottlenecks promoting tourism activities in Cox's Bazar. The majority of the respondents agreed on the lack of government policies and marketing as main hindrance for tourism promotion which is 42.86% and 28.57% accordingly. Furthermore, 23.81 percent respondents answered that there are a lack of awareness in common people and 4.76 percent of the respondents think that there are some other sources.



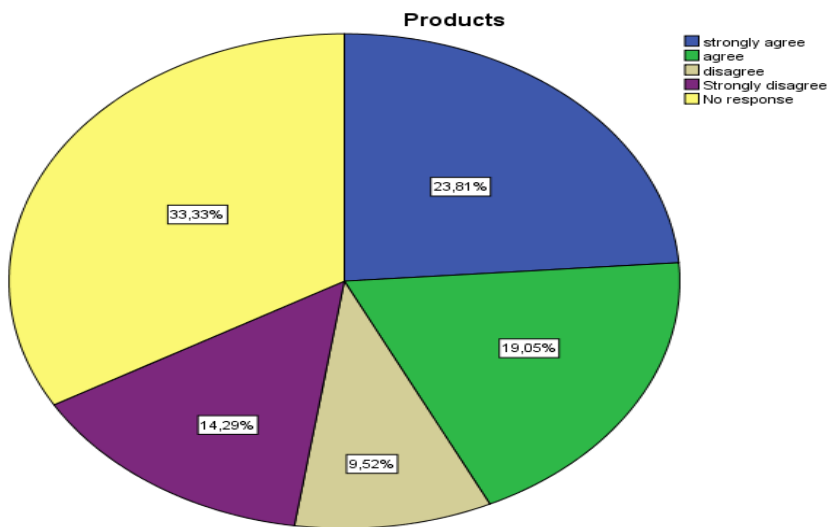
GRAPH 20. Create the environment more ecological and sustainable.

The above pie chart (GRAPH 20) illustrates 47.62 percent of respondents strongly agreed that the government and the people should work together to make the environment more ecological and sustainable while 9.52 percent of the respondents strongly disagree with this topic. Additionally, 14.29 percent of respondents disagreed and they think the government and the people should not work together to make the environment more ecological and sustainable for the next generation.



GRAPH 21. The government should develop the tourism sustainable way.

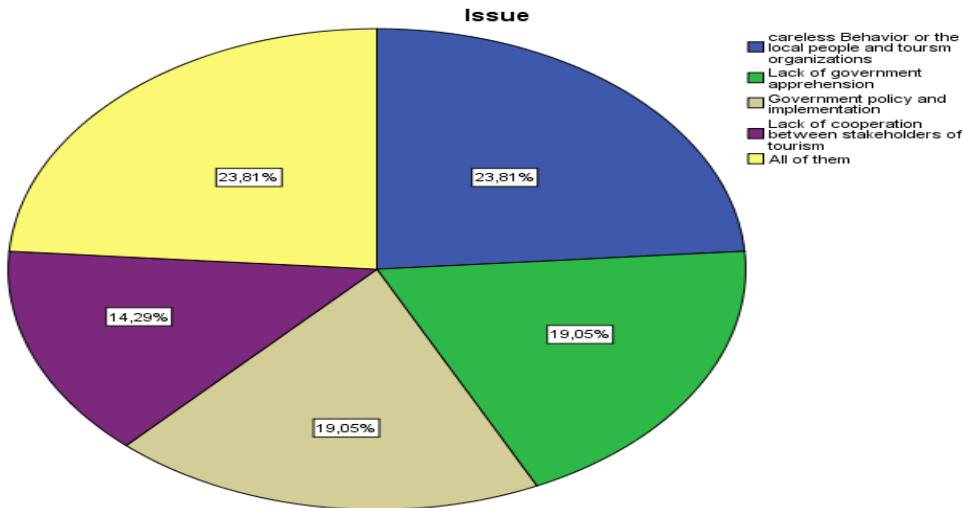
The above pie chart (GRAPH 21) provides information that 42.86 percent of respondents agreed that the government should develop tourism to the sustainable way in Cox's Bazar while 38.10 percent of respondents partly agreed with this topic. Additionally, 4.76 percent of respondents strongly disagreed and partly disagreed with this question and they think the government should not develop tourism to the sustainable way in Cox's Bazar.



GRAPH 22. Developing more sustainable products and respect sustainable Act.

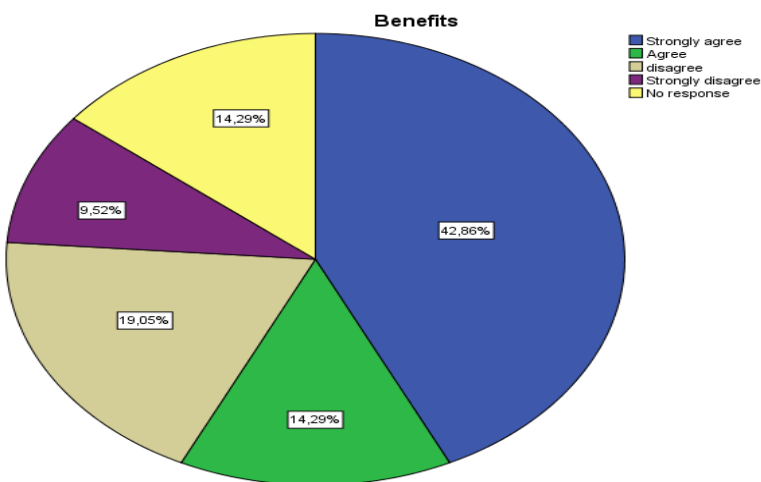
The above pie chart (GRAPH 22) explains that 23.81 percent of respondents strongly agreed that tourism organizations and tourism related businesses should develop more sustainable products and follow the sustainable Act for the business while 33.33 percent of respondents think that there are some other issues related with this. Additionally, 19.05 percent of respondents partly agreed and 14.29 percent of respondents strongly disagreed.





GRAPH 23. The main difficulty for the sustainability issue.

The above pie chart (GRAPH 23) tells about the main difficulty for the sustainability issue in Cox’s Bazar. From the data, it can be seen that most of the respondents think that careless behavior of local people, tourism organizations, lack of government apprehension and government policy implementation are the main difficulties for the sustainability issue in Cox’s Bazar. Only 14.29 percent of respondents think that there are a lack of cooperation between stakeholders of tourism as prime difficulty.



GRAPH 24. Local people gain benefits economically and socially from the tourism sector.

Graph 24 demonstrates that most of the respondents strongly agreed that local people get benefits economically and socially from tourism sector while 14.29 percent of respondents partly agreed with this. On the other hand, 9.52 percent of respondents strongly disagreed and 19.05 percent of respondents partly disagreed with this question.

## 7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Cox's Bazar has become the major tourist destination in Bangladesh. As a result, there are thousands of hotels, motels, cottages and restaurants that have been built unplanned way as construction boom continues there destroying the agricultural lands, hills, and forests. To ensure sustainability in Cox's bazar, the government have to remove all unplanned hotels, motels, cottages, beach resorts, restaurants, insufficient drainage infrastructure, growth of slum, poor transport network and unplanned industrial activities in Cox's Bazar town because these are key issues responsible for unsustainable tourism growth in this region. If this city is developed non-sustainably it is not possible to protect the environment and wildlife from the great threat and the government can't ensure sustainable livelihood of the poor and disadvantaged groups.

It would be difficult for the country to generate expected income from this tourism destination, conserves local culture, protect natural resource and create employment opportunities for local people. If it continues this way, the local government cannot promotes agricultural markets, support local products, increases tourism revenue, improve living standards, reduce environmental pollution, develop infrastructure and public services in the near future in a sustainable manner.

Cox's Bazar is not pollution free. This town faces environmental pollution for instance, water, air, sound, soil and impurity of food. Both domestic and international tourists leave non-degradable substances in the beach that cause serious problem to the sea and sea beach. Tourism related organizations have to confirm good governance in the environment and natural resources management in order to develop a transparent tourism organization, improve accountability and transparency in all sectors, progress participatory and co-management method in all common property resources (CPRs) and advance network with all stakeholders.

People should raise their voice against the development of industries that emit chemical and poisonous waste, particularly the ship braking industry and shrimp hatcheries, along the coastline. Pollution prevention law and policies should be strict so that all industry respect all environment policies, rules and regulations. The government should develop a websites for environmental clearance certificate (ECC) and introduce the sustainable environment management programme (SEMP) as well as proper waste management systems (WMS). The government also can set up vehicle inspection and maintenance programmes and pollution emission tax in order to reduce the pollution a great extent in this town.

Tourism is a great source of revenue in Bangladesh. To promote the marketing of Bangladesh tourism, Bangladesh national tourism board should deliver recommendations to the visa officers of the foreign missions of Bangladesh so that they try to inspire foreign tourists by different campaigns to visit Bangladesh especially the tourist producing countries for instance UK, USA. Australia, Japan and China because these countries produce approximately 70 percent of the world's outbound tourist. The government should use natural resources sustainably though conserving biodiversity and try to recognize and respect different cultures and cultural practices and make sure that long-term operations and developments are ecologically sustainable and the local people get benefits from the tourism fairly.

The social justice system should be toughened mostly with honor to the poor, women and the other vulnerable groups. If low ministry are able to ensure proper social justice by local government it is possible to stop drug smuggling and prostitution not only in this region but also across the country. In this social justice systems, the case management system should not be slow, expensive and time consuming if it does, it will definitely hamper poor people's access to social justice.

Bangladesh needs political stability in order to attract both the foreign and domestic tourists and the government should think of proposing nightlife events for foreign and domestic tourists with sufficient security procedures because tourists do not come here to sleep idly in

a hotel. Bangladesh tourism authority have to make the tourists busy all the time by different activities so that they can enjoy their trip through experiencing different memorable events.

Now local councils are allocating a lot of money to develop the tourism industry without making long term plans and there has not been enough planning and strategy for the development of Cox's bazar. When all above discussed will be applied in Cox's Bazar, it will be an ideal destination for tourists. So the practice of sustainability should be started as soon as possible in order to preserve the tourist destinations, bring positive change for local people, the tourism industry and the tourist themselves.

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## **Sustainable Tourism Development in Cox's Bazar. Perspective of Bangladesh.**

The aim of the research is to find out the present situation of the sustainability in Cox's Bazar and probable measures to make it sustainable. This survey contains the actions of the Government, tourist, people of Bangladesh and tourism connected organizations and their accountability to make it sustainable. This is a designed questionnaire model survey.

The survey is unspecified and you will not be recognized anyway. Your participation is highly appreciated.

1. Gender

Male       Female

2. Age

15-25       26-35       36-45       46-55       56 and above

3. Nationality

Bangladeshi                       Other specify

4. What are the main attractions in Cox's Bazar in your opinion?

Natural attraction       Cultural Attraction  
 Sports and Recreation       Other specify

5. Can sustainability play a vital role to the development of tourism in Cox's Bazar?

Strongly agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly disagree       No response

6. The government should be more active and conscious in sustainable issues

Strongly agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly disagree       No response

7. People should be accountable and work ethically to the nature

Strongly agree       Agree                       Disagree       Strongly disagree       No response

8. How do you rate your ecological awareness?

Excellent Good Satisfactory Poor

9. Are sustainability practice satisfactory in Bangladesh compared to other countries?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree No response

10. How can you make tourism business sustainable in Cox's Bazar?

Local Awareness  Marketing policy  Government Policy  Co-ordination between stakeholders of tourism.

11. How do you rate the participation of private sectors and local entrepreneur?

Excellent  Good  Satisfactory  Poor

12. Does tourism activities in Cox's Bazar has adverse effects in Environment?

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree  No response

13. What are the main bottlenecks in promoting tourism activities in Cox's Bazar?

Government policy  Public awareness  Lack of marketing  
Other specify,

14. The government and the people should work together to make the environment more ecological and sustainable

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree  No response

15. Government should develop tourism sustainable way in Cox's Bazar

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree  No response

16. Tourism organizations and tourism related businesses should develop more sustainable products and follow sustainable act for the business

strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree  No response

17. Which of the following is the main difficulty for sustainability issue?

Careless behavior of the local people and tourism organizations  
 Lack of government apprehension  
 Government policy and implementation  
 Lack of cooperation between stakeholders of tourism.  
All of them

18. Local people get benefits economically and socially from tourism sector.

Strongly agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly disagree    No response

19. Is infrastructure adequate to host tourism activities in Cox's Bazar?

Yes    No    Don't know

20. Your valuable suggestions and comments regarding the survey is highly appreciated to improve the tourism sector of Bangladesh.

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Thank you for your valuable time!!!

