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## Research Article

### Tourism and Economic Growth of Bangladesh

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#### Abstract:

*This study examines the projected economic effects of the tourist sector in Bangladesh. It's a secondary information-based review of the literature. The contribution of tourism to our national economy's GDP, employment, and capital investment is examined in this study. It also determines the viability and potential of various sorts of tourism sites in Bangladesh. Because the tourism sector contributes such a small percentage of GDP to Bangladesh's economy (at the moment), its commitment to economic growth is limited. The*

*present amount of Bangladesh's tourist industry economy is BDT 500 million, according to this study. In addition, between 2009 and 2018, Bangladesh received US\$ 1157 million from the travel sector. Visit Bangladesh in a comparable time frame (all things considered). It also creates 2.23 million jobs each year. The tourism sector's SWOT analysis aids in the formulation of a tourism policy to attract and retain inbound and outbound visitors, as well as contribute to the growth of Bangladesh's tourism industry.*

**Keywords:** Tourism, Economy, Impact, Economic growth, Economic development, Bangladesh.

#### Introduction:

Tourism and the travel sector are among the fastest growing industries, and they are gradually contributing more to the global economy (WTTC, 2014). Bangladesh is now the world's 41st largest economy and the second-largest economy in South Asia, only behind India. Bangladesh is a South Asian country with a population of about 163.7 million people. Bangladesh's GDP is now valued at USD 286 billion, with an annual growth rate of 8.13 percent in 2018-19, and it is expected to rank as the world's 24th largest economy by 2033 (Bangladesh Financial Survey (BER) 2019, Place for Financial Aspects and Business Exploration (CEBR) (2018).

Tourism has recently been identified as one of the world's fastest-growing and most promising industries. One of the reasons for this is that tourism is not a single industry, but rather a collection of sub-sectors that are all intertwined and developed as a whole. The majority of countries that have done well in tourism have advanced quickly in transportation, hotels, motels, restaurants, crafts, and other services. The tourist industry's biggest beneficial feature is its potential to generate large amounts of jobs. As well as enhancing the country's image. Recently, this burgeoning business has begun to make a significant contribution to Bangladesh's public economy (WTTC, 2017).

The tourist business, which is a rapidly growing sector on the globe, is expected to contribute to the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) in non-industrial countries and their economic future since it may provide jobs, wages, and hard currency (Sirakaya, Jamal and Choi, 2001). The total contribution of Bangladesh's movement and tourist industries to the country's public Gross domestic product was BDT 809.6 billion (4.7 percent of GDP) in 2016, and was expected to rise by 6.4 percent per year to BDT 1,596.0 billion (5 percent of GDP) in 2026. (WTTC, 2015). To maintain the expected pace of growth, Bangladesh must focus on new forms of tourism to attract both international and domestic visitors, since the traditional regular, social, and documented attractions face fierce competition in the global travel business market.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, undated) reported that the global travel industry's annual appearance rate increased by 6.5 percent in 2005, with 806 million travelers, up from 25 million in 1950. While tourism may benefit many places, it also tackles a wide range of concerns, such as the economy, climate, and society (Tosun 2000).

Bangladesh's tourist sector suffers from insufficient price ranges and government assistance, as well as insufficient roads in remote areas, a few courses, insufficient vacationer centers, and so on. Political instability and violence presented an additional challenge for tourism in the past (Sultana, 2016), but the environment is now calmer and tranquil.

Rationality of the study:

The total economic impact of tourism in Bangladesh is the subject of this study. The study's findings may be useful in reducing poverty and ensuring long-term growth. As a result, the current study will look at the good and negative economic effects of tourism on Bangladesh. This research will also aid politicians in developing adaptive policies, investors in investing to gain greater incentives and lower costs, and therefore, the local community and all direct and indirect stakeholders in the process. Bangladesh isn't a particularly large country. In several nations across the world, each province is much bigger. However, the natural and cultural variety that we have is vast. Bangladesh will eventually become recognized for its agricultural goods as well as an appealing and lucrative tourism destination by steadily drawing local as well as foreign tourists.

**Objectives of the study:** The following are the study's particular research goals:

**RO 1:** To visit a major tourist site or location in Bangladesh.

**RO 2:** To determine the economic effect of tourism in Bangladesh.

**RO 3:** To investigate the influence of tourism on Bangladesh's GDP and job opportunities.

**RO 4:** To examine the tourist sector of Bangladesh's strengths, possibilities, weaknesses, and challenges.

**RO 5:** To determine some recommendations for the growth of Bangladesh's tourist sector.

#### **Review of literatures:**

Tourism refers to enterprises that provide services (such as transportation, tourist attractions to visit, or (entertainment) to those looking for a holiday (Tourism, 2019). Tourism is defined by the Collins dictionary as "commercial operations that provide amenities for people on vacation" (Tourism, 2019a). Furthermore, tourism may be described as the supervision and control of visitors (Tourism, 2019b). There have been several studies on economic growth and tourism in other nations. However, there are few descriptive studies on the tourist industry in Bangladesh. Bangladesh's tourist business is one of the country's most profitable sectors (Elena *et al.*, 2012). According to Ali and Mobasher (2004), this region has been recognized for its great grandeur since antiquity. Unacquainted visitors praised this nation for its bright normal excellence, rich social legacy, and people's neighborliness.

According to the aforementioned responses, Parveen (2013) investigated the present development and progress of this industry, as well as assessed a few restrictions and problems of the firm and offered some approach strategies to identify its existing hindrances. The tourism industry, according to Musa (2013), is a coordinated effort to satisfy sightseers by offering the best administrations available to them. It's a device that transforms potential tourists into real travelers. It's the safest way to generate interest and expand the market.

Hassan *et al.* (2013) found that tourism has a positive influence on Bangladesh's economy. The contribution of tourist revenues to GDP is less than 10%. Bangladesh welcomed just 3 lakh international visitors in 2010, with more than 70% of them coming for business or government activities.

According to Sandip (2014), the improvement of the administration business would hasten our monetary development. In light of the vision of 2021, the investigation developed some significant approaches and, as a result, achieved reasonable monetary growth.

Redwan (2014) discussed the importance of the tourist sector in Bangladesh, as well as its financial benefits. Increases in the tourist sector are multifaceted, including GNP commitment, business age, foreign currency revenue, framework advancement, and creation of speculation opportunities, poverty alleviation, government profit, and social change. Ferdoush and Faisal (2014) demonstrated that the tourist industry's significance may be seen from a variety of perspectives, including financial, social, political, and so on. The tourist industry now accounts for less than 1% of our GDP. If it could be reduced down to 5%, it would generate about five lakhs in immediate and indirect business, propelling the financial record to new heights across the board. According to Roy and Roy (2015), the tourist sector may provide significant financial, social, and environmental benefits, particularly in rural areas and agricultural countries. Nevertheless, mass tourism is also associated with negative consequences. He has demonstrated that the tourist sector strategy may help the economy by providing a diverse range of locations of interest.

Masud (2015) discovered that the country has a favorable pattern in terms of appearances and profit, which may be increased to a large extent if the country can adopt appropriate development methods such as increasing the distribution. For this reason, the country must also employ creative people, and the character of the limited-time items must also be developed.

Sultana (2016) emphasized the importance of tourism in terms of employment, GDP capital investment, and foreign exchange receipts, among other things. The report also addressed and underlined the multiplier impacts of tourism, such as hotels, restaurants, and transportation.

Kobra *et al.* (2018) look at the positive and negative aspects of investing in Bangladesh's tourist industry. A group of 120 partners (both governmental and non-governmental) were brought together to discuss their perspectives and thoughts on the division.

Speculation is insufficient, and the necessity for integration among the many specialists has been identified as a key challenge in this industry. Bhuiyan and Darda (2018) point out the potential negative consequences of halal tourism in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is the world's fourth most populous Muslim country, and it is home to many Muslim holy sites and gatherings. As a result, there are opportunities to increase halal tourism (or Islamic Shariah-based). Sayeda (2017) examines the potential financial, social, and environmental impacts of mass tourism in Bangladesh, particularly in the context of Cox's Bazar and its surrounding zones.

Mass tourism is geared at easy and cost-effective tourist activities for many people, regardless of their socioeconomic position, and this might be one strategy for a large volume of tourism income. According to the study, the idea of economical tourism, which focuses on conserving the visitor goal's socio-cultural and distinctive assets, may be linked to the promotion of tourism in Cox's Bazar and its surrounding regions in a cost-effective manner. According to Hafsa (2020), tourism is a dynamic and valuable sector for every country's economy.

Bangladesh offers a diverse range of natural, cultural, historical, archaeological, religious, and man-made tourist attractions. It's a rising industry that contributes to GDP growth both directly and indirectly by providing new job opportunities, reducing poverty, and increasing local community engagement by acquiring foreign cash. From the above, it was found that the majority of the research studies on tourism marketing were from other cities and countries, but the present study, tries to fill the gap in the literature by adding new sights and the contribution of tourism in Bangladesh, also identifying the important relevant dimensions in this context.

#### **Materials and methods:**

This is a descriptive research article that relies heavily on both qualitative and quantitative data. It includes secondary data from 2009 to 2020, such as various examination articles, books, and web sources, among other things. We choose the 2009-2017 periods because information from Bangladesh's tourist company isn't always accessible before to 2008. The data comes from the arena Tourism Outlook 2009-2018, as well as the

Bangladesh Economic Review (various editions). In 2009, the normal value of the USD was utilized to calculate statistics on actual GDP, investment, and tourism earnings. Mean, median, general deviation and graphical analysis are all used to analyze the data.

### Result and discussions:

For the tourist sector, the government has a number of dynamic structures and enactments, including the Bangladesh Tourism Industry Board Act, the Tourism Industry Strategy 2010, the Medium Expression Spending Structure (MTBF), and the Viewpoint Plan 2021.

These methods and laws have been created in order to develop and progress the tourism sector.

### UNESCO Recognized World Heritage Site in Bangladesh

Three places in Bangladesh have been recognized by UNESCO as world heritage sites, which are:

SL.No.	Name of the place	Recognition year	category
1.	The Sundarbans	1997	Natural
2.	Ruins of the Buddhaist Vihar at Paharpur	1985	Cultural
3.	Historic Mosque city of Bagerhat	1985	Cultural

### 6.1 Name of the attractive tourist destination in Bangladesh.

SL	Category	Name of the attractive Tourist destination in Bangladesh
1.	Beaches and Islands	Cox's Bazar Sea beach, Kuakata Sea-beach, Potenga Sea-beach, Saintmartin Island, Inani, Himsori, Moheshkhali, Shonadia, Moinamoti, Nihjum Dip, Parki sea beach, Teknaf, Kotka sea beach, Monpora Island, Kutubdia, sonadia etc.
2.	Hills and waterfalls	Bandarban hill tracts, Nilgiri, Nilachal, Chimbuk hills, Keoradong, Tajigdon and many others, Khagrachori Hill tracts, Shuvolong waterfall, Batali hill, Madhob kundu Waterfall, Madhob Kunda, Hum hum waterfall, Garo hill etc.
3.	Forests	Sundarbans, Ratargul swamp forest, Madhupurandvowal gore, Singra forest, Lawachora national forest etc.
4.	Religious sites	Tongiestemamoidan, Golden temple, Kantojiu Temple, Dhakeshwari Temple, Sixty Dome Mosque, Start Mosque, Hazrat Shahjalal Mazar, Baitul Mukarram national mosque, Dhakessori national temple, Puthia temple town, Sri choitanna temple, Dharma rajika Buddha Bihar, Aemricamcruch, Shah jalal, Shah poranmajar, Hathagari Madrasa, Kakrail Mosque etc.
5.	Historical and Archeological sites	Lalbagh Fort, Curzon Hall, Somapura Mahavihara, Jatiyo Sangshad Bhaban, Mainamoti, Mahasthangarh, Paharpur, SuhrawardyUdyan, AhshanMonjil, AporajeoBanglaetc, Museum of the father of nation, national memorial, central shahidminar, Curzon hall, Baldhagurden, suhrawardi Uddayan, Old High court Building, Bahadur shah Park, National Poets grave, Martyred intellectual memorial, Nator Dighapatiya Rajbari, Jatiasangsad Vaban, Varendra Museumm, Sonar Goan, Mughal Eidgah, World war to cemetrery, shilaidahakutibari, Shagordarijessor, Mujib Nagar Memorial, Trishal, Gandhi assrom,
6.	Dark tourist spots	Central Shahid Minar, Jatio Smritisoudho, National poet's graveyard.
7.	Lakes and Rivers	Foy's Lake, Madhobpur lake, Boga lake, Kaptai Lake, Dhanmondi Lake, Tamabil, Sunamganj, Kisharganjhaur, Nator Chalan Bill, Ratar Gul, wetland, Rangamati,
8.	Man-made tourist spots	Heritage Park, Nandan Park, Shapna Puri, Vinno Jagat, Dulahazra Safari Park, Butterfly Park, Foy's Lake etc.
9.	Rural Tourism spot	North Bengla Area of Bangladesh.
10.	Echo Tourism Spot	Sajek, Bisnakandi, Tamabil, TenjaurHaor, Lalukhal, alikadam, Nijhumdwip, Tamabil, Hakalukihaor, Dighinala, Charkukrimukri, panchai, Madhupur, Ruma Bazar etc.

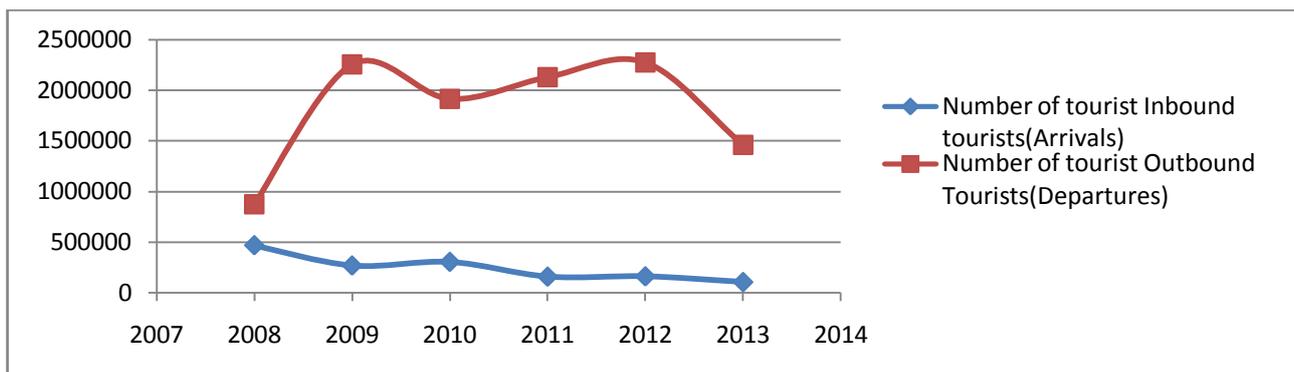
11.	Health Tourism Spot	United Hospitals, Appolo Hospitals, Square Hospitals etc.
12.	Education tourism spot	Dhaka University, BUET, North south University, Various Medical college and hospitals etc.
13.	Agriculture Tourism spot	Thikana, Botanical garden, Jump plant of Bangladesh Agriculture University.
14.	Trade and Fair	Dhaka International Trade fair, Bangla Academy Ekushey BoiMela, Bashakhi Mela, National Tree Fair, National Fisheries Week and Fish Fair, Science Fair etc
15	Cultural Tourism	Pohela Boishakh, Pohela Falgun, Nouka Baich, Buddha Purnima, Christmas, Nabanna, Shakrain, Jatiya Pitha Utsab, Joy Bangla Concert, Eid-Ul-Fitr and Adha, Durga Puja etc.
16.	Sports Tourism	Hadudu , Jbbarer Boli Khela, Boat race, Bangladesh Cricket etc.
17.	Marine Spot	Bay of Bengal.
18.	Other attractions	Ramna Park, Padma Bridge, National Zoo, Kirtan khola, DC Hill, National Botanical Gurden, Bangavaban, Nich Tourism spot, Jamuna Bridge etc.

**Developed by Author**

Year	Number of tourist		Growth (%)	
	Inbound tourists (Arrivals)	Outbound Tourists (Departures)	Arrivals	Departures
2008	4,67,000	875,000	61.6	-62.4
2009	2,67,000	22,54,000	-42.8	157.6
2010	303,000	19,13,000	-42.94	-15.13
2011	1,57,000	21,27,000	12.95	11.19
2012	1,60,000	22,73,000	1.91	6.86
2013	1,04,000	14,60,000	-35.00	-35.77
2014	1,34,000	-	28.85	-
2015	1,26,000	-	-5.97	-
2016	1,82,000	-	44.44	-
2017	2,37,000	-	30.22	-
2018	2,67,000	-	12.66	-
2019	3,23,000	-	20.97	-
Average Growth (2008-2019) (%)			7.2408	10.3916

**6.2 Impacts of tourism in the economy of Bangladesh**

Source: Bangladesh Parjaton Corporation

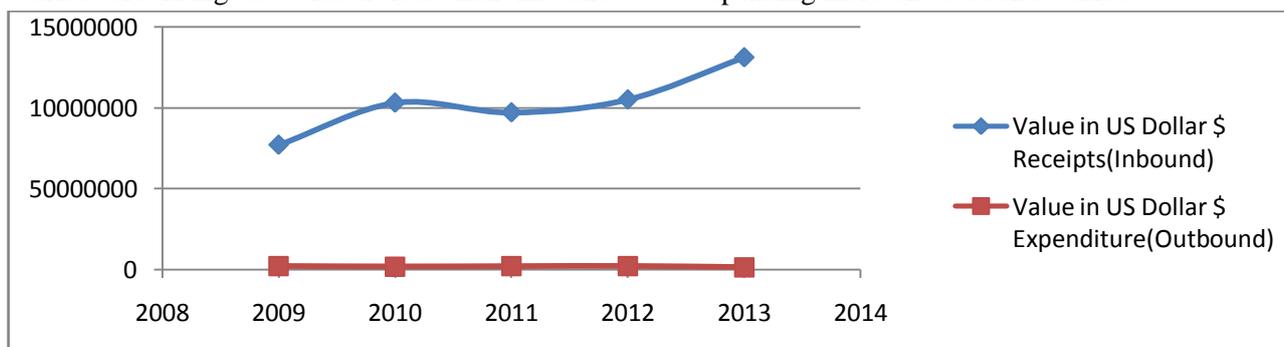


Year	Value in US Dollar \$		Growth (%)	
	Receipts (Inbound)	Expenditure (Outbound)	Receipts	Expenditure
2008		8,75,000		
2009	77,000,000	22,54,000	-6.10	-11.43
2010	103,000,000	19,13,000	33.77	28.26
2011	97,000,000	21,27,000	-5.83	-1.92
2012	105,000,000	22,73,000	8.25	8.55
2013	131,000,000	14,60,000	24.76	47.13
2014	154,000,000	-	17.56	-40.21
2015	150,300,003	-	-2.40	5.75
2016	214,300,003	-	42.58	1.93
2017	348,000,000	-	62.39	33.69
2018	357,000,000	-	2.59	7.10
2019	391,000,000		9.52	15.0
	Average Growth (2008-2019) (%)		17.0081	8.5318

**Fig. 1: Tourist arrival and their growth**

According to the above table and figure, outgoing tourists are rising at a faster rate than inbound

tourists. It means we're generating less money but spending more on outbound tourists.



**Fig. 2: Tourist Receipts (inbound) and Expenditure (outbound)**

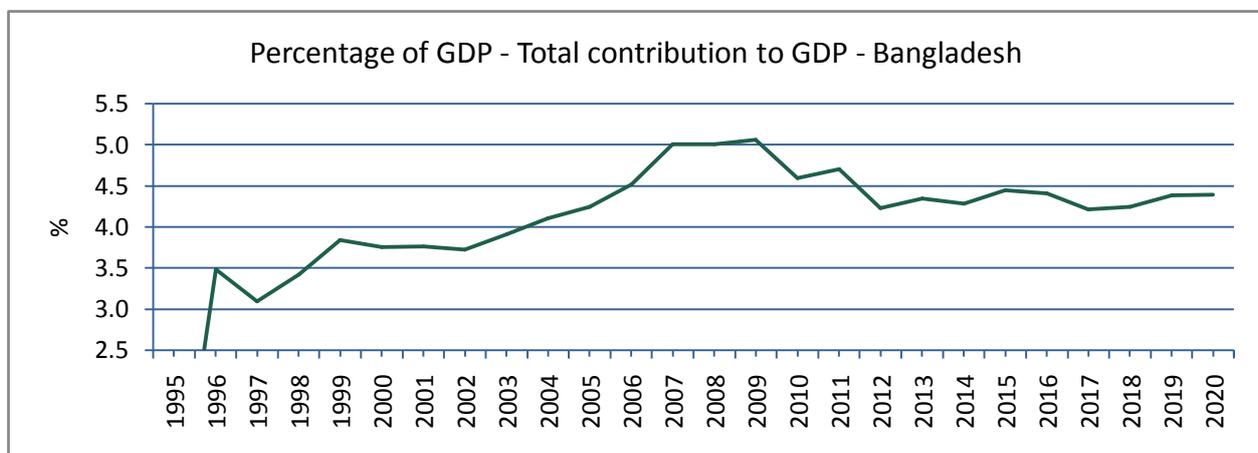
A worldwide vacationer receipt denotes the usage of a global vehicle by incoming tourists from around the world, as well as payments to public transportation providers. Other payments paid for items or services obtained in the target nation are

included in these installments. In contrast to dwindling tourist numbers, the number of Bangladeshis traveling overseas has increased significantly in recent years.

**6.3 The impact of tourism in the GDP and employment opportunity in tourism of Bangladesh.**

**Table-3: The overall contribution of travel and tourism to employment in terms of capital investment**

Year	Capital investment (US\$ bn in real price)	Direct contribution to GDP (US\$ bn in real price)	Direct contribution to employment (Growth in %)
2010	0.66626	3.52781	5.92075
2011	0.675016	3.56069	-7.65872
2012	0.743941	3.90898	7.03387
2013	0.680828	4.12148	0.547882
2014	0.645837	4.53742	6.00117
2015	0.850318	4.85186	4.89845
2016	0.933387	<b>5.01296</b>	-1.13066
2017	1.03101	<b>5.31044</b>	0.996056
2018	1.11302	<b>5.6332</b>	2.48396
2019	1.1814	<b>6.00768</b>	2.92509
2020	1.21248	<b>6.41374</b>	4.8447



**Fig. 3: The economic contribution of Travel & Tourism: Growth (Bangladesh)**

**Contribution of travel and tourism to GDP (% of GDP) {Source: World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)}**

According to the table and graph above, the travel and tourism business has a substantial influence on direct employment and GDP in our country. Aside from that, capital investment in the tourist business is steadily rising.

**6.4 Swat analysis of tourism industry in Bangladesh**

Positive Impacts	Internal Factors		Negative Impacts
	Strengths	Weakness	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Natural, cultural, archeological, historical, religious, as well as man-made resources abound.</li> <li>➤ People have a welcoming disposition.</li> <li>➤ The world's longest beach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Local community engagement is low.</li> <li>➤ Inadequate funding</li> <li>➤ Ineffective promotional efforts</li> <li>➤ Insufficient safety and security</li> <li>➤ Obstacle to communication</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The world's largest mangrove forest</li> <li>➤ A vibrant culture with a long and illustrious history</li> <li>➤ Foods and desserts that are appealing</li> <li>➤ Huge unexplored destination</li> <li>➤ Number of world heritage sites</li> <li>➤ Availability of gastronomy</li> <li>➤ Unique mangrove forest like Sundarbans and swamp forest like Ratargul</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lack of knowledge</li> <li>➤ There is a lesser emphasis on developing new tourist policies.</li> <li>➤ Our budget has been underutilized.</li> <li>➤ No formal authoritative rules, regulations and associations</li> <li>➤ Inefficiency in managing the destination the destination</li> <li>➤ Lake of appropriate coordination' stake holders</li> <li>➤ Inappropriate marketing strategies</li> <li>➤ Lack of government prioritization of tourism sector</li> <li>➤ Limited budget for promoting tourism over seas</li> <li>➤ Poor digitalization initiative from the government and private sector</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Community based eco-tourism establishment</li> <li>➤ Easy Promotion via social media</li> <li>➤ Research opportunity on tourism industry</li> <li>➤ New types of tourism like dark tourism, floating restaurant etc.</li> <li>➤ Innovation opportunity</li> <li>➤ Relatively comfortable weather conditions</li> <li>➤ Young generations' zest for new destination</li> <li>➤ More engagement in international events e.g. World Cup Cricket, SAAF Game</li> <li>➤ Huge space of business tourism</li> <li>➤ Mega-project-based tourism</li> <li>➤ New information technology</li> <li>➤ Privatization of the public sector of tourism</li> <li>➤ Increased popularity of short holidays</li> <li>➤ Peoples tendency to escape from urban and stressful life</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Unawareness regarding sustainability of Destination</li> <li>➤ Political instability</li> <li>➤ Absence of proper tourism policy</li> <li>➤ Corruption</li> <li>➤ Poor implementation of taking projects</li> <li>➤ Strong competition within the region</li> <li>➤ Unplanned extraction of natural resources</li> <li>➤ Language barrier of the Bangladeshi people</li> <li>➤ Threats of security</li> <li>➤ Natural disasters</li> </ul>
<p><b>External Factors</b></p>	

**Recommendations:**

According to the study's research and conclusions, some recommendations for improving the state of Bangladesh's tourist sector are included below.

- Ensure service quality of the tourism industry. Creating skilled human resources in the tourism industry.
- Ensuring flawless safety and security in the hotel. Restaurant and transportation.
- Improving the country's roads, power, and physical infrastructure.
- Creating a tourism-friendly environment and promoting Eco-tourism
- Protecting natural and mineral resources. Avoid all types of pollutions- water, air, soil, and sound.
- Ensuring responsible tourism behavior from all stakeholders.
- Reducing extra fees, costs, and unnecessary expenses.

- Attracting new tourists and retaining old tourists both domestic and international tourists.
- BPC takes various new steps to develop tourist policies.
- Both private and public entrepreneurs ensure positive socio-economic benefits.
- Develop the existing tour operators of the country.
- Ensuring the efficiency of the tourist police and ensuring better service and providing pro-active support to the tourist.
- Communication frameworks (Rail, Street, Air, and waterway) should be created and appropriately kept up.
- Government and the tourism industry organizers should make a move in regards to the security framework at the traveler police; more preparation ought to be offered to the vacationer police.
- Building up a strong handicraft market to attract inbound and outbound tourists.
- Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation should continue various types of sponsorship for domestic tourism.
- Promotion of tourism and hospitality management education.
- Upgrading the government tourism website and make available all information regarding tourism destinations.

### Conclusions:

The potential of the tourist sector is investigated in this study, as well as the influence of tourism on Bangladesh's overall economic growth. Furthermore, it provides insight into the issue and possibilities of Bangladesh's tourist sector. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and dangers are also examined (SWOT). This research gives an excellent picture of Bangladesh's economic contribution, GDP, capital investment, employment, and opportunity. According to this study, Bangladesh earned USD 1,153 million from tourism between 2009 and 2017, which is a tiny percentage of its GDP. This analysis concludes that the tiny share of tourist sales has a limited positive influence on Bangladesh's economic growth at the time. Despite the fact that Bangladesh's tourist sector has significant challenges, it generates jobs, creativity and new technology, knowledge transfer, new infrastructure, human companionship, and, most

importantly, it contributes to the country's iconic image of "Beautiful Bangladesh." Finally, all stakeholders should collaborate to maximize the use of natural and artificial tourist resources in order to improve Bangladesh's tourism industry's competitiveness.

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### Conflict of interests:

The authors declared there are no conflicts of interest in publishing the present research study.

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