

**Department of Management**

**Micro and Small Enterprises Involvement in Pro-poor Tourism:  
Evidence from Bangladesh**

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**This thesis is presented for the Degree of  
Master of Philosophy (Management)  
of  
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## **DECLARATION**

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

The proposed research study received human research ethics approval from the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (EC14879), Approval Number HRE2018-0324.

Signed:  
Rudrendu Ray

Date: 27 June 2019

## ABSTRACT

Existing studies on pro-poor tourism (PPT) predominantly focus on its benefits, roles, sustainability, and development issues. Inadequate theory, fragmented tourism development and scarcity of academic interests avert the formation of PPT approach. There is also a lack of research on micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in tourism that uncover the roles in developing PPT approach. Even though Bangladesh has commenced Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations for eradicating extreme poverty, often, the tourism MSEs' effectiveness in reducing poverty and implementing PPT approach has not been recognised by key stakeholders. Thus, the study context is placed within a theoretical framework exploring the involvement of MSEs in PPT initiative at Cox's Bazar beach destination, which is underpinned by stakeholder theory. Based on these issues and to achieve the aim of this study, three research questions were developed:

RQ1: What are the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?

RQ2: What are the challenges faced by MSEs from getting involved in PPT initiative?

RQ3: How do tourism stakeholders support MSEs involvement in PPT initiative?

A qualitative research methodology situated within the interpretive paradigm was adopted in this study to explore comprehensive information of the investigated phenomenon. Semi-structured interviews were the main data collection method adopted in the study. A total of 25 interviews were conducted with relevant MSEs in tourism stakeholders from Cox's Bazar beach area, at which point interview data had reached a saturation stage. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected from the participants.

The study's findings indicated that MSEs involvement in PPT approach were inspired by two main reasons, namely economic benefits and non-economic benefits. Findings showed that within the economic benefits, MSEs involvement in tourism contributed to the local community in the provision of employment opportunities and improved standard of living. Non-economic benefits included social recognition and environmental awareness. Findings also provided insights into challenges faced by

MSEs such as initial capital investment, lack of business knowledge and technical skills, political and administrative exploitation, conservative outlook of the society and threat of seasonality. These challenges have a great impact on the livelihoods of the poor local community. Findings revealed stakeholders provide support for MSEs involvement in the PPT initiative at the study context.

To sum up, this study has implications on the existing body of knowledge, practice and policy makers and in particular the hosting community of Cox's Bazar. From the theoretical point of view, it has developed a framework for MSEs involvement in PPT initiative. Limitations and directions for future studies are also discussed in detail.

## **DEDICATION**

**This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents –**

*(Swapan Kumar Ray and Dipali Ray)*

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
BB	Bangladesh Bank
BMCF	Beach Management Committee Force
BPC	Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CBT	Community-Based Tourism
CoxDA	Cox's Bazar Development Authority
DCI	Direct Calorie Intake
DFID	Department for International Development
DSLR	Digital Single Lens Reflex
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
FEI	Food Energy Intake
HES	Household Expenditure Survey
HIES	Household Incomes and Expenditure Surveys
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MSEs	Micro and Small Enterprises
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council's
NTO	National Tourism Organisation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PPT	Pro-Poor Tourism
PPTP	Pro-poor Tourism Partnership
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SRI	Stanford Research Institute
ST-EP	Sustainable Tourism for the Elimination of Poverty
TOAB	Tour Operators' Association of Bangladesh
TOAC	Tour Operators Association of Cox's Bazar
UN	The United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WB	The World Bank
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council



# **Micro and Small Enterprises Involvement in Pro-poor Tourism: Evidence from Bangladesh**

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Chapter Overview

This thesis inspects the involvement of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in pro-poor tourism (PPT) at a beach destination in Bangladesh. It provides insights into the perceived benefits, challenges and stakeholders' support associated with MSEs involvement in PPT. The intention of PPT is to generate benefits for the poor through their involvement in tourism-related businesses and activities, which are usually micro and small in size. It is important that tourism MSEs are operated by or benefited the local poor people at tourism destination. However, limited research has been done to understand the actual situation at tourism sites, in terms of benefits received, impediments confronted by the MSEs involvement in PPT approach at beach destination. Therefore, this thesis seeks to explore the perceived benefits of tourism MSEs involvement in PPT, uncover the challenges faced by the MSEs, and to examine tourism stakeholders' support for the tourism MSEs in the beach destination. This introductory chapter instigates with an overview to the background of the study and its connotation, followed by the study context. Subsequently, it draws the thesis objectives and questions. Afterwards, it clarifies the scope of the study with justification, and finally, outline the structure of the thesis.

#### 1.2 Research Background

From the late 1990s, the concept of PPT has become widespread which instigated as a new idea in tourism in the mid of 1980s (Torres *et al.*, 2011, Tolkach *et al.*, 2012, Saito *et al.*, 2017). Pro-poor tourism is stated as placing of tourism development to create livelihood opportunities for underprivileged people of a destination (Mowforth and Munt, 2016). PPT is not a type of tourism product or an attraction, rather it is an

approach for developing and managing of tourism (Ashley *et al.*, 2000, Tao, 2018). PPT approach can be adopted in different types of tourism such as community-based tourism, rural tourism, urban tourism, cultural tourism, event tourism, eco-tourism, philanthropic tourism, sustainable tourism, volunteer tourism and so on (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010). The intentions of employing PPT are due to its potential in: 1) unlocking opportunities for the local poor people rather than enhancing the extent of the tourism sector (Bennett *et al.*, 1999, Goodwin, 2005, Islam and Carlsen, 2016); 2) focusing on the poor community's voice through bridging tourism and poverty reduction (UNWTO, 2005); and 3) ensuring benefits for the impoverished community at the tourism destination (Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2016).

Over the past decades, PPT's attention (Hall, 2007) is predominantly enhancing in the light of reducing poverty through comprehensive support from the respective stakeholders of the tourism industry (Bennett *et al.*, 1999, Briedenhann, 2011, Gascón, 2015, Elsetouhi *et al.*, 2018). PPT academics support the inclusion of poverty issues in tourism strategy (Gascón, 2015, Yang and Hung, 2014, Truong, 2014); and it can be reduced through developing PPT where tourism related businesses might play a pivotal role (Martínez-Román *et al.*, 2015, Islam and Carlsen, 2016). Most of these studies have highlighted on poverty alleviation through tourism development addressing PPT as an approach. They focused on how effectively and efficiently rural destination can be developed to ensure self-dependency of the impoverished local community. Limited research has been done to investigate the other benefits of PPT, other than poverty alleviation (Tao, 2018, Espiner *et al.*, 2017, King and Dinkoksung, 2014). Ashley *et al.* (2001a) revealed the benefits of the PPT approach, including expand of opportunities for the poor (e.g. access to the infrastructure, employment and training), increase in demand for products and services made by the poor communities, diversification of livelihood sources, support in formulation of pro-poor policies and facilitation in reducing poverty as a whole by ensuring sustainable tourism development. It is desirable that PPT helps to improve the well-being of the local community, capacity development, infrastructural development, where tourism destination stakeholders' support is needed in the endeavor (Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018, Proyrungroj, 2018).

On the other hand, micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in tourism have been documented as a key source of employment and income in various developing nations in the world (Mshenga *et al.*, 2010, Akbaba, 2012, Tahir *et al.*, 2016, Mao, 2015). These studies have conferred about rural poverty reduction by involving poor people into tourism related business activities. The impacts of tourism enterprises towards the residents can influence their standard of living and significantly contribute to local economy by providing employment, and higher level of income, while attracting huge investment to community, generating tax revenue for the local government, improving infrastructure in the local community, besides increasing in training and education opportunities (Sharma and Dyer, 2009, Mao *et al.*, 2013). These studies have found that micro tourism enterprises have several advantages relative to large scale industries at the tourism destination (Scheyvens and Russell, 2012). It is because of MSE is well known as a local distribution network that satisfy specific demands of tourism consumers, and providing distinctive products that appeal to the local taste with a minimum cost, and ease of transportation facility (Zhao, 2009, Agyapong, 2010, Cuervo and Cheong, 2017). In particular, employment in MSEs increases through two significant ways; establishment of new business enterprises and extension of current enterprises (Mead and Liedholm, 1998). These enterprises can be particularly vital in helping a huge number of very poor people. These significant contributions of MSEs to the national economy are often termed as the ‘Engine of Growth’ (McPherson, 1996, Zhao, 2009, Agyapong, 2010) for a developing country like Bangladesh (Chowdhury *et al.*, 2013b, Mamun *et al.*, 2013).

According to Chowdhury *et al.* (2013b), there is a total of six million micro and small enterprises in Bangladesh. 83% of these MSEs have employed between one and five workers; summing up to about 31 million employees by the MSEs (Qamruzzaman, 2015). In particular, MSEs in tourism form about 93.6% of businesses in Bangladesh, and contribute about 4.81% of the nation’s GDP (BBS, 2017). Bangladesh is gifted with natural resources, and has the potential in the tourism sector which produced 3.8% of the total employment in year 2016 (WTTC, 2017). However, poverty line of Bangladesh is visible and most of the local communities, especially poor, are underprivileged from the perceived benefits of the tourism businesses. Currently, about 24.3% of the populace in Bangladesh is living below the poverty line.



Optimistically, the government targets to reduce the poverty rate to 18.6% by the year 2020 (Ministry of Finance Bangladesh, 2017). Moreover, the long-term plan of Bangladesh is to become a middle-income country within the next decade (Bangladesh Bank, 2015). In this regard, this study employs the concept PPT as an approach that could be adopted in order to make sense of poor advancement through the help of MSEs in tourism industry. MSEs are the channels through which the poor, especially the most marginalized and vulnerable sections of the community (such as rural women and youth) can diversify their sources of earnings. With the additional income generated, they can afford to gain education or training among other needs which subsequently improves their quality of life (Harrison and Schipani, 2007, Komppula, 2014, Islam and Carlsen, 2016).

However, literature review indicates that prior studies on micro and small tourism enterprises were predominantly focused on the employment generating aspect (Mead and Liedholm, 1998, Sharma and Dyer, 2009, Akbaba, 2012, Chowdhury *et al.*, 2013b, Gascón, 2015) whereas neglecting the other benefits of MSEs' involvement in PPT approach (Middleton, 1998, Page *et al.*, 1999, Thomas, 2000, Thomas *et al.*, 2011, Sajilan *et al.*, 2016, Page *et al.*, 2017). In addition, most of the previous studies focused on small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and pointed out their impediments to success (Pechlaner *et al.*, 2004, Hwang and Lockwood, 2006, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2009, Pyke *et al.*, 2016, Cuervo and Cheong, 2017, Shankar, 2017), these studies have yet to be replicated in consideration of micro enterprises (Scheyvens and Russell, 2012, Thomas *et al.*, 2011, Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018). Thus, the investigation of the perceived benefits and challenges of the local poor people from getting involved in tourism MSEs in PPT initiative is indispensable in PPT initiative in ensuring the poor local people's livelihood (Sharma and Dyer, 2009, Brouder and Eriksson, 2013, Komppula, 2014, Mao, 2015, Chhetri, 2019). A review of the literature indicates that pro-poor tourism studies in Bangladesh context are very limited (Islam, 2012, Hasan *et al.*, 2019b, Mamun *et al.*, 2013, Anwar, 2012). These studies partially stated the overview of PPT approach in context of Bangladesh in the viewpoint of alleviating poverty, however, the perceived benefits of PPT approach via tourism businesses and the impediments faced by the local poor people to be involved

remain unspecified (Chowdhury, 2012, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2009, Islam and Carlsen, 2016, Saito *et al.*, 2017, Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2016, Chhetri, 2019). Similarly, there is limited evidence of support for the MSEs provided by various tourism stakeholders in PPT initiative in context of Bangladesh which is needed immensely (Chowdhury *et al.*, 2013b, Islam, 2012, Islam and Carlsen, 2016, Hasan *et al.*, 2019a). This study aims to fill these gaps through exploring the perceived benefits of the local poor people to be involved in tourism MSEs, their challenges and attained support provided by the stakeholders in view of implementing PPT approach in Bangladesh.

### **1.3 Study Context**

Like many countries around the world, Bangladesh is an attractive destination for tourists for its natural beauty, tribal culture, historical and archeological sites and monuments, beaches, resorts, hill tracts, abundant evergreen forests and wild life, and its hospitable culture (Ray *et al.*, 2014). This study is based on the context of Cox's Bazar beach in Bangladesh; - a poverty-stricken area where the community is willing to be involved in tourism activities via MSEs and seeking support from concerned authority (Islam, 2012). This area of Bangladesh is occupied by the local poorer community and is known for its beach destinations and other tourist sites in which numerous tourism MSEs can be found. In order to implement PPT approach successfully; it is required to involve the poor into tourism activities where the link between the MSEs and the poor community at this destination is indispensable.

Cox's Bazar Beach, the world's longest (120 kilometers) steady natural sandy beach is located in the southern and south-east part of the country and is connected with the Bay of Bengal which is popularly known as the tourist capital of Bangladesh (Quaddus *et al.*, 2011, Mamun *et al.*, 2013, Hossain *et al.*, 2015). This beach is known for its miles of golden sands, cuisine and various water sports e.g., towering cliffs, water skiing, river cruising, rowing, surfing. In recent years, the number of tourist arrivals has increased at this destination. Every year, a huge number of tourists visit this destination. Most of them are Bangladeshi nationals who travel from different parts of the country, and a few are foreign tourists. Though Bangladesh does not get a

great number of international tourists, it has millions of domestic tourists who go for vacations often. In 2010, nearly three million (Mamun *et al.*, 2013), and in 2013 five million tourists visit Cox’s Bazar beach (Hossain *et al.*, 2015). The number of tourists rose to seven million in 2017 from six million a year earlier (Hasan *et al.*, 2019a) which has brought a big economic change in this area, where this number is expected to increase to 10 million in 2020 (Hossain *et al.*, 2013, Hasan *et al.*, 2019b). Around 55,000 people living at Cox’s Bazar municipality in an area of 6.85 square kilometers (BBS, 2017) and earning a livelihood through tourism activities and fishing in the Bay of Bengal where most of them are from poor community (Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2009, Islam, 2012).

### Study Site: Cox’s Bazar, Beach Tourism Area



**Figure 1. 1: Research Site Map of Bangladesh**

Nearby the Cox's Bazar town, a number of attractions e.g., the dead coral Island Saint Marin, Buddhist Heritage sites and Dulahazra Safari Park have enriched the tourism appeal in this area. A huge number of tourist accommodations and restaurants can be found around the Cox's Bazar beach area. Meanwhile, there is a variety of local transportation mode operated by the local community in view of smoothing the travel

experience of the tourists within the Cox's Bazar town and adjacent tourism sites. In particular, handicraft businesses are very common in the Cox's Bazar where most locals are involved in this business. Handicraft business includes various types of ornaments made by dead coral, conch and pearls which are even very attractive to the visitors. As such, it is obvious that the socio-economic condition and standard of living of local community in this small district are quite dependent on tourism-based activities and earnings.

Alongside the unique tourist attractions and hospitable culture, low living and accommodation costs is another factor for tourist visit at Cox's Bazar. In addition, the government has developed tourism policy that prioritizes in creating a tourism friendly environment and to market its tourism potential, - nationally and internationally. However, it appears that there are limited studies available on tourism MSEs perceived benefits to ensure PPT approach especially in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh as a beach tourism destination. Therefore, this destination has been selected by the researcher as the study context helps to understand the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT approach, challenges faced by the MSEs and support from the destination stakeholders for the MSEs in order to implement PPT initiative.

The researcher had to consider several issues in choosing the study context for this thesis. Firstly, as the main objective of this thesis is to explore the involvement of MSEs in PPT approach in beach destination, the destination inhabited with significant percentage of the poor local communities with extreme poverty have been considered (Mamun *et al.*, 2013, Islam and Carlsen, 2012). Secondly, the beach destination is considered where the poor local community's livelihood depends on agriculture and has a probable scope in supplying agricultural products to the MSEs for serving the tourists (Mao *et al.*, 2014, Islam, 2012). Thirdly, the beach destination adjacent to the poor local communities' residence where traditional handicrafts are produced for tourism business have been meticulously considered for the selection of the study context (Islam and Carlsen, 2016, Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2016). Finally, the existing tourism MSEs in the beach destination which offer comparative quality services to tourists (Komppula and Reijonen, 2006) and the frequency of tourist

arrival have also been taken into consideration (Quaddus *et al.*, 2011, Hossain *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, taking into account all the mentioned issues of Cox's Bazar beach in Bangladesh, it is deemed as the best study context for this study.

Selecting the study site for this study was challenging as it involves critical consideration regarding several issues; e.g., entry barriers, possibility and probability of getting into deep information, trustworthy relationship with the participants, credibility and quality of provided information by the participants (Marshall and Rossman, 2014). As the researcher is a local in Bangladesh, his familiarity with the background had helped him in conducting in-depth interviews for data collection in terms of time, cost and allows a better understanding of the participants which is much needed in qualitative research. The target population for this research is tourism stakeholders e.g., MSE investors, MSE employees, MSE trade union, community leaders, local community, tourists, government agencies and NGOs in Bangladesh. The outcome of this research will assist local communities' earnings by increasing their involvement more in MSEs in the tourism sector.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives and Questions**

As discussed in the previous sections, PPT approach benefits the poor communities through involving them into tourism related businesses. However, relevant skills and much capacity are required to engage into tourism MSEs which are significantly absent in poor local communities. Besides, stakeholders' conducive support is also necessary for the tourism MSEs to ensure PPT approach in a destination. Literature review revealed that information concerning this topic of study is inadequate, other than a few studies that have been done on poverty alleviation perspectives (Manwa and Manwa, 2014, Rogerson, 2006, Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018, Gascón, 2015). Hence, it is pertinent to study on tourism MSEs to help the poor community in finding their source of livelihood and advancing the PPT initiative. The main aim of this thesis is to explore the involvement of micro and small enterprises in pro-poor tourism in Bangladesh. More specifically, this thesis seeks to identify the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative, such as economic, non-economic and participation standpoints besides; to uncover the challenges faced by the tourism

MSEs from getting involved in PPT, and to identify tourism stakeholders' support for MSEs involvement in PPT. Thus, this thesis develops the following specific research questions based on the existing literature review.

RQ1: What are the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?

RQ2: What are the challenges faced by MSEs from getting involved in PPT initiative?

RQ3: How do tourism stakeholders support MSEs involvement in PPT initiative?

### **1.5 Scope of the Study and Justification**

This research explores the driving forces of tourism MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in context of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Cox's Bazar was selected as the study context as there is an absence of recognised studies on PPT approach focused on tourism MSEs. It is argued that the participation of the poor in PPT development through the micro and small enterprises can be recognised in three main areas: (1) Employment of the poor in the micro and small tourism enterprises (2) Small suppliers of goods and services to the tourism enterprises and (3) Small, local tourism operators from within the poor populations (UNWTO, 2005). Accordingly, understanding the driving forces of tourism related MSEs to be involved in PPT as well as challenges faced by the MSEs are important in ensuring PPT approach. As with many developing countries, Bangladesh is well behind in terms of research and scholarly studies on PPT approach. Meanwhile, the contributions of tourism MSEs for the poor is not well documented which might play an important role for ensuring PPT approach at the destination.

The impacts of the scope and benefits for various forms of linkage in tourism industry with the MSEs on the poor local people's livelihood are more important in the PPT initiative (Sharma and Dyer, 2009, Brouder and Eriksson, 2013, Komppula, 2014). In addition, there is a need for comprehensive support from destination stakeholders' end for both MSEs as well as PPT approach in view of favoring the poor community of this destination. Nevertheless, this indication still lacks for MSEs in the existing literature over the PPT approach and particularly vague in Bangladesh perspective. In

fact, it is imperative to understand the stakeholders' supporting strategy for the tourism MSEs involvement in PPT in Bangladesh.

Therefore, in successful PPT development through tourism MSEs involvement with the participation of the local communities at Cox's Bazar, it is essential to understand the perceived benefits of tourism MSEs' involvement in PPT initiative. To investigate the perceived benefits of the PPT approach through tourism MSEs, this study utilized the PPT strategies provided by Ashley *et al.* (2001a). These strategies include benefits such as economic, non-economic and participation. This thesis aims to investigate the facts relating to the tourism MSEs benefits in ensuring the PPT approach in Bangladesh's perspective where one fourth of the citizens are living in poverty (Ministry of Finance Bangladesh, 2017). It is evident that the tourism MSEs is operated by the poor people of the local community who are well behind the mainstream of the society due to poverty. In an overpopulated country like Bangladesh, it is challenging to seek for an earning source in maintaining one's livelihood. Hence, there is a need to identify the challenges of the local community as well as the tourism MSEs in getting involved in PPT in Bangladesh. This will help in identifying appropriate supporting strategies for the MSEs in PPT development by the tourism destination stakeholders.

Due to the exploratory and contextual nature of this study, a qualitative means of investigation and interpretive paradigm is adopted (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). This research employs an inductive approach using case study which is effective in yielding new insights (Yin, 2012). To ensure participants are knowledgeable regarding the investigated phenomenon, this thesis adopts purposive sampling technique. In-depth interviews with 25 key stakeholders relating to tourism MSEs from Cox's Bazar were conducted using a digital voice recorder. Interview data were transcribed appropriately and analyzed thematically through identifying the common patterns within the data. In view of triangulation and to ensure the credibility of this study, documentary evidence was obtained from government reports, newspapers, websites and field notes.

This study has developed an integrated but parsimonious conceptual framework based on existing literature relating to tourism MSEs and the PPT approach. These are

contextualized through field study using in-depth interviews and relevant mechanisms from the standpoints of tourism MSEs and PPT approach. The information from this thesis consequently can help tourism MSEs and policy-makers to establish more effective and justifiable PPT strategies in Bangladesh.

## **1.6 Research Significance**

This research is significant in three ways. Firstly, this study contributes as a deeper and comprehensive study on PPT approach through capitalizing the benefits of tourism MSEs. It draws the perceived benefits of tourism MSEs involvement in PPT initiative followed by the challenges of the tourism MSEs in context of Bangladesh in order to ensure PPT initiatives through benefiting the poor. This study could have potential contribution to the literature on MSEs involvement in PPT in beach tourism destination. Unlike previous studies, the current research can extend and enrich the tourism stakeholders' supporting strategies for MSEs involvement in PPT initiative and this enables the knowledge gap concerning the link between MSEs and the poor to be filled. The findings of this study can be considered as new insights and understanding relevant for future research of the joint effects of MSEs and PPT in the field of tourism and may work even in other developing countries in the world.

Secondly, Cox's Bazar Bangladesh as a unique and significant case study into MSEs involvement in PPT has yet to be explored in prior research. The performance of tourism industry in recent years is improving in Bangladesh as it is contributing to national economy as well as creating employment opportunities steadily (WTTC, 2017). However, Cox's Bazar is a low resource area and this is reflected in Bangladesh as a whole with one fourth of the citizens living under poverty line (Ministry of Finance Bangladesh, 2017). Consequently, the development of micro and small enterprises in this sector will also create more employment compared to other sectors due to the existing labour force as this is highly labour intensive sector (Chowdhury *et al.*, 2013b, DFID, 1999). Similarly, if micro and small enterprises of a region operate their businesses comprehensively with the aim of connecting and integrating poor people into their businesses, the aggregate impact of such linkages could be generous (Quaddus *et al.*, 2011).



Thirdly, from the managerial perspectives, the National Tourism Organization of Bangladesh (NTO) can apply the findings of this thesis to eliminate poverty through ensuring involvement of the poor in tourism enterprises and simultaneously formulating constructive policy for tourism development. The policy makers and destination stakeholders can also adopt the findings of this thesis to secure greater benefits for the poor.

## **1.7 Thesis Structure**

This thesis is focused on the driving forces of tourism related MSEs involvement in PPT at Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. It also concentrates on the challenges faced by MSEs in participating in the PPT initiative. Thus, it is imperative to know the comprehensive efforts of the tourism stakeholders to overcome those challenges to create benefits to the poor local people. The thesis is structured into five chapters.

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter discusses the key issue of MSE and PPT in a generalized approach to create a clearer understanding of the perceived benefits of the tourism MSEs to ensure PPT approach in Bangladesh. It presents the gaps of the study and outlines the research questions in order to justify the stated research objectives, followed by study site selection and justification of the study which explains the significance of the study and finally the thesis structure.

### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter presents the related literature reviewed for this study. This section focuses on poverty in the local community, micro and small enterprises in tourism, scope of reducing poverty through MSEs in tourism, pro-poor tourism approach while its contribution to local people and tourism development has been addressed critically. Destination stakeholder map has been adopted in order to identify the key

stakeholders relating to the study and to form a conceptual model based on literature which ensures the basis for proper, effective and consistent methodological structure for this research. In particular, the contribution of tourism enterprises in creating benefits for the poor, according to extant literature, is analyzed.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter outlines the overall methodological philosophy and shape the boundary of the thesis. The chapter begins with justifying why the research chooses the interpretive research paradigm. Afterwards, the justification of Bangladesh as the study context is presented. The case study protocol, participant sampling and data collection stages are also highlighted, after which the methods for data analysis and interpretation are explained. Lastly, the ethical considerations involved in the research followed by limitations of case study are presented to conclude the chapter.

### **Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion**

This chapter presents the comparative discussion based on extant literature and current findings of the study. Findings of this thesis exhibit the outcomes of the in-depth interview followed by research questions of the study. It begins with an elaborative discussion over the perceived benefits that encourage the poor local community to be involved in tourism MSEs in view of ensuring PPT approach considering the economic and non-economic benefits at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination in Bangladesh. Thereafter, it highlights on the challenges faced by the poor community that participates in tourism MSEs in view of reducing poverty. Finally, this chapter concludes by highlighting the pattern of supporting strategy by the identified key stakeholders in advancing PPT approach.

### **Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications**

This chapter recapitulates the findings of the study in connection with the outlined research questions and several sub-questions followed by the research objectives. Theoretical contribution and implications of the findings to various parties (i.e.:

tourism industry, policymakers, society and local community) are presented in this section. Finally, the chapter concludes by providing a summary of the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

## **1.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter describes a brief introduction of this thesis and provides an elaborated background of the research at the very outset of the thesis. Study context has been presented with the justification of selection. It has also drawn research objectives and articulated three research questions in supporting the research gaps. It outlines the significance of the study and ends with the formulation of the thesis structure. To establish a more detail conceptual framework, literature reviews pertinent to MSEs and PPT will be discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Chapter Overview

The main purpose of this chapter is to review the extant literature relating to tourism and poverty alleviation, pro-poor tourism and the contribution of tourism enterprises involvement in pro-poor tourism. The focus is on micro and small tourism enterprises and pro-poor tourism literature. Though this research reviews studies conducted in both developed and developing countries, most literature focuses on developing countries in a similar economic development like Bangladesh. Nevertheless, owing to the deficiency of academic research in MSEs in tourism related venture in Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination in Bangladesh, in this chapter, an indication of tourism expansion, poverty, MSEs in tourism and pro-poor tourism were reviewed with an emphasis on contemporary progresses and encounters confronted by the tourism academics. Critical appraisal of the preceding literature is referenced to identify the research gaps in a sound way and allow a transparent understanding of the investigated phenomenon in the perspective of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

#### 2.2 Issues of Poverty

Yang and Hung (2014) defined poverty as lack of necessities, anxiety in satisfying one's fundamental needs or monetary restraints. It can be described as the deficiency of human basic needs such as clean drinking water, food, health facilities, education, shelter and sanitation etc. (Tahir *et al.*, 2016). Poverty includes lack of food, calorie intake, shelter, safety, susceptibility to poor health and education, lack of knowledge and communication, incapability to workout human and political rights and absenteeism of dignity, confidence and self-respect (Bradshaw, 2007, Ministry of Finance Bangladesh, 2017). It is a common phenomenon that is dynamic in nature and differs based on time, culture, region, demographic and season (Johnson, 2001, Green and Hulme, 2005). It is then progressed to a multi-dimensional concept from a

traditional material-centric concept and an ongoing challenge for both the advanced and developing countries (Yang and Hung, 2014). It is evident that before year 2000, poverty denotes only the lack of fundamental survival requirements i.e. food, shelter, health care (Hagenaars and Vos, 1988). Subsequently, academicians agree in a point in which poverty also incorporates issues relating to injustice, incapability and social exclusion along with fundamental survival requirements (Grusky *et al.*, 2006, Sen, 2009, Devicienti and Poggi, 2011). Green and Hulme (2005) stated that poverty is because of social and economic factors that dismiss a portion of people from obtaining income, education, health support, social security and so on. Meanwhile, Sachs and Riedel (2005) devised the term "poverty trap" as a dilemma for the poor people in the society who cannot get rid of their extreme conditions of power and resource deprivation.

As poverty is referred to a multidimensional problem, it is indispensable to recognize the evolution of poverty conception in view of forming suitable measures or strategies to address poverty (Akindola, 2009, Bourguignon and Chakravarty, 2003). There is a prolonged debate for years among the researchers, practitioners and financial organizations relating to the concept of poverty and surprisingly, each of them argues on behalf of their philosophy and practices (Misturelli and Heffernan, 2012, Ajakaiye and Adeyeye, 2001). Although the definition of poverty has evolved over the decades, the meaning of poverty is still associated with key words such as 'basic needs', 'deprivation' and 'multidimensional' (Misturelli and Heffernan, 2012). Sumner (2007) recapitulated the concept of poverty and its measurement that shows prior to year 2000, poverty was quite materialistic in nature and afterwards turned into multi-dimensional thought of poverty, exhibited in the Table 2.1. Amongst different approaches to measure poverty, the poverty threshold or poverty line approach will be considered for this study. The poverty line is the lowest scale of income necessary to attain a satisfactory standard of living for a given nation. In 2016, the World Bank defines poverty in absolute terms where extreme poverty means living on less than US\$1.90 earning per day per person, while moderate poverty as less than US\$3.10 (World Bank, 2016).

**Table 2. 1: Evolution of Poverty Concept**

<b>Evolution of poverty conceptualization and measurement Periods</b>	<b>Concept of poverty</b>	<b>Measurement of poverty</b>
1960s	Economic	GDP Per Capita Grow
1970s	Basic Needs	GDP Per Capita Grow + Basic Goods
1980s	Economic	Per Capita GDP
1990s	Human Development	UNDP Human Development Indices
2000s	Multidimensional 'Freedom'	Millennium Development Goals (MDG)
2030s	Economic Parity	Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

**Source:** Adapted from Sumner (2007, p. 6)

### **2.2.1 Poverty in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh is a developing country in the South Asian, faced severe hurdles in alleviating poverty. In general, poverty is a critical global issue and is not unusual in Bangladesh. The measurement of the incidence of poverty in Bangladesh is taken from the report of Household Expenditure Survey (HES). At present, the survey is renamed as Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES). The first HES in Bangladesh was carried out in FY1973-74 followed by FY1991-92, where few HESs were conducted employing the same strategies as the first HES. HESs was accomplished by Food Energy Intake (FEI) and Direct Calorie Intake (DCI) method. Based on Direct Calorie Intake (DCI), a person eating less than 2,122 kilo-calories daily is considered as absolute poor, and under 1,805 kilo-calories is considered as hard-core poor in Bangladesh (Ministry of Finance Bangladesh, 2017, Islam and Carlsen, 2016, Islam, 2012). Normally, the poor are deprived of medical support, education, pure drinking water, nutrition and hygienic scheme where this but reduces their potential earnings.

Islam and Carlsen (2016) mentioned that micro credit is the precondition to set up micro and small enterprises for the poor with relevant training and support. Similarly, Yunus (2007) claimed that poor people has the right to get micro credit, to upgrade their standard of living, without faced the conventional complex collateral security

and should be advocated for poor friendly banking system in Bangladesh. The poor are also referred to as being capable enough to get micro credit in forming micro and small enterprises. Thus, the rate and depth of poverty in Bangladesh has been declining steadily because of a number of initiatives of the government and the NGOs. For example, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) as the world's largest NGO which established Arong as a handicrafts producing firm where the poor community are engaged and provided with training for their development (Ahmed, 2018). Approximately 75000 poor people are working under this organization with 45% being female workers. Similarly, government agencies provide free skill development training under different projects such as youth development in every district (Ministry of Finance Bangladesh, 2017). Therefore, the poverty rate in 2017 has declined to 24.3 percent whereas it was 56.7 percent in 1991. The government aims to reduce poverty rate to 18.6 percent by 2020 (Ministry of Finance Bangladesh, 2017, BBS, 2017). To sum up, it can be said that one fourth of the people who still belong under the poverty trap in Bangladesh is not a good sign for development. To overcome this issue, tourism is seen as a viable solution to solve this predicament by proper designing of plans where poor people's access should be ensured in a formal way through establishing micro and small tourism enterprises.

### **2.3 Tourism as a Development Tool**

The UNWTO (2010) outlines tourism as “a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes”. Tourism industry can play a significant role to boost a nation's economic growth through creating employment and can be established as the best sustainable development alternatives as it has direct effects on the local economy relating to other industries (Mao, 2015). This sector has been documented as the biggest economic segments in the view point of socioeconomic growth, job opportunity and establishment of new enterprises along with infrastructural improvement (Sharpley and Naidoo, 2010, Bakker and Messerli, 2017, Hossain, 2013). It is also regarded as the key foreign exchange earning source for the least developed countries as well as the developing countries of the world (Hall, 2007, Yang and Hung, 2014). Scheyvens and Russell

(2012) revealed tourism as the best means of transferring resources from the rich to the poor through travelling to different parts of the world.

The tourism industry has become one of the fastest growing sectors of the world economy (Ghasemi and Hamzah, 2014, Martínez-Román *et al.*, 2015, Fletcher *et al.*, 2016, Rashid *et al.*, 2013) and is now considered as one of the most significant pillars of economic, social and cultural enhancement in many nations in the world (Sharma and Dyer, 2009, Ma and Hassink, 2013, Webster and Ivanov, 2014). Spenceley (2012) explains that this sector directly influences a wide range of industries i.e., transportation and communication, accommodation, education, infrastructure, agriculture, customs, and immigration. Normally, local economy can be influenced and is benefited the most by tourism compared to other sectors as it provides numerous job opportunities for the host community which is reflected by the upgrade of their livelihood through ease of earnings. It indicates that tourism is interrelated with a wide range of other sectors whereby the poor communities find their livelihood (Zhao and Ritchie, 2007). Studies revealed tourism as a system which is an interlinked network of many functions (e.g. travel, accommodation, attractions and so on), organizations (e.g. airlines, travel agents, car rental firms, coffee shops, restaurants, government departments, local tourism offices and so on) and supply chains (e.g. agriculture, fishing, communication, energy) (Weaver and Oppermann, 2000, Sofield *et al.*, 2004, Leiper, 2004, Raina and Lodha, 2004, Ritchie, 2009). Basically, five inevitable components comprises of the tourism system i.e., tourists, tourist-generating regions, tourist destination regions, transit routes and tourism industries (Leiper, 2004).

According to Zhao (2009), interest in poverty alleviation through tourism is mushrooming in the world as it is regarded as a panacea in terms of economic, social and environmental perspective. Hence, the relationship between tourism and poverty reduction is under observation by tourism experts considering the potentials of tourism sector as a development tool. Moreover, it is also evident that tourism provides labour-intensive and small-scale business opportunities mainly for women in comparison to other economic sectors (Zhao and Ritchie, 2007, Ashley *et al.*, 2000).



Thus, tourism industry contributes in creating employment opportunity for the poor community and is viewed as a development tool.

#### **2.4 Tourism and Poverty Alleviation**

Other than using it a development tool, tourism has also been adopted by many developing countries as a strategy for alleviating poverty. Studies have shown that tourism business is viewed as the biggest earning source for the poor which comes from the rich (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010, Muhanna, 2007, Scheyvens, 2012). Consequently, scholars has been addressing the logical relation between tourism and poverty alleviation and regarded it as an effective way of reducing poverty as it facilitates the poor through their services (Hall, 2007, Zhao and Ritchie, 2007). However, tourism industry is not free from debates in terms of low payment to workers and minimal local involvement although it is the most labour-intensive sector in the world (Yang and Hung, 2014).

Community participation in a wide-scale form in the tourism industry plays a crucial role in reducing poverty and is no longer a new phenomenon. This type of spontaneous participation of host community especially from the poor can raise their income as a whole which enhance the strength of local economy as well as the national economy (Harrison and Schipani, 2007). However, particularly in accommodation sector, a worker has to depend on tips from tourists as they are low paid employees with extended working hours whilst having less opportunity of promotion and job security (Beddoe, 2004).

Tourism industry is expected to generate earnings for the poor and local communities along with other economic benefits, if it could be developed in a planned manner (Pleumarom, 2012). Thus, high attention of different tourism stakeholders associated with tourism MSEs is much needed to mitigate the complications of poor community (Mao, 2015). Pleumarom (2012) argues that to develop tourism, it is required to ensure the backward and forward linkages from other related sectors. Backward linkages are necessary for the formation of tourism sites including sectors such as construction, agriculture, manufacturing, telecommunications and utilities. On the

other hand, a forward linkage encompasses sectors such as supply chain of tourists' demand including recreational, hospitality, retail and financial areas.

Harrison (2008) claims that there is still deficiency in linking between the poor and the various approaches to reduce poverty through tourism sectors, in spite of wide range of concepts that is shaping to enhance the tourism welfare to the poor community. Hence, there is an urgency of bridging the concept of poverty and tourism that might uphold the livelihood of the poor (Brohman, 1996). Studies relating to poverty alleviation through tourism is quite inadequate and gaps are also visible (Yang and Hung, 2014, Islam and Carlsen, 2016). Zhao and Ritchie (2007) claimed three major problems leading to the said gaps and averting the formation of pro-poor tourism i.e. scarcity of interested scholars, fragmented development of tourism and theoretical inadequacies. However, tourism is an effective tool for reducing poverty for a penurious sector of inhabitants in the form of PPT, which tends to increase net income of people through tourism activities (Gascón, 2015). Thus, it is instrumental to understand the concept of PPT, its benefits for the poor communities and challenges associated in terms of achieving PPT approach.

#### **2.4.1 Pro-poor Tourism (PPT)**

The term pro-poo tourism was conceptualized in 1999 by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in a report that aims to improve the livelihoods of the poor through tourism (DFID, 1999, Harrison and Schipani, 2007, Duim and Caalders, 2008, Briedenhann, 2011, Saito *et al.*, 2017). Prior to, in 1998, DFID commissioned DeLoitte and Touche along with Dilys Roe of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and Caroline Ashley of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in view of justifying the extent to poverty alleviation in the UK through outbound tourism (Harrison, 2008). Afterwards, Pro-poor Tourism Partnership (PPTP) has been formed through the joining of Roe and Ashley by Harold Goodwin in 1999 of the International Centre for Responsible Tourism. Remarkably, PPTP personnel is appreciated and contributed in Sustainable Tourism-End Poverty (ST-EP) of the UNWTO, acknowledging the potential of tourism as a tool for poverty alleviation (Tolkach *et al.*, 2012). Nonetheless, since the

late 1990s, PPT approaches is promoted by a small cohort of academics and consultants in the UK, and applied by many aid agencies, emphasizing in view of linking the poor people with tourism enterprises (Harrison, 2008).

Pro-poor tourism is a form of tourism that produces net benefits for the poor by inspiring local involvement, partnerships and procurement (Ashley, 2000, Suntikul *et al.*, 2009, Pongponrat, 2011, Gascón, 2015, Espiner *et al.*, 2017) and seeks to confirm that tourism progression contributes effectively to poverty reduction (Rogerson, 2006, Torres *et al.*, 2011, Bakker and Messerli, 2017). In the 1970s, attention in tourism has been growing as a tool for development, particularly a raised awareness on its significance in alleviating poverty in the end of 1990s (Gascón, 2015). Since then it is rapidly acknowledged as 'pro-poor tourism' under broader perspective of sustainable tourism (Harrison and Schipani, 2007, Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2016). PPT strategies (See Table 2.2) seeks to unlock opportunities for the poor in terms of economic achievement, livelihood welfares and participation in decision making, other than a product or sector of tourism (Rogerson, 2006, Suntikul *et al.*, 2009, Gascón, 2015, Saito *et al.*, 2017, Ashley *et al.*, 2001b).

**Table 2. 2: Pro-poor Tourism Strategies**

<b>Increase economic benefits</b>	<b>Enhance non-financial livelihood impacts</b>	<b>Enhance participation and partnership</b>
1. Boost local employment and wages 2. Boost local enterprise opportunities 3. Create collective income sources---fees, revenue shares	1. Capacity building, training 2. Mitigate environmental impacts 3. Address competing use of natural resources 4. Improve Social, cultural impacts 5. Increase local access to infrastructure and services	1. Create more supportive policy/planning framework 2. Increase participation of the poor in decision-making 3. Build pro-poor partnerships with private sector 4. Increase flows of information, communication

**Source: Ashley *et al.* (2001b)**

In fact, numerous multilateral institutions, development agencies, governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been adopting the PPT strategy in view to reduce poverty (Gascón, 2015). Despite the admiration towards PPT, it is not free

from critiques in terms of its ability to fight against poverty (Hall, 2007). First, PPT evokes excessive expectations of the tourism capacity to fight against poverty without taking into account of the structural capability of the tourism sector (Spenceley, 2012).

**Table 2. 3: The characteristics of Pro-poor Tourism (PPT)**

<b>What PPT is not</b>	<b>What PPT is all about</b>
anti-capitalist	focus on incorporating the poor into capitalist markets by increasing job and entrepreneurial opportunities and collective benefits. Like fair trade, it is a form of market intervention, which relies heavily on the private sector
separate from wider tourism systems	depend on existing tourism structures and markets
a theory or model	orientate research to the net benefits from tourism that can or could accrue to the poor
a niche type of tourism, e.g. CBT	apply to any kind or type of tourism, including large- and small-scale tourism, even if the non-poor also benefit. Can be from regional or national policies or private sector involvement
a specific method	use numerous methods, none of which are specific to PPT, including value chain analysis, to collect data and show how the poor are and can be further involved in tourism
only about ‘the poor’	recognize that the non-poor may also benefit from tourism, even disproportionately. It is less concerned with the relative than the absolute (net) benefits received by the poor
just about hunger and no/ inadequate incomes	have a broad definition of ‘poverty’, including lack of freedom, opportunity, power, skills and education. It is about ‘development’
only about individual benefits	focus on community benefits—e.g. water, sanitation, health, education, infrastructure, etc.
only for those occupying the ‘moral high ground’	require wide stakeholder co-operation and commitment, including national and local authorities, planners, the private sector, etc, ideally combining to ensure the poor benefit from tourism

**Source: Harrison (2008, p. 856)**

Second, PPT does not encourage the business sector effectively and efficiently which is much more needed to occupy the poor community and might be the inevitable part of the tourism policy (Scheyvens and Russell, 2012, Hummel and van der Duim, 2012). Next, PPT ignores the environmental impacts to some extent in terms of transportation of the tourists in rural areas (Harrison, 2008, Gascón Gutiérrez, 2014).

Finally, PPT has been alleged for the overrating growth of the tourism sector and overlooking the identical redistribution of its benefits to combat poverty as an approach (Scheyvens and Russell, 2012, Hall, 2007, Gascón, 2015, Mitchell and Ashley, 2010, Mowforth and Munt, 2016). Furthermore, according to King and Dinkoksung (2014) firstly, monetary return is surprisingly minimum to the communities and secondly, those people are skilled in entrepreneurial perspective can only gain the advantages from the PPT approach. PPT approach becomes challenging when tourism stakeholders act to manipulate and exploit the poor (Tao, 2018).

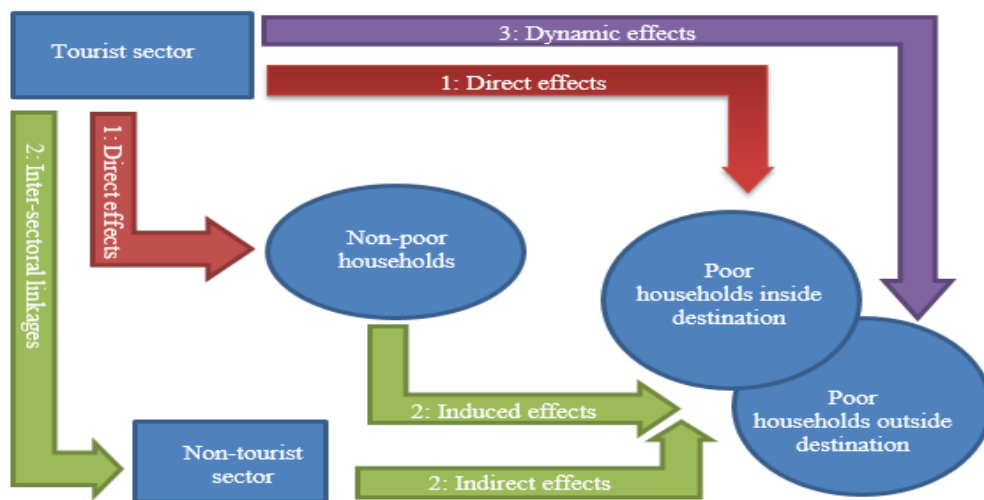
On the other hand, Harrison (2008) argues nine vital features (See the Table 2.3) of the PPT which are the results of numerous publications by the PPT practitioners and the outcomes of PPTP; mainly focusing what PPT is and how it is involved in yielding benefits for the poor as well as country as a whole.

#### **2.4.2 PPT Benefits for the Poor**

Pro-poor tourism is a tourism which yields net benefits for poor people in a specific country as the underlying goal. There are three types of benefit that can be gleaned from pro-poor tourism: economic benefits (e.g., direct earnings); livelihood benefits (e.g., purified water availability), and empowerment of the poor by means of training and learning (Goodwin, 2005, Briedenhann, 2011). It is evident that scholars have realized the inevitable linkages between tourism related enterprises and the poor community's spontaneous and enthusiastic participation opportunity (Thomas *et al.*, 2011, Page *et al.*, 2017, Shankar, 2017). Since PPT advocates the welfare of the society through giving benefits to the poor, micro and small enterprises in tourism sector might be the best method in achieving the quality of life. Dimoska (2008) stated that there is a meaningful linkage between tourism enterprises and the poor people which is quite well recognised in view of extending the benefits of tourism sector to the poor as the PPT approach. Since the tourism enterprises directly involve the poor into the workforce, they can be benefited in a number of ways, with opportunities such as education and learning, health care, entertainment, capability enhance and so on. In particular, such linkages between the poor and tourism

enterprises in a penurious area are fundamental to identify and implement strategies for poverty alleviation (Simpson, 2008, Mao, 2015).

Mitchell and Ashley (2010) identified three pathways by which the benefit or cost of tourism sector might be transferred to local poor communities that are inside and outside of the tourist destinations. The pathways are namely direct effects, indirect effects and dynamic effects; which are intended to develop pro-poor tourism by involving poor people into the system (see Figure 2.1). Direct effects as the first pathway occur when poor people of the community who belong to low-earning cluster are involved as workforces in restaurants and hotels, homestays, tour guides, crafts shop, transport drivers and so forth (Mitchell, 2012). However, there may be some negative impacts resulting from direct effects and that should be recognised to mitigate the crises. For example, developing a tourist site might require to acquiring the land and declare as protected area and consequently, the poor people who were attached with that place for their livelihood like fishermen relating to beach area can be obstructed which is a critical issue indeed (Islam, 2012).



**Figure 2. 1: Three Pathways of Tourism Benefits for the Poor**

**Source: Mitchell and Ashley (2010, p. 25)**

The next pathway is termed as indirect effects, recognised as tourist spending pattern which encourages activities beyond the tourism sector such as supply chain linkages.

For instance, infrastructure construction wages and supplies, food and beverages etc. that extend the income of the poor households indirectly and induced effects taken place while the expenditure of tourist workers' incomes in the local economy.

Finally, the dynamic effects as the third pathway comprises both positive and negative effects of the overall tourist movement in the indigenous economy which are viewed as long-term impacts. Dynamic effects resulting from payment of taxes, making skilled labor force by arranging training for workers, technical know-how, economic diversification and development of infrastructure of the tourist destination so that the poor can be benefited in a sustainable way for years (Mitchell, 2012).

Similarly, it is also instrumental to know the reasons of micro and small enterprises involvement in pro-poor tourism, meaning that what are the perceived benefits influencing the poor community to set up a business in tourism. Researchers and international organizations relating to tourism have been trying to find scopes for micro and small enterprises operation in underprivileged tourism destinations through developing liaison opportunities among the tourism businesses, tourism and the poor by means of employment, supply of goods and services relating to tourism, and direct sales of goods and services to the visitors or the tourists (Sharpley and Naidoo, 2010). However, there is a great lack of current studies discussing this concern that can obviously enhance benefits for the poor. Therefore, scholars concede in favor of comprehensive and circumstantial investigation about participation opportunities for the poor people in tourism related activities (Thomas *et al.*, 2011).

### **2.4.3 Challenges of PPT**

Despite the main aim of PPT approach is enhancing net benefits to the poor community while confirming that the expansion of tourism plays crucial role in alleviating poverty, numerous challenges exists in advancing PPT approach. These challenges (See Table 2.4) include access of the poor into market, commercial feasibility, indispensable support from different stakeholders, and the execution challenges of the approach (Ashley *et al.*, 2001b). Over the past decades, pro-poor

tourism attention (Hall, 2007) is predominantly enhanced in the light of reducing poverty with a comprehensive effort from the respective stakeholders of tourism industry by minimizing the negative impacts of tourism (Bennett *et al.*, 1999, Briedenhann, 2011). According to Shah and Gupta (2000), negative impacts of tourism such as increase in living costs at a tourism destination, deforestation for infrastructural developments, drug violence, prostitution, cultural dilapidation, snatching and robbery tendency have to be minimized with proper initiatives. They argued that a small tourism enterprise must have impact on the indigenous inhabitant in a sustainable way. However, it is hard to find the expected relationships between different enterprises in tourism and the poor community specially in developing nations owing to inequality in social and economic perspectives (Britton, 1982, Brohman, 1996, Wanhill, 2000, Gascón, 2015). Meanwhile, these inequality aspects create a very intricate setting for the poor inhabitants' engagement in tourism business (Mowforth and Munt, 2015).

**Table 2. 4: Factors that Restrain or Facilitate Progress in PPT**

<b>Access of the poor to the market</b>	<b>Commercial viability</b>	<b>Policy framework</b>	<b>Implementation challenges</b>
1. Physical location 2. Economic elites 3. Social constraints	1. Product quality and price. 2. Marketing 3. Strength of broader destination	1. Land tenure 2. Regulatory context 3. Planning process 4. Govt. attitude and capacity	1. Filling the skill gap 2. Managing costs and expectations 3. Maximizing collaboration

**Source: Ashley *et al.* (2001b, p. 18)**

In addition, initial capital is highly essential to set up a tourism enterprise which is a significant challenge for the poor inhabitants to manage, where financial financing limitation for expanding their business is viewed as a common constraint in a tourism destination (Chowdhury, 2012, Page *et al.*, 2017). Likewise, political pressure complicates the participation of the poor community into tourism related activities, thus limiting the implementation of PPT as well (Ashley *et al.*, 2001b, Islam and Carlsen, 2016).



To implement a pro-poor tourism approach, it is imperative to overcome the challenges associated with the poor communities to be involved in tourism enterprises and required to create business linkages. However, tourism scholars have given inadequate consideration for supporting and linking micro and small enterprises with potential different economic sectors and the poor communities (Zhao, 2009, Zhao and Ritchie, 2007). Understanding all these, PPT consultants namely the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Department for International Development (DFID) and International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) are focusing on the aspects of the development and are backing to micro and small enterprises in tourism and developing linkages with other economic sectors, especially with agriculture and fisheries (Goodwin, 2005).

## **2.5 Role of Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) in PPT**

Micro and small tourism businesses are well known and accepted globally as a major contributor to economic development, job creation, innovation, income generation and tourism development (Agyapong, 2010, Akbaba, 2012). In the age of globalization, the role of tourism related to micro and small enterprises in poverty alleviation is significant (Scheyvens and Russell, 2012, Borden *et al.*, 2017). It is a fact that most of the visitors relying on the tourism enterprises preferably smaller business structure, in which this provides customized quality tourism services. Tourism centers have matured in developed nations as competition is rampant and the only precondition for growth of the industry is a larger destination where a large number of people is involved (Shankar, 2017). Thus, if micro and small enterprises of a region operate their businesses collectively in view of connecting the poor into their businesses, the comprehensive impact of such linkages could be substantial. In view of the description of PPT, most of the stakeholders from micro and small enterprises in the economy play a vital role in supporting the poor community. Hence, understanding the perceived benefits of micro and small enterprises involvement in pro-poor tourism in terms of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh is a meaningful project as the investigated phenomenon.

### 2.5.1 Definition of MSE

Micro and small enterprises (MSEs) can be defined in accordance to staff headcount and turnover or annual balance-sheet total, which significantly vary among countries based on the economic status (Brouder and Eriksson, 2013, Chowdhury *et al.*, 2013b, Cuervo and Cheong, 2017, Page *et al.*, 2017). Similarly, there are various measures that can be used in identifying the size of a tourism business, (i.e. number of employees, total salaries and wages paid in a certain time period, amount of capital, sales revenues, number of rooms/beds, provision of facilities such as conference, banqueting and restaurant halls and their capacities, existence of ancillary services such as swimming pool, car parking, shops, etc.); which can be listed as major bases for classification. Among them, the number of employees is the most widely accepted and used measure (Akbaba, 2012).

**Table 2. 5: MSE Definition**

Country/Region	Micro Enterprise (Service Industry)			Small Enterprise (Service Industry)			Citations
	Capital/Asset (Other than land and building)	No. of Employees	Turnover (Annual) US\$	Capital/Asset (Other than land and building)	No. of Employees	Turnover (Annual) US\$	
India	Not Mentioned	< 10	US\$1,550	Not Mentioned	≤ 50	US\$31,000	Chowdhury (2012)
Bangladesh	Less than US\$6,250	< 10	Not Mentioned	US\$6,250 to US\$125,000	10-49	Not Mentioned	Bangladesh Bank (2015) (* Central Bank of Bangladesh)
Malaysia	Not Mentioned	< 5	Less than US\$51,250	Not Mentioned	5-19	US\$51,250 to Less than US\$256,250	(Sajilan <i>et al.</i> (2016), Rashid <i>et al.</i> (2013))
European Union	Not Mentioned	<10	≤ US\$2,469,620	Not Mentioned	<50	≤ US\$12,348,100	European Union Commission. (2003)
World Bank /International Finance Corporation (IFC)	Not Mentioned	1-9	US\$100,000	Not Mentioned	10-49	Less than US\$3,000,000	(Kushnir <i>et al.</i> (2010), Hwang and Lockwood (2006))

**Source:** Author - Compiled for this study.

According to the Bangladesh Bank (Central Bank of Bangladesh), a micro enterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 10 persons, and whose operating

capital is below US\$ 6,250 excluding land and buildings. However, a small enterprise is one which employs less than 50 persons and whose capital other than land and buildings does not exceed US\$ 125,000 (Bangladesh Bank, 2015). There are several definitions of MSEs developed by different countries and international organizations as presented in Table 2.5. The definition of micro and small enterprises provided by the Bangladesh Bank (i.e. Central Bank of Bangladesh) has been adopted for this thesis as the study context is in Bangladesh. Moreover, the existing businesses in Bangladesh are completely followed by the rules and regulations of Bangladesh. In particular, this thesis explores the scope of the participation of the poor in tourism sector of Bangladesh through micro and small enterprises. Thus, it is indispensable to follow the provided definition of MSEs by the specific country that consolidate the meaningful clarification.

### **2.5.2 MSEs Involvement in Tourism in Bangladesh**

A widespread review of extant literature indicates that tourism can promote pro-poor economic growth by enhancing diversification of local economies and creating opportunities for the micro and small enterprises through offering customized services to the visitors at the destination such as food, crafts, and guide facilities (Ashley *et al.*, 2000, Zhao, 2009, Thomas *et al.*, 2011, Scheyvens and Russell, 2012, Martínez-Román *et al.*, 2015, Borden *et al.*, 2017). In the same way, tourism enterprises such as hotels and motels can offer a market for employment and products of the micro and small enterprises. Akbaba (2012) clarifies that the tourism industry comprises a variety of businesses that offer different services for tourists. It includes business such as transportation, accommodation, tour operators, travel agents, tourism promotion and advertisement, insurance and finance, food and beverage, entertainment, nature parks, zoos, special event organizer, translation and guiding services, trading, and so forth. Furthermore, tourism business includes the various functions that offer tourists with services such as accommodation (i.e.: homestays, budget hotels, boutique hotels) and catering sector; transportation; food and beverage; entertainment and other necessities (Sajilan *et al.*, 2016, Rashid *et al.*, 2013, Shankar, 2017). Considering all these, tourism business activities are clustered into four areas (Othman and Rosli,

2011)- food and accommodation services, retail and souvenir, travel agent, transport and tour guide, and other services demanded by the visitors (Sajilan *et al.*, 2016).

Tourism enterprises are generally managed by their proprietors, frequently married couples, by the term 'copreneurs' to exhibit the type of family business (Rashid *et al.*, 2013, Sajilan *et al.*, 2016, Morrison, 2002). In general, the owner of a tourism related MSE in Bangladesh, has total control of the business in terms of decision making and implementation regarding firm's activities. A small tourism business at Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh usually provides employment for local people, inspires economic diversity and constancy, propel progression of the region and aid in enhancing the social advancement through contributing in poverty alleviation (Islam, 2012). Hence, it is more beneficial for local suppliers in the tourism industry when formal tourism enterprises are wholly owned by the local people. This is because there is a higher likelihood of the purchase of local supplies and eventually enhances in participation of the poor (Shah and Gupta, 2000, Briedenhann, 2011, Bakker and Messerli, 2017, Saito *et al.*, 2017). However, the tendency of female participation in tourism MSEs in Bangladesh is very limited due to prevailing social aspects in terms of their legal rights, education, economic independency, empowerment, equality, age at marriage, health, and fertility, as well as the roles she plays in her family and society (Islam and Carlsen, 2016, Qamruzzaman, 2015, Paul *et al.*, 2016). Besides, the poor community's participation in tourism MSEs in Bangladesh is often viewed as a challenge to them as there is limited infrastructural access and high cost of living at these destinations (Islam and Carlsen, 2012). Therefore, it is crucial to understand the inevitable role played by tourism destination stakeholders e.g., government, investor, tourist, local community, NGO. to effectively overcome those challenges faced by the poor inhabitants to participate in tourism MSEs in view of PPT enhancement.

## **2.6 Role of Tourism Destination Stakeholder in PPT**

This study aims to explore the perceived benefits of tourism MSEs to the poor local communities in ensuring PPT approach at Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. To ensure PPT approach in the tourism destination, it is obvious to get conducive support from different tourism destination stakeholders. It is evident that the main goal of the PPT

strategy is to enhance net benefits for the poor through engaging the poor into tourism related activities (Yu *et al.*, 2019). The role of destination stakeholders is regarded as crucial to develop tourism enterprises so that the poor communities can be involved and yield benefits (Zeng, 2018). Prior studies focused on the influence of the stakeholders in tourism destination branding, destination marketing, development of both rural and urban destination competitiveness and rural poverty alleviation (Islam, 2012, Ryan *et al.*, 2012, Komppula, 2014). In this context, this study intends to focus on the tourism stakeholders' support for micro and small enterprises to implement pro-poor tourism initiative at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination as one of the study's specific objectives.

### **2.6.1 Stakeholder Theory**

The stakeholder theory is used as the underpinning theory in this study. In 1960s, Stanford Research Institute (SRI) introduced the word 'stakeholder' as a concept and offered that a firm or an organization should be liable for both of its stockholders and stakeholders considering their support for sustaining an organization in a long run view point (Stoney and Winstanley, 2001). Afterwards, in 1984, Richard Edward Freeman developed the stakeholder theory and defined it as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of an organization's objectives" (Freeman, 1984, p. 46). Consequently, every legitimate person or a group participating in the activities of a firm to obtain benefits is considered a stakeholder. Explicitly or implicitly, the stakeholder theory has been accepted in the extant literature on the basis of three aspects i.e. descriptive, instrumental, and normative (Donaldson and Preston, 1995). Although these three approaches of the stakeholder theory are correlated but distinctive in terms of various types of evidence, argument and implications. Descriptive validations endeavor to display that the concepts embedded in the theory link to pragmatic realism. Meanwhile, instrumental explanations attempt to justify the link between stakeholder administration and business performance. Lastly, normative justifications demand to fundamental thoughts such as micro or macro rights, social agreement or the best action or decision in a particular situation is the one which brings most advantages to the most people.

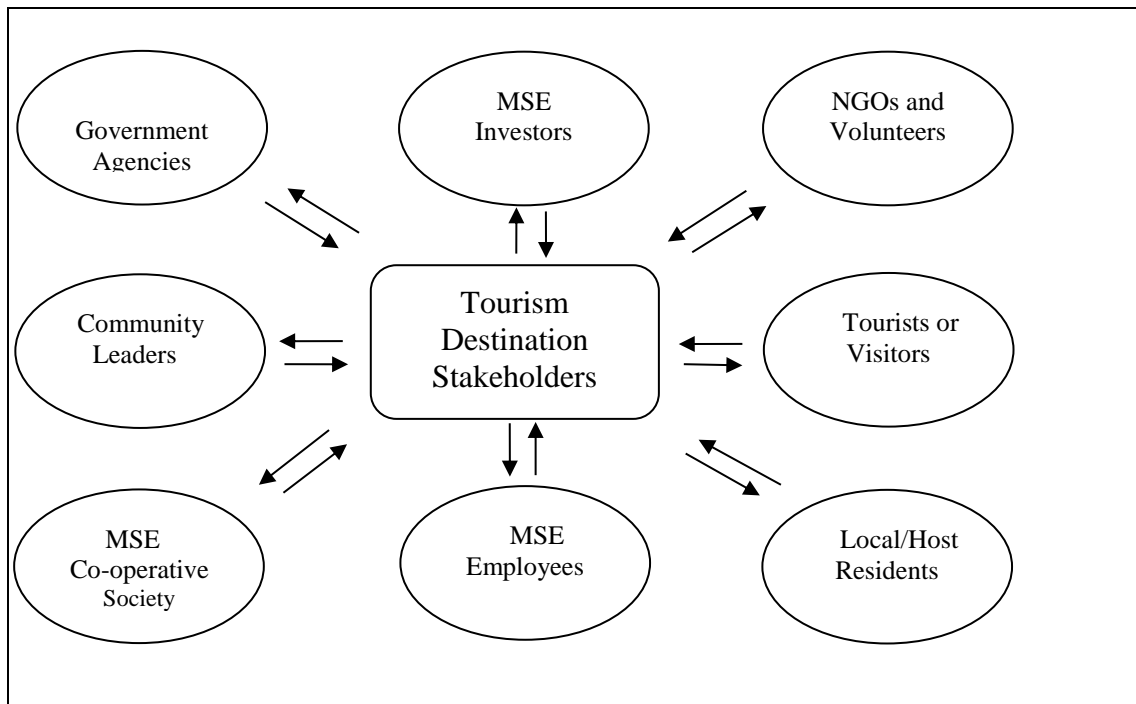
In this study, the implications of normative approach have been reflected as it is concerned with the welfare of the society as a whole. The existence of diverse stakeholders is a common phenomenon in tourism sector and Bangladesh as the context of this study is not exception from this point of view. In poverty alleviation through tourism development the key stakeholders may include government agencies, NGOs and volunteers, community leaders, MSE investors, MSE employees, MSE co-operative society, local residents, and tourists. These stakeholders can have considerable role in tourism development by ensuring poor community involvement (Simpson, 2008).

Academics have recognized the role of the key stakeholders for tourism development and poverty alleviation through capitalizing the benefits of tourism (Zhao, 2009, Zhao and Ritchie, 2007, Hummel and van der Duim, 2012, Sharpley and Naidoo, 2010, Shah and Gupta, 2000). Based on the extant literature relating to sustainable tourism development four different groups are recognized; the current visitors, imminent visitors, existing host community, and imminent host community (Kruja and Hasaj, 2010, Zeng and Ryan, 2012, Zeng, 2018). The host community can be further categorized into residents, business owners, and government officials. All stakeholders engaged in tourism development have different roles, for different motives, and assume their benefits in tourism to be rewarded. Directly or indirectly, these stakeholders can support in tourism development considering pro-poor tourism implementation (Khazaei *et al.*, 2015). The management view of the stakeholder theory indicates that all stakeholder groups should be involved in the entire tourism development process (Kruja and Hasaj, 2010, Khazaei *et al.*, 2015, Ghasemi and Hamzah, 2014). However, all stakeholders do not need to be involved equally in the decision-making process, but it does require that all interests are well identified and understood (Donaldson and Preston, 1995).

In order to extend tourism development benefits to the poor community living under extreme poverty it is necessary that the government agencies, community leaders, NGOs, tourists and local communities consider the rural poor as their stakeholder (Islam and Carlsen, 2016). Particularly, government agencies' consideration for the

extreme poor community as stakeholders is extremely important as they are the major power that energizes tourism development (Ghasemi and Hamzah, 2014, Fletcher *et al.*, 2016). Basically, government agencies are the vital stakeholder to patron the tourism expansion in terms of infrastructural, legal and administrative support in the view point of creating opportunity for the poor community (Yu *et al.*, 2019, Espiner *et al.*, 2017). Similarly, NGOs and volunteers are engaging to boost up the capacity of the poor communities through providing various training programs and micro credit for the productive purpose (Ahmed, 2018, Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018). Meanwhile, the community leaders work for the local community's welfare through creating awareness on tourism significance for their livelihood (Islam and Carlsen, 2016). MSE owners or investors contributes in tourism development through incorporating local employees and local supplies for their businesses (Mao *et al.*, 2013, Rogerson, 2006). On the other hand, the MSE cooperative society endeavor to keep business environment favorable to them through making liaison with different tourism stakeholders (Yang and Hung, 2014). Eventually, the tourists' helping attitudes towards the poor communities through purchasing different types of indigenous products or services offered by the poor local community at the destination (Hasan *et al.*, 2019b, Mamun *et al.*, 2013, Cuervo and Cheong, 2017). Hence, the comprehensive effort of the key stakeholders is highly appreciated for the tourism MSEs to ensure PPT approach.

Similarly, the stakeholder theory is important in tourism destination in view of identifying the roles of individuals or groups that are likely to be affected by tourism MSEs' involvement in PPT. The stakeholder theory is adopted in this study as it is relevant in providing answers to the study's research questions. Stakeholder theory has been applied in previous tourism studies for understanding key parties involved in tourism destination development. For example, Quinlan (2008) adopted the stakeholder theory to study the branding of urban destinations and Islam (2012) also used stakeholder theory for investigating into the relationship between tourism enterprises development and poverty alleviation. In identifying the components of stakeholders, this study adapted the stakeholder map developed by Freeman (1984); Donaldson and Preston (1995); Quinlan (2008) and Nair *et al.* (2015) as presented in Figure 2.2.



**Figure 2. 2: Tourism Destination Stakeholders' Map.**  
 Adapted from Freeman (1984); Donaldson and Preston (1995); Quinlan (2008);  
 Nair *et al.* (2015)

## 2.7 Proposed Conceptual Framework

This section presents a unified research framework underlining the PPT strategy from Ashley *et al.* (2001b) as the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT. This framework represents the link between the tourism MSEs and PPT considering the tourism destination stakeholders' support and the challenges exist for the local poor community as well as the MSEs involvement in the PPT initiative (See Figure 2.3). Besides, this framework places the poverty reduction notion from the destination through tourism related MSEs as the foremost intention that is consistent with the PPT implementation, which is fundamental for the basis of the emerging thesis topic. In tourism destination, MSEs are very common which offers customized services and products to the tourists in a number of ways (Tao, 2018, Agyapong, 2010). Basically, these MSEs are operated and owned by the local community who can easily find their



livelihoods through this type of businesses (Muhanna, 2007, Mao *et al.*, 2013, Cuervo and Cheong, 2017, Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018). Based on the extant literature, there are three main perceived benefits that have been recognised i.e., economic benefits, non-economic benefits and creating partnership and participation benefits (Ashley *et al.*, 2001a) of the PPT strategies that can be attained through tourism MSEs. In this research, how these benefits work for the MSEs involvement by the local poor communities will be revealed in confirming the PPT approach which is supposed to unlock opportunities for the poor.

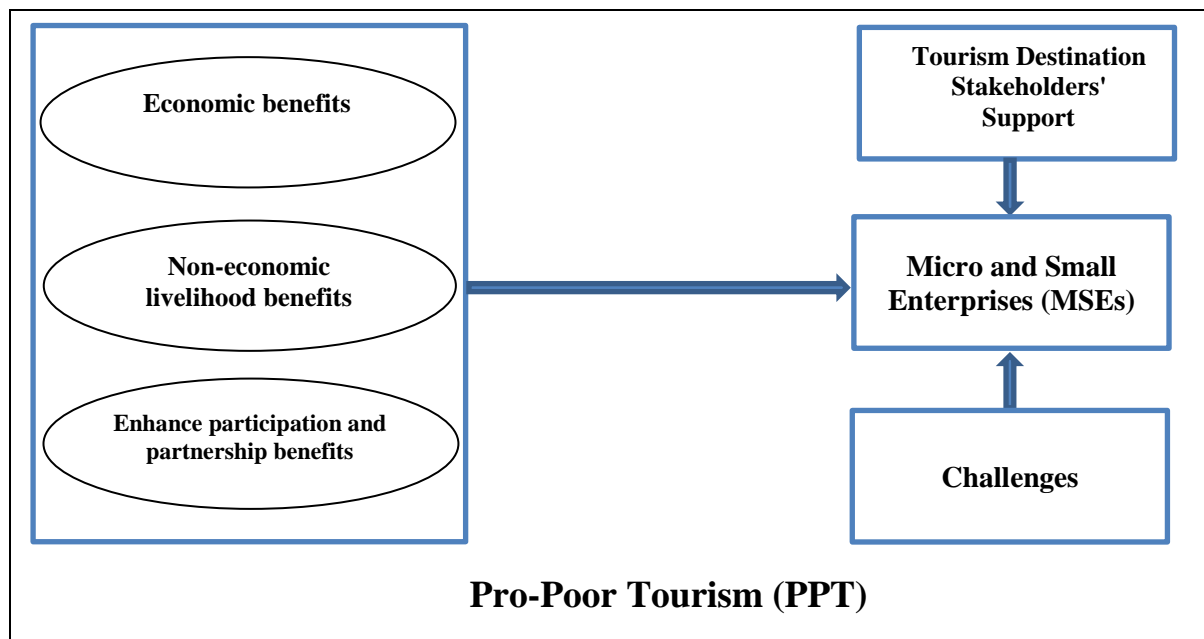
*Economic benefit* is regarded as an important objective of any development initiative which is a crucial part for the PPT initiative and a major considerable force for the tourism MSEs. In fact, the local poor community involved in a tourism business considering the perceived economic benefits. These economic benefits include boost in local employment and wages, local enterprise opportunities, create collective income sources-fees, and revenue shares (Ashley *et al.*, 2001b, Briedenhann, 2011, Bakker and Messerli, 2017). Overall, these benefits open the opportunity for poor people who are enthusiastic to be a part of the tourism MSEs as well as in the PPT initiative.

*Non-economic livelihood benefit* is regarded as the human resource development alongside with environmental sustainability of the destination as a vital attention in PPT initiative. Development of entrepreneurial skill (Zeng, 2018) of the poor is crucial for the PPT approach which is possible through tourism MSEs at the destinations. These non-economic benefits include capacity building and training, mitigate environmental impacts, address competing use of natural resources, improve social, cultural impacts, increase local access to infrastructure and services (Ashley *et al.*, 2001b, Goodwin, 2005, Tolkach *et al.*, 2012).

*Enhance participation and partnership benefit* is regarded as evaluation of the views of the poor community which is contributory to the policy reform. PPT is supposed to be focused on creating liaison among the poor local community and other destination stakeholders in view of ensuring the participation of the poor in all aspects. Here, MSEs in tourism might play a pivotal role for the inclusion of the local community that can allow them to participate in decision making opportunities relating to their

interest which concerns tourism (Rogerson, 2006, Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018, Pongponrat, 2011). The considerable benefits derived under this section are such as creating more supportive policy/planning framework, increase participation of the poor in decision-making, build pro-poor partnerships with private sector, increase flow of information and communication (Ashley *et al.*, 2001a, Islam, 2012).

These three driving forces are conceptualized to develop a framework for this thesis as presented in Figure 2.3 which is the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT considering the challenges faced by the tourism MSEs and the poor. The literature indicates that a series of obstacles exists in initiating a tourism enterprise at the tourism destination which is equally deterrent for PPT initiative. Consequently, to implement a pro-poor tourism approach, it is instrumental to seek tourism destination stakeholders' support (Ghasemi and Hamzah, 2014, Shah and Gupta, 2000) for both the MSEs perspective and the PPT implementation viewpoints.



**Figure 2. 3: Proposed Conceptual Framework for MSEs involvement in PPT**

The destination stakeholders' (See Figure 2.2) are supposed to mitigate the originated challenges (Briedenhann, 2011, Othman and Rosli, 2011, Chowdhury *et al.*, 2013a, Page *et al.*, 2017) in this regard and make strategies in such a way that might suave the path of PPT execution. The conceptual framework for this thesis conveys a theoretical background as a beach tourism destination stakeholder's map and structure

for analyzing the impacts of the tourism MSEs on the poor local community in ensuring the PPT approach and answering the research questions. Eventually, the contributions of MSEs in tourism towards the local poor community might fulfill the objective of the PPT approach.

## **2.8 Chapter Summary**

In summary, this chapter has presented the relevant literature aligning three research questions of the study. It also includes the insights into the tourism MSEs, poverty and PPT approach, leading to recognize the research gaps. Besides, this chapter has presented an understanding about the stakeholders' theory underpinned in the thesis and shown the destination stakeholders' map considered for this thesis. Moreover, this research targets to contribute in the tourism stakeholder literature by identifying destination stakeholder and supporting the strategies for MSEs involvement in PPT approach in the context of Cox's Bazar. The next chapter will outline the methodology for this thesis in answering the research questions in particular.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Chapter Overview

In the preceding chapter of this thesis, pertinent literature to this study was reviewed for finding the research gaps and conceptual framework has been developed in addressing the research questions. This chapter outlines the overall methodological philosophy alignment with the thesis objectives and research questions of this thesis. It elucidates the reason in opting for case study in qualitative research for this study and outlines the research design as well. This chapter highlights the techniques adopted for gaining access to the participants, sampling methods, data collection techniques and data analysis methods. Finally, this chapter ends with an appraisal of validity and reliability, ethical perspectives, limitations of the case study method and summary of the chapter.

#### 3.2 Understanding Research Philosophies

Each researcher must commence research with a clear understanding of philosophical phenomenon which underlies behind all studies. Proper knowledge and awareness of the research philosophy is a key step towards research process. Basically two reasons justify the essence of knowledge about the research philosophy (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002). Firstly, the research philosophy aids in illuminating the research strategy. The research strategy includes the categories of data to be collected, the method of collection and processing and the possible interpretation of the results. Secondly, it is evident that conscious consideration of research philosophy can facilitate in averting the inappropriate selection of methodologies that might improve the quality of work. According to Morgan and Smircich (1980), in the social sciences research, methodologies part for a particular research project is designed by the researcher's own underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions. Din and Mapjabi (2010) mentioned that a good understanding of philosophical assumptions in research such as ontology and epistemology are essential.

Ontology concerns how the researcher view the features of multiple social reality and human beings (Riley and Love, 2000). There are two views that dominate in ontology assumption i.e. objectivism versus subjectivism (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Notably, epistemological standpoint of the researchers and their research methods are influenced by these two viewpoints of ontological assumption. An objectivist views social reality as administered by stable regulations that considers the community behavior as visible realities and quantifiable relationships (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). Thus, the objectivist assumptions focus on the quantitative analysis of the investigated phenomenon (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

However, a subjectivist views social reality as generated from insights which result from actions of social actors, and considers these as very much subjective, ever-changing, and multiple in nature (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). In view of producing information through interactive sessions, it is important to understand the subjective awareness from the 'inside' of the social actors as it underlies the individual's self-understanding (Schwandt, 2000). Such information may institute multiple realities structured within a framework of collective understandings, practices, language, and so forth. Hence subjectivists often use epistemology of interpretivism that strains the prominence of understanding on how people make true their affiliation to their surroundings. Therefore, the subjectivist's standpoint involves the acceptance of a qualitative method to research (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). According to Cunliffe (2011), research methods employed in the subjectivist stance includes unstructured or semi-structured interviews, observation of the participant, and narrative analysis.

Different types of philosophical approaches are used on positivism-interpretivism continuum as a means to expand knowledge. For instance, post-positivism, interpretivism, constructivism and critical realism are frequently accepted approaches in PPT research (Tao, 2018, Espiner *et al.*, 2017, King and Dinkoksung, 2014). Particularly, this research adopted the interpretivism paradigm on a positivism-interpretivism continuum. The researcher strongly believed that the research is attached with norms, values, and beliefs in which researcher needs to be immersed with the objective of the study where findings of the study will be subjective (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). In this research, as MSEs in tourism is beach tourism

destination oriented, both the investigator's and participants' knowledge are contextual, realistic, and unique, including a number of tourism destination stakeholders. Notably, how the perceived benefits of tourism MSEs involvement in PPT initiative is subjective in nature where the interrelationships of the stakeholders that exist in this destination is crucial. Subsequent section will provide more account of the selected research approach for this study.

### **3.3 Rationale for Interpretivist Paradigm**

In social science research, approaches widely used are namely positivism, pragmatism, interpretivism and constructivism (Strang, 2015, Tao, 2018, Mao, 2015). The interpretivist paradigm appears to support the analysis of the investigated phenomenon considering the contingent feature of the pro-poor tourism and micro and small tourism enterprises at the destination (Tao, 2018, Bakker and Messerli, 2017). An interpretivist assumes that individuals creates implications towards certain objects in which this might differ from one to another because of one's belief, culture, value, religion, background, and education. Interpretivists believe in meaningful human action with intentional content which completely relies on the context (Schwandt, 2000). The interpretive paradigm in the social sciences research “assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and subject create understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures” (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, pp. 13-14). The research process is very much subjective rather than objective where data is being collected from an insider's perspective from their real world or natural setting (Jennings, 2001). Notably, the researcher believes in multiple realities of findings rather than one specific answer of either yes or no; agree or disagree. Thus, the positivist views may constrain the understanding of the contextual knowledge underpinned in tourism destination stakeholders' who are associated with MSEs and their urge in advancing the PPT initiative as it looking for stable benefits for the poor (Tao, 2018).

This study has been carried out in Bangladesh, Cox's Bazar, thus a qualitative and interpretive means of investigation has been adopted as the most suitable approach for revealing tourism MSEs' involvement in PPT initiative within the Cox's Bazar's rich diversified cultural setting, while offering the required insights and understanding to

the study (Patton, 2002). The context of the study has already been exemplified in Chapter 1, section 1.3. As a study context displaying such unique and diversified cultural and social setting, an interpretivist view and a case study research design was believed to be most appropriate for investigating the subjective social world of beach tourism destination stakeholders in Bangladesh and the significance of MSEs participants' involvement in PPT (Mao, 2015, Tolkach *et al.*, 2012, Manwa and Manwa, 2014, Briedenhann, 2011, Brouder and Eriksson, 2013). Consequently, this study attempts to understand the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh, challenges faced by the poor to be involved in this industry and the supporting role of stakeholders to overcome the constraints which are subjected to multiple interpretations. The next section will explain the case study research design and present justification for using Bangladesh as a case study.

### **3.4 Case Study Research**

A case study research includes “intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units ... observed at a single point in time or over some delimited period of time” (Gerring, 2004, p. 342). Likewise, Jennings (2001) mentioned some inevitable bright sides of the case study as in-depth data is collected, evidence is underlying in the social setting being investigated where it is applied the methodological triangulation. In addition, Merriam and Tisdell (2015) revealed distinctive features of research case study as 'particularistic' which focuses on specific phenomenon or situation; 'descriptive' which focuses on explanation of the phenomenon; and 'heuristic' which focuses on revealing the reader's understanding of the phenomenon. Thus, it provides a great chance for the researcher to obtain a deep holistic view of the research problem at hand that might enable describing, understanding and clarifying the circumstance of the research problem (Baxter and Jack, 2008, Baskarada, 2014).

The case study that has been chosen as the research approach for this study is used widely in tourism research and education (Beeton, 2005, Page *et al.*, 2017, Phillips and House, 2009, Tahir *et al.*, 2016, Mao, 2015). A case study is an empirical inquiry which explores a "contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context"

(Yin, 2009, p. 18). This research method provides the researcher with a deep understanding about the research problem (Baskarada, 2014) and relies on multiple sources of evidence (Beeton, 2005). According to the case study, relevant questions are asked with addressing the 'what' and 'how' in this thesis in exploring the social realities at Cox's Bazar. Underpinning research questions for this study have been specified in section 1.5 of Chapter 1. The unit of analysis or what instituted the 'case' (Yin, 2003) in this study is the beach tourism MSEs relationships with the destination stakeholders in advancing the PPT initiative.

Case study approach is well-matched with the study context of the Cox's Bazar beach destination, where local micro and small enterprises holders in tourism are keen to share their views and knowledge in terms of perceived benefits of MSEs, their challenges regarding livelihoods and destination stakeholders supporting pattern. The study context has been illustrated broadly in Chapter 1, Section 1.3 of this thesis. The local community members are also concerned about poverty and tourism impact in this destination which is very crucial for getting response from them. Notably, the micro and small business owners are highly attached with the knowledge of the researcher as a frequent visitor, it is noteworthy to capture the information of this study. Therefore, the researcher considers a qualitative case study approach for this research which enables a better outline of the views of the participants and their statements more vividly rather than presenting as statistical implication.

### **3.4.1 Justification for Bangladesh as a Case Study Context**

According to Curry *et al.* (2009), case study is significantly useful when looking for new insights from the investigated phenomenon. A single-case study can be considered suitable where it is characterized as unique or rare, critical, or typical in nature (Yin, 2012). It allows the researcher to examine the investigated phenomenon deeply to draw rich insights and meaningful understanding (Walsham, 1995). Case study method is deemed to be valuable in tourism research and considered as a legitimate methodological tool for a number of reasons as it can demonstrate the complexities of a situation by identifying the contributing factors, allowing the



readers to apply to their situation, utilizing information from various sources, presenting information in a variety of ways, and stating the general problem through examination of a specific example and so on (Beeton, 2005).

Bangladesh is unique as a case to study PPT for a number of factors. Firstly, more than 80% people are living in the rural areas that are well behind the society in the prevalence of poor socio-economic conditions. Secondly, the overall poverty line is visible where one fourth of people are living under poverty and it is near to about 32% in the rural areas (BBS, 2017, Ministry of Finance Bangladesh, 2017). Thirdly, Bangladesh has competitive potentials in tourism sector to create employment opportunity in a massive way for the poor people through tourism business. Moreover, Bangladesh is a country of diversified cultures and traditions that can be displayed through tourism enterprises to the tourists, both domestic and international. As PPT regards with creating benefits for the poor local community through tourism activities, tourism MSEs is vital for contributing PPT enhancement. In addition, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is no published research work on the MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh's perspective. This research could consequently serve as a pioneer study and lead to PPT enhancement in Bangladesh via MSEs in tourism. Hence, Bangladesh is a unique case study to PPT initiative through the tourism MSEs involvement where a range of tourism destination stakeholders are being affected for tourism.

The interviews for this case study have been conducted at particular locations of the beach destination of Cox's Bazar such as Kolatoli point, Sugandha point, Laboni point and Inani point of the beach. There are several reasons behind the selection of the beach points at Cox's Bazar Beach. First, these are the most popular points where tourists are enthusiastic to enjoy sunbathing and waves of the sea. Second, most of the shopping malls and food outlets are available in these areas where tourists can access easily. Third, the micro and small enterprises offer their products and services in the said areas. Moreover, most of the entertainment and amusement facilities are available here, thus serves as attraction points. In addition, the communication system is available for the visitors compared to other points of the beach. Therefore, considering all these aspects, the researcher believes that a qualitative case study

approach is deemed to suitable for this research in the context of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh where tourism stakeholders are enthusiastic to share their views and experience in terms of tourism.

### **3.5 Case Study Protocol**

According to Yin (2009), case study protocol is considered as dominant instrument in terms of designing and applying case study research. This will provide an overview of the study, the field setting procedures, interview questions and direction for preparing case study report (Yin, 2009). It might benefit the study in two significant ways. First, case study protocol allows the researcher in terms of data collection procedures and requirements in advance. Second, the case study protocol is significant for providing direction, flexibility considering the requirements for investigation, and reliability of the thesis outcomes (Perry, 1998). According to Patton (2002) interview is required for collecting data when it is difficult to observe the participants directly where the desired things exists on their mind. Interviewing people allows the researcher to explore their perspective intensely.

A wide range of data was collected through using secondary sources such as tourism websites, government archives and reports, newspapers, MSEs leaflets. Field visits at the destination were made which allows the researcher to observe the MSEs stakeholders behavior and functioning (Yin, 2012). Informal data collection also happened through talking with the tourism MSEs stakeholders in a casual mode at the destination to ensure additional evidence. The diverse evidence of data collection process provides comprehensive and clear understanding about the investigated phenomenon and improves the reliability of case studies (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007, Yin, 2012, Beeton, 2005).

#### **3.5.1 In-depth Interview**

In this study, semi-structured in-depth interview was the basis for collecting qualitative data from the destination stakeholders relating to MSEs in tourism at Cox's Bazar beach. In-depth interview was the preferred data collection method for the current research. Due to the existing gap in the literature and paucity of

knowledge on the study region, in-depth interview method has been considered as suitable to obtain insightful data on this study (Johnson, 2002). According to Johnson (2002), in-depth interviews require a greater involvement of the interviewer that yields the most crucial insights on the phenomenon being studied. In-depth interview allows the researcher to explore, illuminate and to develop thoughts under the study. It is a method to seek "deeper" understanding of the investigated phenomenon by using knowledge, experience, and values of individuals. The investigator can achieve insights from the participants' elucidations regarding the issue through in-depth interview which is very meaningful in qualitative research (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In addition, in-depth interview method mainly focuses on participants' perspective and this helps in developing the desired topic issues better (Hwang and Lockwood, 2006, Yang and Hung, 2014).

There are several reasons for choosing in-depth interviews as means of collecting data in this case study research. First, it offers the researcher understanding towards the participants' world views, their perceptions, beliefs, norms, and feeling through casual conversation (Rossman and Rallis, 2012). Second, to explore the perspectives of the participants' in-depth interview is effective as it allows the researcher to communicate personally with the participants (Maureira and Stenbacka, 2015). Another reason for selecting in-depth interviews is because it provides the researcher with more flexibility due to interactive discussion that is either unstructured or semi-structured in nature. Moreover, through in-depth interviews, the participants' can reply freely and openly to the questions and the investigators can ask further questions based on the previous answer provided (Legard *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, follow-up questions can be asked through employing this method of data collection owing to the open-ended nature of the in-depth interviews. Similarly, there is a specific logic for choosing semi-structured interview for this thesis. Since, semi-structured interviews possess a 'non-standardized' set of questions, the investigator has the opportunity to transform the format of asking questions to provoke in-depth information (Gray, 2014).

### 3.5.2 Procedure for Designing Interview Questions and Pre-Test

The procedure for designing the interview questions were structured around the PPT strategies provided by Ashley *et al.* (2001a). This is because according to these scholars, the PPT strategies can extensively be characterized under economic benefits, non-economic benefits and participation benefits. Questions on the challenges faced by the poor local community to be involved in tourism MSEs were included in the interviews. Moreover, questions on supporting role of destination stakeholders linked with tourism MSEs were also included in the interviews for better understanding of the investigated phenomenon. Thus, the answers of these questions served as guidance to overcome the challenges of poor community to be involved in tourism MSEs in view of implementation of PPT initiative in this destination.

In this case study research, the semi-structured research questions were developed on the basis of research gaps which are illustrated in the conceptual research framework of the thesis in Chapter 2, Section 2.9. Six relevant questions were developed in attaining the main aim of this research (see Appendix 3). After the interview questions were developed, pre-testing interview for this research was conducted before the final data collection. The prime purpose of the pre-test interview was to verify the research questions whether it provides clear understanding to the participants or not. Besides, in enabling the researcher's capacity to conduct in-depth interviews and familiarizing themselves with the process of an interview, the pre-testing is noteworthy (Yin, 2012). Interview guide (see Appendix 4) was developed through segmenting the research questionnaire in three parts: (a) ice breaker (warm-up) section (b) Transition (key questions), and (c) Closing key components.

In pre-testing the questionnaire, a total of four interviews were conducted which were steered in accordance to the interview guidelines and protocols, maintained by audio recording as well. It was organized by four Bangladeshi students who are studying here in Curtin University, Malaysia (PhD and MPhil Fellows) and had knowledge about Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination as well. Importantly, two of the pre-testing participants are doing research on tourism perspectives which indicates their knowledge concerning the questions. Every participant was provided a consent form

to fill up prior to commencing the interview and permission was taken to use audio recorder to record the conversation. Notably, the researcher was well trained by the supervisor of this thesis through a mock in-depth interview session before arranging the pre-testing sessions with the participants. The main purpose of the mock interview session was to provide understanding to the related tactics and the ways of steering an in-depth interview. It was also recorded by using a digital tape recorder.

After conducting the pre-test, some areas were identified for improvements in order to improve clarity for the participants. Consequently, the ice-breaking part of the questionnaire is abridged by three sections such as (a) establishing rapport with participants (b) informing the purpose of the study in brief and (c) interview time. In the transition part of the interview, several changes occurred as the researcher found that the participants are not natural in understanding two questions. For example, interview question no 1(c) and 3(b) were as follow:

*1. (c) What is the role of MSEs in PPT initiative at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination?*

*3. (b) Do you think the involvement of local community in MSEs will reduce the level of poverty among the tourism MSE operators? How?*

While answering question number 1(c), most of the pre-test participants could not understand properly and they meant that the existing contributions of MSEs in PPT initiative at Cox's Bazar. In getting significant outcomes from the field study, it was not standard as per the researcher that can contribute in this study. Therefore, on the basis of conversation held among the researcher and the supervisors, question pattern was changed and turned into the abridged question as below which made more sense and is consistent to the study:

*1. (c) What do you think should be the role of MSEs in PPT initiative at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination?*

Likewise, at the time of answering question 3(b), participants only mentioned the status of themselves those who are operating tourism MSEs which indicates very limited extent of expressions. Meanwhile, the researcher noticed the limitation of the

question and discussed with the supervisors in view of making comprehensive view point and subsequently, overturned the question as below which indicates overall impact for the community:

*3. (b) Do you think the involvement of local community in MSEs will reduce the level of poverty among the members of local community at Cox's Bazar beach? If yes, how?*

Therefore, after conducting the pre-test interviews, significant changes in the questionnaire have been made for the final data collection of this study. Moreover, the formation of the questionnaire was shifted from an academic style to a layman's style to ensure participants' understanding.

### **3.5.3 Ensuring Validity and Reliability**

In empirical inquiry of this nature, the issue of validity and reliability are very important. In-depth interviews are valid if they are applied to address the issue that is relevant for interview enquiry (Puvanesvary *et al.*, 2011). In this thesis, researcher considerably reduced the number of bias that may emanate from the in-depth interviews. These biases include asking leading questions, issues of religion, race and social-economic class of the participants. In order to prevent these biases, this study followed the recommendations of Cohen *et al.* (1994), that in-depth interviews questions must be carefully designed. Notably, the interviewer or the researcher have to be trained on the procedures involved in in-depth interview data collection. It should be noted that the researcher was well trained. The researcher attended qualitative research workshop organised by the Faculty of Business for the higher degree by research (HDR) students. In addition, prior to actual in-depth interviews data collection, the supervisors of this thesis also trained the researcher on how to conduct in-depth interviews through a mock interview session as presented in Section 3.5.2. More importantly, the interview questions went through several rounds of reviews from the research's supervisors in April 2018. The in-depth interviews were digitally recorded as suggested by Rasmussen *et al.* (2006).

### 3.5.4 Participant Sampling

Sampling is an important stage in research which is needed to select and provide access to the sources of data of the phenomenon being studied (Minichiello *et al.*, 2008). Purposive sampling is one of the non-probability sampling techniques and was chosen for this study because the researcher's objective is to select participants who are knowledgeable to provide answers to the research questions (Creswell, 2009). The main reason behind choosing purposeful sampling for this case study research is to reach and encourage potential research participants to take part in the in-depth interview session. Moreover, this type of sampling technique ensures the representativeness of vital informants to elicit typical significant aspects of relevant issues (Gray, 2014).

The potential interview participants were selected based on their involvement in tourism businesses at this destination. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), a criterion setting for purposeful sampling helps to identify information-rich case or cases which directly reflect the study objective. In this study, selection of interview participants using the criteria involved: (1) tourism MSE that is registered under Cox's Bazar district administrator's office; (2) tourism MSE that is demonstrating the local traditional culture, values and selling locally produced products; (3) tourism MSE operating business for at least five years to be considered prominent; (4) tourism MSE employed people from local poor community; (5) tourism MSE which is not focused on imported products; (6) tourism MSE that is established in the beach destination and involves interest of different stakeholders. Mostly, in-depth interview participants were tourism MSE operators involved at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination in Bangladesh. Other participants include key stakeholders who support and/or are affected by the MSEs involvement in PPT. These include local residents, tourists, community leaders, tourism volunteers, government agencies responsible for tourism at Cox's Bazar and NGOs.

Snowball sampling, a type of purposeful sampling technique has been applied in this study as the researcher was unfamiliar with the participants prior undertaking this research. The information is collected in such a way that helps in selection of next samples too and because of this nature it is also known as chain sampling (Patton,

2002, Minichiello *et al.*, 2008). In addition, snowball sampling is a tactic to engage a cohort of informers whom the investigator initially contacted and has asked them to recommend others who are knowledgeable in this regard and fits with the research criteria. Furthermore, it is very effective as it covers the potential informants by requesting the interviewees to recommend other persons or institutions. Notably, it is appropriate when the researcher has limited knowledge about the setting. The interviewees were requested by asking ‘*Could you please recommend the name(s) of any other individuals who can contribute to this study*’. This question facilitates the investigator immensely in finding knowledgeable participants for the study.

In qualitative research, the size of sample varies as per the research topic and scope where it ranges between 11 participants (Hardy, 1985) and 45 participants (Mehmetoglu and Altinay, 2006). Meanwhile, Creswell (2013) suggests a range from 20 participants to 60 participants as sample size in qualitative research. However, the number of participants in this study is determined by data saturation (Yang and Hung, 2014) when neither new theoretical insights nor new facts of research issues is produced (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, Corbin and Strauss, 2008, Matteucci and Gnoth, 2017). In fact, in this study, sample size was not anticipated as the researcher depended on the participants' feedback relating to the theoretical saturation point which is supposed to fix the sample size. In qualitative study, addressing the idea of personal lens, the researcher is treated as the fundamental data collection instrument and cannot detach themselves from the study (Jackson, 1990).

Eventually, the researcher found the data saturation point after conducting 22 in-depth interviews. However, to make sure the data saturation points in this study, after a long discussion with supervisors, the researcher decided to continue for few more interviews. The researcher conducted another 3 in-depth interviews where similar outcomes remained as earlier and decided to stop with 25 in-depth interviews upon agreeing with supervisors of the study.



### **3.5.5 Data Collection Stages**

#### **3.5.5.1 Gain Access**

In order to gain access to the investigation of the studied destination; it is required to have permission from the tourist police office and the municipal commissioner of Cox's Bazar as they are responsible to manage the overall system of tourism relating to beach. In particular, before starting data collection, it is beneficial to build trust to the interview participants in order to obtain reliable information by getting approval from the concerned authorities who are well known to the research participants (Minichiello *et al.*, 2008, Johnson, 2002). It is a fact, the underpinning theories which inspired the researcher to conduct interview in a natural setting of beach tourism based on the local people who are involved in tourism activities for their livelihood. In this study, the poor community who is involved in micro and small tourism enterprises are considered as the most relevant participants in context of Bangladesh. The poor in the underprivileged locations in terms of standard of living enhancement makes sense for the pro-poor tourism establishment. As MSE owners and employees are related to other stakeholders such as community leaders, co-operative society, government agencies, NGOs, the researcher was aware of the requirement of getting permission from concerned authorities.

In consistent with this requirement, the researcher primarily communicated with the Director of Bangladesh Tourism Board who is the concerned authority that plans and develops of tourism sector of Bangladesh and obtained important information to lead the field study. After that, the researcher contacted the chairman of Cox's Bazar Development Authority (CoxDA) who is responsible for the welfare of the area and obtained permission to conduct in-depth interviews. Besides, the researcher got permission from police commissioner of Cox's Bazar region considering the safety and security during the data collection to avoid unexpected events. In fact, such access was approved and granted as introductory letters were forwarded to the head of the organization stating the goal of this research and the ways of conducting the field study along with the proper identity of the researcher and the respective supervisors.

Meanwhile, the researcher also sent formal letters mentioning the aim of the study to obtain approval from the authorities and before arranging interviews, each participant was contacted via mobile phone at least one day prior to the interview. Moreover, the researcher communicated with the micro and small tourism enterprises operators at the time of field visit and provided them with the formal letter considering the participants of the research. In addition, a consent form (see Appendix 5) for the participants and a participant's information statement (see Appendix 2) were attached with the introductory letter (see Appendix 1). Though the in-depth interviews were semi-structured, several questions were tagged with the participants' information statement. It comprised the main theme of the research where participants gain understanding about the requirement of the issue and helps them to predict the questions asked by the researcher. With this, they can set answer as their own prior to the interview which is very important in terms of finding more information about the investigated phenomenon, leading to proper understanding of the topic by eliminating the ambiguity of the questions.

The researcher was also conscious about the secondary sources of data and found that the world's largest NGO, BRAC is working hard for capacity building of the poor in the Cox's Bazar area which is also consequently linked to pro-poor tourism approach. In addition, international organization such as UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) has been working for poverty alleviation by means of playing supporting roles for the poor. Moreover, another voluntary organization relating to tourism in Bangladesh named Tour Operators' Association of Bangladesh (TOAB) is working for the betterment of the poor community and promoting sustainable tourism development since its establishment. The researcher made contact with this organization's authority to get more concrete information about the community and prospects.

#### ***3.5.5.2 Conduct Interview***

It is necessary to start the interview with small conversation referred to as ice-breakers so that the participants feel comfortable prior the interview. According to

Johnson (2002), creating a good rapport is essential to build trust on interviewer which inspires the interviewee to answer spontaneously on the topic throughout the interview. Therefore, the researcher highlighted an ice-breaking part at the beginning of the interview prior entering into the key questions and a casual conversation was maintained with each participant (Patton, 2002). Moreover, the participants were communicated properly before starting the interview that there is no limitation to the answers whether it has wrong or right and this helped them to be more enthusiastic in explaining their experiences regarding the topic issues. The researcher sought permission for using the voice recorder from the participants which is mandatory for qualitative data collection. Therefore, a digital tape recorder has been used for this study to record views and opinions of the participants for data collection (Rasmussen *et al.*, 2006).

The researcher prepared all necessary documents relating to in-depth interview, both in English and Bengali language. Since most of the participants are not highly educated and do not have English language proficiency, they asked to choose the language to use as medium of instruction for interview. Everyone picked Bengali form of communication in the interview as they were reluctant to communicate with English language. The researcher emphasized on the convenience of the participants as they were asked to select the place for arranging interview to ensure an effective interview. Overall, environment is a factor that might impact participants during the in-depth interview (Minichiello *et al.*, 2008). Specially, the peak hours of business are not good for interview and the participants were also reluctant as it required more mental effort and was inconvenient. In addition, some participants were asked by the researcher to arrange their interview out of their working place and working hours. The place for the interview was confirmed at least a day before of the original interviewing date. Despite the disturbance of external noise, it did not affect the quality of the conversation and quality of the recording.

On the other hand, considering the safety of the researcher at the destination, each participant was requested to choose the time of the interview before sunset as the destination is not fully known to the investigator. Notably, in view of ensuring accurate information from the interviewee, all in-depth interviews were solely

conducted by the researcher. The investigator tried to adhere to the given interview questions, nevertheless, it was also dependent on the flow of answers delivered by the interviewee which allowed the investigator to enquire further. Meanwhile, the researcher was also aware to keep notes during in-depth interviews to record crucial information for further probing besides voice recording of the interview session. Eventually, a total of 25 in-depth interviews were conducted for this research. The following table 3.1 exhibits the summary of participants' in-depth interviews conducted in this case study research.

**Table 3. 1: Summary of the Case Study Participants**

<b>Key Informants</b>	<b>Number of Informants</b>	<b>Place of the In-depth Interviews</b>
MSE Investors/Owners	9	At their business center/local cafe outlets
MSE Employees	4	Local cafe outlets
NGOs and Volunteers	2	Their offices at Cox's Bazar
Government Agencies	4	Their own offices at Cox's Bazar
MSE Co-operative Society	1	At the co-operative society office
Community Leaders	1	Local cafe outlets
Tourists or Visitors	2	Local cafe outlets
Local/Host Residents	2	Local cafe outlets
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>25</b>	

### **3.5.5.3 Transcribing**

The transcribing process is required to initiate the data collection process (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). Hence, the researcher started transcribing after completion of the first in-depth interview. In this case study, all of the interviews were conducted in Bengali language as the research participants' first language is Bengali, similar to the researcher's first language. Thus, it was comfortable for both the researcher and the participants to discuss on deeper information using their own language. The length of each in-depth interview lasted between 35 minutes to one hour. The researcher performed transcription in order to be immersed with the qualitative data. Thus, it facilitated the researcher a lot in terms of accurate understanding of the interviewees' voice records and meanings.

However, complexities can appear when it is needed to translate of voice recordings from a non-English language into English (Twinn, 1997). In this study, it was needed to convert the Bengali interview transcripts into English and the researcher was careful to do so. Firstly, the researcher converted the voice recording into written transcripts in Bengali language. Secondly, these transcripts were sent to the interview participants to confirm their statement besides to check accuracy. A member-checking process enhanced the reliability of the research (Legard *et al.*, 2003, Islam, 2012). Thereafter, Bengali version of transcripts were converted into the English language. The researcher requested a dual language expert who is working as a senior lecturer at Curtin University, Malaysia to check English transcripts with the Bengali transcripts as well as the voice clips. No discrepancy was found in terms of meaning and wording of the sentences. This rigorous checking process ensured the validity of the translated transcripts for this thesis.

### **3.5.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

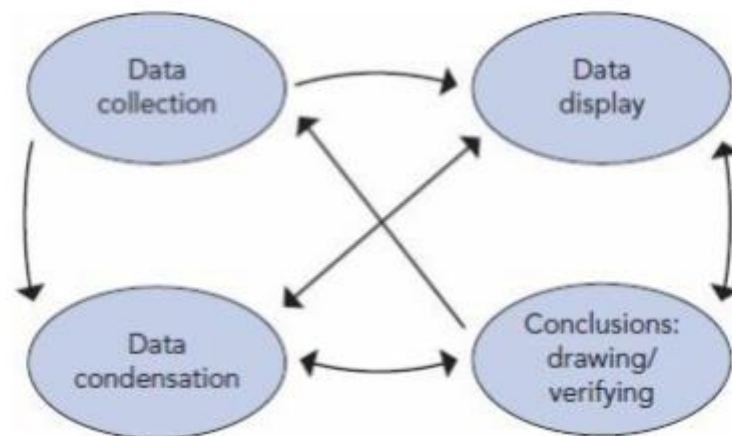
In this study, thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2006), and Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) was the main data analysis method adopted and supported with Microsoft Excel and Word document (Meyer and Avery, 2009, Ose, 2016, Bree and Gallagher, 2016) because the researcher needed to be immersed in the study (Agar, 1991). This method produces a flexible Word document of interview data based on open-ended questions asked in the interview to the participants (Stuckey, 2015) and making attempts to combine or group similar points or comments to consolidate the data in Excel worksheet (Bree and Gallagher, 2016). The purpose of the method is not to quantify qualitative data but only to sort and structure large amounts of unstructured data through coding from the data in view of developing themes and sub-themes (Ose, 2016).

Thematic analysis is adopted when data is analysed by theme. This type of analysis is considered to be inductive, that is, themes emerge from the data are not imposed (deductive) by the researcher based on the primary data collected from the participants (Ahmad and Usop, 2011). Thematic analysis is a method for identifying,

analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Besides, the six stages of thematic analysis recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006) were adopted in this study. These stages include (a) familiarizing oneself with the data, (b) generating initial codes, (c) searching for themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining and naming themes, and (f) producing the report.

Data analysis in qualitative research is critical in terms of describing and summarizing the texts collected through interviews and observations as there is no shortcuts. It is an organized procedure that endeavors to retrieve the exact meaning of the gathered data and draw inferences meticulously in a study (Silverman, 2013). Miles and Huberman (1994) proposed an interactive model of qualitative data analysis (see Figure 3.1) which comprises of three significant components: (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion: drawing/verification. Data reduction includes the analytic approach selected by the researcher according to the research questions of the study which is accomplished through coding, theme developing and grouping. Subsequently, data analysis steps includes organizing and assembling of information required to be displayed in the form of tables, texts and matrices, so that the readers can understand the research clearly and draw sensible conclusions (Miles *et al.*, 2014).

**Figure 3.1: Interactive Model of Data Analysis**



**Source:** Miles and Huberman (1994)

The purpose of this study is to understand the perceived benefits of MSEs in tourism with associated challenges of poor community and related stakeholders supporting

strategy for PPT advancement in Bangladesh. To do so, tourism destination stakeholders' map was adapted, to identify different stakeholders associated with the MSEs and beach tourism destination, which served as a preliminary guide to data collection design and analysis.

According to Faherty (2010) no software (e.g., NVivo, Atlas.ti, MAXqda) can actually analyze qualitative data except support the researcher during data analysis process; only the human mind can do that (Ose, 2016). However, recent studies indicate that analysing qualitative data is getting more sophisticated using Nvivo in particular (Tobi, 2014, Gibbs, 2002). Despite the benefits of using qualitative software, this study employed thematic analysis to analyse the data due to the following reasons. First, manual coding is needed which is widely used in interpretive research paradigm and it allows researcher to deal with the data in the language of participants to make sense (Marshall and Rossman, 2014, Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Second, Yin (2009, p. 129) suggests that “computerized tools cannot readily handle this more diverse array of evidence” such as filed notes, and the archival documents, and participants observation. Third, software programs such as NVivo do not take into consideration the study context and would be too rigid in abstraction of variables (Khoo-Lattimore, 2008).

In addition, Tobi (2014, p. 80) warns that “using NVivo in PhD (including other qualitative research) journey, there is no right answer and there is no right code”. These views are consistent with Punch (2013) that there is no right way to analyse qualitative research. Moreover, the researcher used own analytic rationale (Yin, 2012) for analysis and interpretation of collected interviews. According to Miles *et al.* (2014), this research followed analytic approaches, starting with First Cycle coding from the data and the Second Cycle coding or pattern coding along with theme developed through thematic analysis. Cautionary steps have been adopted to ensure trustworthy coding and interpretation of data according to the evident transcripts.

The following subsections present the adopted techniques of data analysis in this study.

### 3.5.6.1 First Cycle Coding

First cycle coding is a process of clustering and summarizing the raw data from the interview (Miles *et al.*, 2014). Initially, it is required to meticulously study of the interview scripts, documents and the field notes to retrieve meaningful concept which has been delivered by the participants through the interviews.

**Table 3. 2: Example of codes assigned to participants’ responses**

We are blessed with this beach destination that provides us work opportunity through tourism MSEs. Despite of poor condition and illiteracy, we can get working opportunity due to tourism MSEs.	Perceived benefits/Economic
...sometimes we get training for boosting our efficiency in work.	Perceived benefits/Non-economic
Powerful local leaders used to impose subscription for doing business. ...if they are not satisfied with you, you cannot do business.	Challenges/Political and administrative
we cannot operate business all the year round due to monsoon period. Practically, it is difficult for the poor MSE owner to survive as tourists’ availability reduced significantly.	Challenges/Seasonality
Community leaders trying to promote own cultural products through inspiring the indigenous people to be involved in tourism MSEs. Cooperative society also convinces the financial institutions for arranging micro loan in against of their businesses. ...NGOs are enthusiastic to provide loans and training for the betterment of the poor community.	Stakeholder support/Community leaders, cooperative society, NGOs

Coding is an interpretive action which condenses the data through assigning codes via a broad statement given by the participants. The First Cycle coding process is reflective to the research questions of the study and a code is a construct generated by the researcher, generally capable to capture a datum's key content and significance (Saldaña, 2013).

A descriptive coding approach has been adopted for this study under First Cycle coding because it supports the study of a voluminous data form (see Table 3.2). In



addition, other types of coding approaches have also been adopted i.e., In Vivo and Simultaneous coding as per needed for robust analysis (Miles *et al.*, 2014). In Vivo codes originated from the exact interviewee's words in the data sets. However, when it is found to comprise of multiple meanings, simultaneous coding is used for a single datum in this research (Saldaña, 2013).

### 3.5.6.2 Second Cycle Coding

The Second Cycle coding method is also termed as 'pattern coding' and is a briefer form of the concepts emerged from the First Cycle codes. It clusters the outcomes from the First Cycle coding in such a way that it develops meaningful units of analysis (Miles *et al.*, 2014). Pattern codes are useful for identifying an emergent theme because of its explanatory and inferential nature (see Table 3.3).

**Table 3. 3: Example of codes about perceived benefits**

...few years back my family had to live under mud and straw made houses. ...now it is turned into wooden and corrugated iron made houses. ...Even though, I can budget to go for family entertainment to a limited extent.	Standard of living
Collaboration with big concerns provides opportunity to add more products in the outlet without investing personally and consequently increased the volume of sell with low price. Moreover, you can minimize your capital risk as required supports been provided by the large-scale company.	Leverage on tourism network
...handicrafts and handlooms product are selling through tourism MSEs to the tourists, we can conserve our culture and able to display to versatility of our community. In general, these types of products are very popular owing to unique nature. Every nation has own social values and culture which can be shown and sustained through tourism enterprises	Indigenous socio-culture conservation

Subsequently, the condensed data was exhibited thematically (see Appendix 8). It is possible to generate a rich and wide-ranging account of complicated data through

thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This is because diverse perspectives of different in-depth interview participants are meticulously examined considering their opinions in respect to the similarities and dissimilarities, and produces unpredicted insights to the investigated phenomenon (King *et al.*, 2004). Another reason behind choosing thematic analysis for this study was that it helps in summarizing the significant notions of a huge data set that might generate a vibrant, concise and orderly report (Nowell *et al.*, 2017).

In course of analyzing and final thesis writing in this study, the displayed data was interpreted in the light of existing literature to ensure the coherent justifications for findings. Afterwards, the researcher develops the descriptive case report using participants' quotation and necessary supporting documents in view of producing insights through proper understanding in the single-case.

### **3.6 Techniques to Improve Rigour of the Research**

This case study research followed the four particular criteria for ensuring rigor and trustworthiness of the study as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985); namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability which have become extensively adopted benchmarks in qualitative investigation (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015, Patton, 2002, Tao, 2018).

#### **3.6.1 Credibility**

Credibility denotes to what extent the research findings are truthful or authentic in nature (Miles *et al.*, 2014). To meet the requirements of credibility, the researcher has applied various techniques in data collection including in-depth interviews, observation, field visiting, archival records of government body and documentation (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). This mode of data triangulation improved the credibility of the research (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). Transcripts were sent to the participants for cross-checking after the interviews to ensure the accuracy of their statement.

### **3.6.2 Transferability**

Transferability of the research indicates the versatility of the findings of the study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To what extent the investigation outcomes can be applied to another similar context is a concerning issue for research. As this research has been carried out in context of Bangladesh, a developing country, the findings of the study may be of interest in other developing countries, which is referred to as transferability of the research. To enhance the transferability of this case study research to another identical setting, a wide clarification of the sampling technique was revealed in section 3.5.3 in this study. These clarifications allow the reader to inspect the researcher's choice for sampling and case study context that makes transferability judgments possibility (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

### **3.6.3 Dependability**

Dependability is another crucial criterion for enhancing the trustworthiness of the research as it indicates the degree of consistency of the research findings (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). Prolonged engagement of the researcher and audit trail can be the significant techniques to boost up the dependability in qualitative inquiry (Decrop, 2004). According to Yin (2012), case study protocol (see Section 3.5.2) and case study database development can ensure the dependability of the case study research. To gain the dependability of this study to the readers, these tactics were undertaken by the researcher. The case study protocol includes field procedures, interview questions and guidelines for the study report. Eventually, the systematic maneuver at all phases of research design, collection of data, meticulous documentation, coherence and cohesion of the phenomenon confirmed the dependability and consistency of this study.

### **3.6.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability criteria in qualitative research state the neutrality of the findings of the investigation and logical conclusion drawn from the data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Audit trail technique has been confirmed in this study for increasing the confirmability of qualitative investigation. Audit trail brings up the proper documentation of the research instruments including recorded interviews, signed consent forms, transcripts, memo reports, collected secondary documents, pictures, notes, tour dairies and so on (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and are strictly maintained in this study. All these proper documentations obviously enhance the confirmability of the research.

### **3.7 Research Ethics**

As this study encompasses human participation, all procedures are aligned with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) National Statement on Ethical Conduct of Human Research (2007). The researcher completed the training on Curtin Research Integrity Professional Development which is essential for conducting a research. Notably, this research rigorously followed the listed ethical guidelines throughout the entire data collection procedure provided by the Human Research Ethics Committee. The Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee approved the study project on 06 June, 2018 and the ethics approval number is HRE2018-0324 (see Appendix 7). Afterwards, the researcher started to communicate with the destination stakeholders as mentioned earlier via email and/or phone calls to recognize the concerned authority relating to the Cox's Bazar beach destination. An invitation letter was sent for research participation containing the purpose of the research, a consent form, demographic information form, special letter for in-depth interview, and a list of questions for the interview as well.

In-depth interviewees' confidentiality has been guaranteed as it was promised to the participants that all feedbacks are anonymous and provided information would be used only in academic purposes that would be used to preserve in a secured place of the university's custody where the accessibility will be reserved for only the supervisor of the project and the researcher. The participation was completely voluntary for the participants in this study and they were informed well before starting an in-depth interview that if or when they detect discriminatory question or offensive to their culture and value, they can instantly withdraw from the interview session and

notably, the provided information would not be used as part of the research. The researcher ensured this commitment before starting each interview and permission was secured from the research participants to use digital voice recorder as well. Only then, the interviewees were asked to sign a consent form.

### **3.8 Limitations of Case Study**

In general, no research project is free from limitations in terms of choosing research methods for reaching findings of the study. Likewise, this case study research is also confined regarding the preferred methods. These restraints can be recognised in several areas. Basically, the interviews were conducted with the tourism stakeholders linked with MSEs in tourism at the Cox's Bazar beach. To do so, purposive sampling technique was applied to identify knowledgeable participants for the thesis. Thus, there is a chance where participants might know each other. Apart from this, they might conceal the true facts regarding the topic issue. Moreover, women were found to be reluctant to go for a face to face interview because of social aspects of the destination, although their perceptions might be important for generalizing the findings. To overcome these limitations, the interviews were conducted at the places preferred by participants to ensure freedom and confidence in providing the answers. A casual conversational form was adopted to encourage participants' enthusiasm to share the expected information at their best of knowledge. In addition, participants were assured about the privacy concerns before starting each interview. Various data collection techniques such as in-depth interview, government reports, websites relating to tourism, observation were employed. The application of the data triangulation approach diminishes participants' bias risk.

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

This chapter discusses the methodological approach adopted for this thesis. It has been justified that qualitative-inductive case study is appropriate to explore the participants' experiences and views relating to the PPT approach through the tourism MSEs at the beach destination in interpretivism paradigm. A single-case study method

was adopted where a purposive sampling technique was applied for the selection of relevant participants in this research linked to beach tourism MSEs at the Cox's Bazar. Semi-structured interview method was chosen for collecting the primary data from the tourism stakeholders along with a variety of secondary sources i.e., tourism websites, government tourism archives, documentation of tourism firms, field notes and direct observation included in the process of data collection. Systematic data analysis was used to condense data, display and theme development. As this research emphasizes on primary qualitative data and intends to investigate participants' deeper insights, social reality, constraints and statement for participation in tourism businesses, a qualitative case study deemed to be the most suitable method. The next chapter will discuss on the findings of the study relating to the addressed research questions of the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter three has presented the methodology and analyzing techniques employed in this study. This chapter discusses the findings emerged from the rigorous analysis of the in-depth interviews based on the three research questions developed for this study. To enable easier understanding and contrasting with the existing literature, the research findings and discussion are illustrated altogether into a single chapter in this research. This chapter is outlined according to the chronological research questions and findings are conferred in themes and sub-themes. A summary of the findings is presented at the end of each research questions. The chapter concludes with an overall summary of the findings from the in-depth interviews and with next chapter direction.

#### 4.2 Research Question 1: What are the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?

The aim of the first research question is to identify the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh beach tourism destinations, most of the MSEs in tourism are owned by the local poor community due to the perceived benefits to be derived. As a result of these benefits, poorest community members view MSEs in beach tourism destinations in Bangladesh as a source of sustainable livelihood. Ashley *et al.* (2001a) opined that the PPT benefits are categorized under three main headings: economic benefits, non-economic livelihood benefits, and participation and partnership benefits. These benefits have been adapted for this study to examine the reasons behind participating in MSEs tourism related ventures by the poor community at the Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination in Bangladesh. Summary of findings from RQ 1 are presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4. 1: Findings for RQ1 in themes and sub-themes**

Main theme	Sub-theme
<p><b>1. Economic benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Standard of living and employment opportunity</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Leverage on tourism network and expansion of business</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Non-economic benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Access to skills training and development</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Social recognition</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Regional socio-cultural development</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Environmental awareness</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Participation in decision making</b></li> </ul>

**4.2.1 Economic Benefits**

This section illustrates the economic driving forces influencing the involvement of the poor local community in MSEs in tourism at the Cox’s Bazar beach in Bangladesh. As PPT initiative is in regard with the welfare of the poor community to reduce poverty through tourism, MSEs are seen as good options for the local community at Cox’s Bazar to improve their economic status and means of livelihood. In fact, PPT initiative is much more concerned towards sustainable tourism development through poor community’s participation and it is evident from the research participants’ statement that they are also aiming to boost their economic benefits. Therefore, it was found from interviews that before involving in tourism related MSEs ventures, most of the participants were concerned about the potential economic benefits that would be derived, especially by the local community at Cox’s Bazar beach tourism destination.



#### ***4.2.1.1 Standard of Living and Employment Opportunity***

It was found that enhancing family standard of living is one of the economic benefits influencing the involvement of the local community in tourism business related activities at the Cox's Bazar beach destination. Findings from the in-depth interviews revealed that the tourism MSEs enhance the standard of living of the poor local community at Cox's Bazar. It was observed that standard of living enhancement is directly linked with the earning opportunities of the poor in this destination. Hence, at the Cox's Bazar beach, tourism enterprises provide scope for the poor community to be involved and explore which is significant in satisfying their desires. Through their involvement in the tourism MSEs at this destination, the poor community can meet their expenses for their food, clothes, shelter, health, education and entertainment. This study found that MSEs in tourism endeavor boost the poor community's standard of living through providing a wide range of benefits. For example, a participant of this research who is an MSE owner at Cox's Bazar beach stated a real-life example presented in the following statement:

*...Frankly speaking, few years back my family had to live under mud and straw made houses. However, now it is turned into wooden and corrugated iron made houses. ...I can even have budget to go for family entertainment but at a limited extent. (PN 12)*

Notably, employment opportunity through MSEs in tourism has been considered as one of the benefits influencing the local community of the Cox's Bazar beach. In this beach destination, there are several MSEs offering products and services to the tourists. Tourism related MSEs requires huge number of manpower, these include salesman, supplier, producer, waiter, hotel boy, tourist guide and so on. Thus, MSEs in tourism endeavors create job opportunities for the poor local people at the Cox's Bazar beach. These findings were supported by the extracts from one of the participants who stated:

*We are blessed with this beach destination that provides us with work opportunity through tourism MSEs. Despite of poor condition and illiteracy, one can get working opportunity due to tourism MSEs. (PN 06)*

This statement was also echoed by a part-time employee working with a travel agency at Cox's Bazar beach. This participant mentioned that the MSEs are the key source of employment, not only the local poor community but also the entire community of the region. Views are presented in the statement:

*Regardless of the poor, everybody is getting benefits because of beach tourism destination. Tourism MSEs creates plenty of job opportunities and contributed in reducing the level of poverty significantly. ... Besides studying, we can be involved in part-time jobs which are really supportive for our overall development. (PN 05)*

Findings show that the employment opportunity created by MSEs in tourism at this beach destination has reduced the level of poverty. This finding corroborates with the existing literature sources that tourism enterprises can remarkably benefit the poor community through providing work opportunities and contributes to economic development (Mshenga *et al.*, 2010, Houston, 2008, Tahir *et al.*, 2016). This finding is also consistent with Wasudawan and Rahim (2018) and Ashley *et al.* (2001a) that employment opportunity for the poor local community enhances the effectiveness of the PPT approach. Therefore, employment opportunity for the local community in the MSEs in tourism related businesses appears to have reduced the level of poverty.

Similarly, new small-scale enterprise opportunity in tourism at the Cox's Bazar beach is revealed as another significant economic benefit for the poor local community which leads to enhancing their family standard of living. From the interviews, it was observed that the poor local community was very keen to launch their own tourism business at this destination. Moreover, some NGOs have extended training facilities for the poor communities regarding tourism business operation techniques alongside micro credit support so that they can initiate tourism MSEs at this destination.

Interviewing a readymade garment seller [PN 08], this case study found that due to launching their own tourism enterprises their income went high and hence, impacted positively on their family standard of living. These findings are consistent from the views expressed by one of the participants at Cox's Bazar:

*I was an employee of a travel agency at this destination for 8 years with a minimum salary. However, I tried to learn about business and am inspired to launch a new business since I found it as a promising one. I used to keep good relationship with different clients. Eventually, due to tourism destination and for the support of an NGO, I had launched my own business. (PN 19)*

This statement was also echoed by an MSE owner and co-operative society leader is presented in the statement:

*I was a hawker, worked under tourism MSEs in this beach destination. I had to sell their products by walking towards the tourists. ...After a long struggle, today I have three different tourism MSEs and I have recruited 15 local boys as employees. Many of my employees who worked under me now turns as an owner of a business at this destination. (PN 15)*

Findings show that the micro and small enterprise opportunity at Cox's Bazar beach appears as a significant economic benefit which lead to improving the standard of living for the poor community. This finding appears to corroborate with Islam and Carlsen (2016) that tourism destination creates the micro and small enterprises opportunity for rural people and can alleviate poverty. This view is consistent with Mao (2015), Ashley *et al.* (2001a) and Zhao (2009) that small enterprise opportunity for the poor community is effective in extending the standard of living at the tourism destination.

In addition, it is noticed that, after involving into a tourism enterprise, a person can expect to get a reasonable salary or wages regularly as per the contribution and ease their way of life. A participant in this study said:

*...For me economic benefit means certain income for a person in a steady manner. I can meet my family expenses in a limited extent relating to food,*

*shelter, education for kids, and health. ...Actually, by operating this business, I cannot get a big amount but at least I can survive in the society. (PN 02)*

Likewise, other members of local community with traditional occupation such as fishing activities, have been able to get regular customers for their business. They used to supply both fresh and dried seafood products, and because of this opportunity, it was found hundreds of dried seafood business outlets at Cox's Bazar are targeting towards tourists. A homestay service provider at the Cox's Bazar beach stated:

*...Only because of tourism destination a wide range of poor people are producing and supplying tourism related products to the tourism enterprises. Not only fishing but also other sectors like agriculture, livestock etc., thus capitalizing the tourism benefits. (PN 10)*

Findings show that the certainty of income for the poor community through tourism MSEs is a crucial economic benefit that influences them to be involved in tourism activities. This finding authenticates Chok *et al.* (2007) and Briedenhann (2011)'s studies that consistent income generation of tourism businesses acts as a motivation for the poor community which is effective for poverty reduction. According to Mao (2015) and Mao *et al.* (2014), tourism enterprises stimulate local production in terms of agriculture, fishing, handicrafts and so forth. In this case study, it was found that the local poor community are encouraged to be involved in tourism MSEs linked activities to find steady earnings for improving their family's standard of living. This view is similar with key implementation factors in PPT whereby the poor can find stable source of income through tourism MSEs (Tolkach *et al.*, 2012, Manwa and Manwa, 2014). It is also identical with Islam (2012) and Wasudawan and Rahim (2018) that due to the urge to develop from poverty stricken circumstances to a comfortable life, the poor community in the tourism destination tends to be involved in the tourism MSEs. It was noted in this study that the poor communities who are involved in tourism MSEs, are gradually delivered from extreme poverty and gaining back the momentum of having a decent manner of living, which is a benefit from MSEs in Cox's Bazar beach.

#### ***4.2.1.2 Leverage on Tourism Network and Expansion of Business***

In this case study, it was found that expansion of business is the ultimate desire to every business owner regardless of their scale of business. MSEs in tourism related venture are operated by the local residents in Cox's Bazar tourism destination in Bangladesh with small amount of capital. On the basis of interviews conducted at Cox's Bazar, it was found to be very hard to save money through operating such businesses after meeting demands of their family. Thus, the poor community have difficulty in expanding their business at this destination. However, leveraging on tourism network with determination and patience can change their way of life through increasing and diversifying the products in business outlets initially and eventually, launching similar or different types of tourist focused business at Cox's Bazar. Thus, leveraging on tourism network and expansion of business appears as a crucial economic driving force to be involved in tourism MSEs to the poor local community of Cox's Bazar.

Notably, fast access of market information seems to provide a vital economic benefit to the tourism MSE owners and strongly impacts on sales at the Cox's Bazar beach destination. From the interviews, it was found that to operate such businesses requires support from other businesses. A transport service provider [PN 16] stated that market information is very important in business not only for enhancing quality of the products or services, but also for technical matters that helps to increase the sales. It was found that despite limited knowledge of the poor community about the business, they have learned over time through dealing with the related stakeholders where market information plays an important role. For example, in case of air ticket service providers at this destination, it is required to check on time pricing since it is highly fluctuating as per the demand for a specific time schedule. Findings show that in order to operate such type of businesses, the tourism MSEs have to have updated information to cope with the pace. An employee of a travel agency at the Cox's Bazar stated:

*We are linked with all airlines in Bangladesh and bus transport authority. Our business completely depends on fast access of information as the demand of this service is changing over time. In particular, we need to be more conscious*

*during weekends and holidays as the tourists' availability increases significantly. This type of business does not require much money but requires well communication and timely service. (PN 05)*

Similarly, a micro business operator at the Cox's Bazar beach stated:

*...Before starting my business I was introduced as a sunglass's wholesaler. Till now, I am doing business by his supplies and he brings product from the capital city whereas the origin of this sunglass is in the China. ...Most importantly, I can get the updated market information instantaneously through them which helps me to provide trendy products for the tourists. (PN 06)*

Findings show that the quick access of market information through leveraging on tourism network influences the poor local community's involvement in tourism MSEs. This finding agrees with the current literature sources that access of market information positively impacts on tourism enterprises profitability (Goodwin, 2005, Zhao, 2009). This view is consistent with Islam (2012) that the tourism MSEs can be benefited mostly for sharing information through creating network among associated stakeholders. Besides, the tourism MSEs operators can justify the tourists' expectation and demand about products and services which help them to go ahead with the market demand. Hence, this study noted that the fast access of information benefiting the poor MSE owners at this destination is remarkably supportive for expanding their business.

In addition, building liaison with large scale companies also provides enormous economic benefits to the tourism MSEs leading to expansion of their business at the Cox's Bazar beach destination. In this case study, MSEs in tourism have been considered as a chance for the poor to be involved and network with other stakeholders. From the participants' statement, it was found that building liaison with large companies lead to more sales through attaining tourists' faith on the business at this destination. This business liaison provides benefits to both the parties significantly. For example, a transport service provider at the Cox's Bazar beach commented:

*...We sell tickets on behalf of all renowned transport service companies for a commission basis. On the other side, if they open a counter privately for selling tickets, they have to pay monthly rent of that office, utility charges and salary of the employees which are huge burden for them. (PN 19)*

This statement is also echoed by a food and beverage related micro enterprise owner at this destination that business liaison helps to sell more products due to the market reputation of the established company and with minimum effort, products can be sold. For example, in Bangladesh PRAN Foods Limited is a popular group and tourists look for their products due to quality and brand loyalty. It was found that majority of such enterprises developed liaison with this company to sell their products. This business liaison benefits the poor in all perspectives leading to expansion of their business at this destination. A key informant from Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) said:

*If you think to collaborate with big concerns and sell their products, you can add more products in your outlet without investing from your pocket and will sell more products with low price. Moreover, you can minimize your capital risk as required support has been provided by the large-scale company. (PN 24)*

In this case study, it was found that these liaison opportunities in business encouraged individuals to be involved in MSEs in tourism. This finding appears to corroborate with Khazaei *et al.* (2015) that the agreement with private owned companies through developing network among stakeholders has benefited the tourism MSEs. This interpretation is also consistent with Rogerson (2006), Gascón (2015) and Tao (2018) that business liaisons with reputed companies enhance the benefit of small scale tourism enterprises leading to involvement of MSEs in PPT initiative. These studies found that PPT approach intends to build network with the large private owned company by incorporating the poor community. In the Cox's Bazar beach, the tourism MSEs have created liaison in a great extent with the national private owned companies and selling their products with significant benefits. Since the tourists are coming from diverse geographical parts, they are looking for branded items alongside

native products. Thus, liaison in business gives benefits to the tourism MSEs as well as private owned large companies at this beach tourism destination. It can be said that the expansion of business through building business liaison at this beach destination appears as a feasible economic benefit which is crucial for PPT development.

Moreover, utmost support and guidance for the MSEs in tourism appears to be an inevitable factor for their business expansion at Cox's Bazar beach destination. MSEs' involvement in tourism are operated by the poor local community at Cox's Bazar tourism beach destination where the community has very limited understanding about business environment and other related issues due to their lack of education and knowledge. However, these deficiencies are not an obstacle for them owing to the utmost support and mentoring by the stakeholders who are related to that particular MSE. It was observed that every stakeholder looked for personal gain and for the sake of personal benefits, they extend their conducive hand to those who are linked with that business. Findings from the interviews and collected evidence indicated that it was found that the poor MSE owners do get support in the forms of trade loan from the co-operatives, credit purchase of the products, training and counseling support, supply chain management, commission on sells and so on from the associated stakeholders with the said business. For example, regarding expansion of business, one of the MSE owners commented:

*...I found tourism MSEs as an opportunity that grows well over time owing to related stakeholders assistance. ... I have extended my business capacity through opening another outlet of same products according to wholesaler's assistance and direction. (PN 01)*

In this case study, it was found that the tourism MSE owners have expanded their business through leveraging on tourism network. Similarly, it was observed that the capable or rich investors looked for their fortune through helping the poor community at this destination. A photographer as a research participant at the Cox's Bazar beach stated:

*Since I desired to be a photographer, I need to obtain logistics support as I lack self-affordability. ...if there was no support, I could not come into this profession due to initial investment. Notably, I got several trainings on*



*photography arranged by the investor. They provide proper guidelines and provide instructions in the technical know-how in a regular basis. (PN 03)*

The findings show that utmost support and direction from the different stakeholders' end related to tourism business operation is a significant driving force for the poor local community to be involved in tourism MSEs. This finding agrees to the existing literature sources that the supplier of the products to the tourism MSEs or the relevant wholesalers provide related assistance to operate the business successfully (Tahir *et al.*, 2016, Khazaei *et al.*, 2015). Since the poor community are less capable to set up a tourism enterprise, it is required to seek help from associated stakeholders which is similar to the PPT concept (Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2016, Tolkach *et al.*, 2012). Thus, the potential of MSEs in tourism at Cox's Bazar beach is massive in terms of economic perspective which commonly allows the poor community engagement.

#### **4.2.2 Non-economic Benefits**

This section explains the non-economic perceived benefits influencing local community involvement in MSEs in tourism in Cox's Bazar beach destination. Although the perceived economic benefits of MSEs in tourism is the most important issue in the mind of poor community at Cox's Bazar, non-economic benefits offer a steady sustainable life leading approach. Based on the existing literature sources, PPT is not only focusing on gaining economic benefits for the poor but also place emphasis on boosting quality of life (Manwa and Manwa, 2014, Ashley *et al.*, 2001a). Thus, tourism enterprises are found very important considering the local community's participation and poverty reduction in this destination. Findings indicate the following non-economic benefits are important to the local community to be involved in MSEs in tourism.

##### ***4.2.2.1 Access to Skills Training and Development***

The study reveals that MSEs in tourism are mostly operated by the poor community members at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination. Since there are no other options in

this area other than tourism activities, they set up micro businesses while some are employed in tourism enterprises. It was found that a number of NGOs are operating various activities in this area in order to alleviate poverty in Bangladesh. For example, BRAC, an organization which is rooted in Bangladesh is working for skill development program in this destination by involving MSEs in tourism to improve service delivery to the tourists. On the other hand, after inclusion into the tourism businesses, each person is able to learn the way of operating business and the techniques to approach a tourist over time. Eventually, the poor community are enhanced in their capability because of tourism destination with the support of MSEs and the contributing NGOs at the Cox's Bazar beach destination. According to a key informant from BRAC, he said:

*Poverty is killing the local community daily and making them frustrated. To pull them to the main stream requires proper counselling through training assistance. ...we do operate Skill Development Program at the Cox's Bazar area. ...providing technical learning with tourism entrepreneurship so that they can be self-dependent. (PN 25)*

A Cox's Bazar based voluntary tourism association named Tour Operators Association of Cox's Bazar (TOAC) working for sustainable tourism development in Bangladesh arranges training program for tourism related MSE owners and employees in the Cox's Bazar beach destination which is helpful for the poor community. One of the participants who was a photographer at the Cox's Bazar beach acknowledged the services provided by TOAC in the following statement:

*Sometimes we get training organized by TOAC to boost our efficiency in our profession. This training is very effective for our self-development and can be treated as non-economic benefit. (PN 12)*

Findings show that the access to skills training and development has been considered as a non-economic benefit to the MSEs tourism related operators. This finding corroborates with Zhao (2009) and Ashley *et al.* (2001a) that capacity development of the poor community is highly needed to ensure PPT at the tourism destination. This

view is consistent with Tao (2018), and Adeyinka-Ojo (2018) that employability skills can help the poor community to find better livelihood sources and recognised as non-economic benefits that influence MSEs involvement in tourism activities. In this case study, it was found that the tourism stakeholders i.e., NGOs and volunteers, government, cooperative society etc. regularly arrange training and development programs for the tourism MSE participants of Cox's Bazar beach.

#### ***4.2.2.2 Social Recognition***

Findings show that the poor local community relating to MSEs in tourism at Cox's Bazar beach destination expects to achieve social recognition for their contribution in the work place. Social recognition is one of the non-economic benefits for the involvement of MSEs in tourism ventures. Although the poor community serve the tourists in many ways through tourism MSEs in this destination, they are not properly evaluated by the so-called modern society of Bangladesh. Interviewing a handicraft based MSE owner [PN 09], this study found that at the initial stage of a tourism enterprise, it was challenging for a person from the poor community to gain access in the market in this destination. Meanwhile, it is a common phenomenon that the relating tourism stakeholders show disrespectful attitude towards limited-capable micro business owners in this destination. However, tourism MSEs' successful operation alongside provision of customized service transforms them into trustworthy partners to the linked stakeholders. It was noticed that the poor community try to establish their business' goodwill in order to attain social recognition from their neighborhood. In this case study, it was found that tourism MSEs help the poor to discover their self-identity to others over time as a non-economic benefit and PPT strategy gets the momentum as well. A readymade garment business operator at the Cox's Bazar beach stated:

*...I had started my journey in this beach destination as a hawker of garment products. I realized that no one pays respect to me, whereas disrespectfulness from people was a common phenomenon as a hawker. I targeted to rent a location for my outlet as I found it is a lucrative business with tourist*

*demands. ...Eventually, I managed to secure a permanent shop, and this dramatically attracts helping and respect from people around me. (PN 08)*

Similarly, a key participant working under a homestay at Cox's Bazar stated:

*The poor local community can attain social recognition through engaging in tourism MSEs and can grab attention of the tourists which is appreciable in implementing PPT initiative also. (PN 10)*

Findings from the participants statement revealed that social recognition is a considerable issue to the poor local community that influences them to be involved in MSEs in tourism at Cox's Bazar beach destination which poses as a non-economic benefit. Tourism MSEs has been considered as a lucrative business that allows the poor community to be involved and finding their livelihood (Mshenga *et al.*, 2010). This view is similar to existing literature sources that the tourism enterprises provide employment opportunities as a dependable livelihood source to the poor local community at the tourism destination (Brouder and Eriksson, 2013, Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2016, Gascón, 2015). This supports Wasudawan and Rahim (2018) and Ashley *et al.* (2001a), who found that PPT approach endeavors to alleviate poverty through involving the poor local community into tourism activities. However, no previous study has been done to investigate the social recognition as factors influencing the involvement in MSEs in tourism. This study has found that the intention to attain social recognition influenced the poor community's involvement in tourism MSEs. This appears to be a new finding and a potential contribution to the PPT initiative which attracts the poor community people to operate MSEs tourism related ventures at Cox's Bazar. This non-economic benefit works as a significant motivation towards the poor local community to be engaged in tourism MSEs leading to implement PPT approach.

#### ***4.2.2.3 Regional Socio-cultural Development***

In this area of Bangladesh, there is a common problem of drug dealers and suppliers from Myanmar. People are engaging unethically in view of earning large amount of

money as drug smuggling is strictly prohibited in Bangladesh. In addition, it was found that previously there was a trend that the local people who were doing business used to include their kids in their business without sending them to the school. This was a bad practice and consequently they remained illiterate in this destination. A research participant who is a key informant from government agency [PN 13] stated that when a person is involved into work, he will not succumb to illegal work for survival and able to justify good or bad things. It was observed that most of the poor families depend on tourism MSEs in this destination therefore restraining themselves from violent works. Consequently, this study found that they are keeping themselves in the right track for inclusion in tourism MSEs which is very necessary for the stability of the society. Thus, it is a significant non-economic benefit for the local communities who are involved in this type of work. Findings show that MSEs in tourism and extension involvement of local poor people have reduced the number of reported cases of this belligerent works. A key participant from the Beach Management Committee Force (BMCF) at the Cox's Bazar beach stated:

*...No one cannot live without food, thus, at any cost we have to earn in ensuring food for family. If we cannot find work, we may have to be involved in such activities that is not legal or prohibited in the society i.e., drug business, robbery, snatching and so on. Tourism MSEs restrain these crises, otherwise, it might create violence in the society. (PN 07)*

On the other hand, a local government authority [PN 18] stated that indigenous culture is the identity of a country that can be exhibited in a distinctive way towards the viewers through tourism MSEs at this destination. It was found that Cox's Bazar beach destination comprises of multi-cultural people who are living under poverty line but are experts in producing handicrafts items. From the collected documents and field visits, it was observed that handicrafts items were completely produced by the inhabitants of this region, especially by the poor women, in which this activity is very significant to reduce poverty from the destination. This group of people were found to be very enthusiastic to overcome their circumstances through involvement in tourism enterprises at this beach destination. Besides, it is possible to show the traditional

products to the customers or tourists which helps to conserve the indigenous culture spontaneously. A micro enterprise operator at the Cox's Bazar beach expounded:

*... handicrafts and handloom products are being sold through tourism MSEs to the tourists, we can conserve our culture and are able to display to the versatility of the people. In general, these types of products are very popular owing to unique nature. Every nation has its own social values and culture which can be shown and sustained through tourism enterprises. (PN 20)*

Findings revealed that achieving social stability and indigenous culture conservation is the result of poor communities' involvement in tourism enterprises which is a non-economic benefit for the society. In this case study, it was found that local poor community produce indigenous products and sell to tourists, which simultaneously, they are preserving their culture through propagating cultural items via tourism MSEs. This finding appears to corroborate with Fletcher *et al.* (2016) and Maureira and Stenbacka (2015) that indigenous culture becomes the identity of a country and is best preserved through tourism businesses. This also provides employment for the poor community while helps to maintain social stability and preserve the pride of the indigenous community tradition as a non-economic benefit (Borden *et al.*, 2017, Zhao and Ritchie, 2007). According to Ashley *et al.* (2001a) and Shankar (2017), to attain social stability, it is important to ensure employment for the poor community where tourism plays a pivotal role. This view is also consistent with Islam and Carlsen (2016) that MSEs in tourism assists to conserve the indigenous culture and helps to reduce poverty level among the community members. Thus, in this case study, it was found that the poor community is completely dependent on tourism MSEs which significantly reduces the level of poverty as well as developing socio-cultural aspects as a non-economic benefit.

#### **4.2.2.4 Environmental Awareness**

In this case study, environmental awareness appears as a non-economic benefit for the poor local community where this factor also influences them to participate in MSEs in tourism. It was found that environmental awareness has increased among the

impoverished citizens of Cox's Bazar as they now realize on the best use of natural resources. In doing so, MSEs in tourism have played an important role through creating work opportunity for these poor community in this destination. It was found that the local community of Cox's Bazar area used to struggle daily in obtaining food. Hence, they were involved in deforestation over the years in the hilly areas desperately for selling woods as well as preparing land for cultivation. Consequently, in the rainy season, it was a common phenomenon where severe landslides lead to numerous deaths of poor community living at the vicinity of these hills. The ecosystem has been disrupted in many ways such as reduction of the trees, and the loss of lives of the poor community in this destination. In this study, it was found that because of tourism businesses, the poor community gave up their participation in anti-environmental activities as they came to understand the severity of deforestation over hilly areas of Cox's Bazar. A transport operator at Cox's Bazar mentioned extensively about the environmental impacts of PPT through MSEs:

*...Owing to massive deforestation, hill landslide was common phenomenon leading to loss hundreds of lives in the monsoon period at the Cox's Bazar and Chattagram region. However, due to tourism destination and contribution of tourism businesses, we found certainty of work and realized the negative impacts of anti-environmental activities. (PN 19)*

Moreover, the poor local community of the Cox's Bazar came to know the best use of natural resources. Findings show that Bangladesh is enriched with abundant natural resources and Cox's Bazar area is the best example of this. The poor community collect numerous types of conch at the seashore and make exquisite products which can be sold at an expensive price. A local community member as a research participant [PN 22] stated that despite the lack of training and development programs, the illiterate poor community members are able to know the best use of such natural resources through utilizing their own creativity alongside their ancestor's heritage knowledge. A conch product seller at the Cox's Bazar beach commented:

*Near to about 20,000 families are involved in conch business from collecting natural conch to selling to consumers. ...This is a great cycle of work that*

*starts with collecting the conch from the beach to making final products like garlands, chandeliers, showpieces etc. (PN 09)*

Findings show that increasing environmental awareness is the result of involvement into tourism MSEs by the local community of Cox's Bazar. This study found that through involvement in MSEs in tourism, the poor local community became efficient user of natural resources as well in this destination. These findings are consistent with Torres *et al.* (2011), Rogerson (2006), and Mitchell (2012) that the effective use of natural resources corresponds to the PPT approach which is a non-economic benefit in terms of gaining the best knowledge of making use of the given asset. However, there is still a lack in existing literature that involvement into tourism activities can decrease anti-environmental activities by the poor local community at the tourism destination. Few researchers have outlined that PPT approach is effective in mitigating environmental impacts at the tourism destination but failed to address the path to implement it in a proper way (Ashley *et al.*, 2001a, Goodwin, 2005). This is a new finding and a potential contribution to the PPT approach as there are many benefits of MSEs in tourism in terms of contributing to enhance environmental awareness among the local community of this tourism destination. Thus, tourism MSEs contributes to maintain a balanced environment as well as helping the community to be skilled in using natural resources as a non-economic benefit through incorporating the poor community into MSEs in accordance to PPT approach.

#### ***4.2.2.5 Participation in Decision Making***

In this case study, participation in decision making by the poor local community through tourism MSEs appears as a non-economic benefit at the Cox's Bazar. PPT approach advocates involvement of the poor community in tourism planning and policy forming for consolidating the rights of the poor at the tourism destination (Rogerson, 2006, Ashley *et al.*, 2001b, Tolkach *et al.*, 2012). A key informant from the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Bangladesh [PN 11] stated that there is a need for option for the poor community so that they can put their opinion through a legal ground. This participant also stated that MSEs in tourism can be at platform for



the poor to share their experience and requirements for better survival in the society through creating poor-friendly tourism policy at this destination. A key informant from the CoxDA stated:

*Regularly we arrange a general meeting regarding tourism development and invite trade union representatives along with community leaders in a view to listen their opinions. Considering their opinion and governmental plan, we do formulate the strategy for tourism development. We do emphasis on the poor communities' welfare according to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) plan of The United Nations (UN). (PN 18)*

In this study, it was also found that MSEs tourism owners and employees are engaged in selling products and services directly to the tourists and receive direct reactions of customers which is common in business perspective. They can share tourists' demands and expectations related to the given products or services with related stakeholders for securing subsequent right decision making. A tourism MSE operator in the Cox's Bazar beach added:

*Considering participation in decision making, we are a vital part as we sell their products directly to the customers. ...Customer feedback is very important to develop new product, design and so on. Therefore, they asked us about the response of the tourists and consider it rigorously. When they value our opinions, we feel honored and seemed confident as well. (PN 09)*

Findings show that the poor community's participation in tourism decision making is a vital non-economic benefit that can be attained through involvement in tourism MSEs in this destination. In this case study, it was found that tourism MSEs allows the poor to place their opinion towards relevant stakeholders who are responsible to formulate tourism policies. These finding appears to corroborate with Ashley *et al.* (2001a) and Harrison (2008) that the poor communities participation in tourism planning for a destination is more reflective to ensure their welfare in accordance to PPT initiative. This contributory intention of the poor community influences them to be involved in tourism MSEs which is beneficial for sustainable tourism development

and to alleviate poverty from its root (Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018). Thus, the poor community can participate in decision making through the tourism MSEs at this tourism destination which is valuable for both the tourism and the poor local community. This contributory approach by the poor influences them to engage into the tourism MSEs and help to advance the PPT initiative at the Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination in a consolidate manner.

#### **4.2.3 Summary of Findings on Research Question 1**

Research Question 1 aims to examine the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative at the Cox's Bazar beach destination. Mainly two reasons inspire the poor community to be involved in tourism business in order to facilitate PPT initiative, namely economic benefits and non-economic benefits. Under economic benefits, from two viewpoints, it was found the significant driving forces for the local community to be involved in tourism MSEs are standard of living and employment perspective, and leverage on tourism network and expansion of business perspective. On the other hand, under non-economic benefits, factors such as social recognition and environmental awareness appear to be a new finding where these factors have remarkable impacts on the society. Thus, it can be said that motivation for the poor communities to be involved in the tourism MSEs eventually implements the philosophy of the PPT initiative in this beach destination.

#### **4.3 Research Question 2: What are the challenges faced by MSEs from getting involved in PPT initiative?**

The main aim of the second research question was to find out the challenges faced by MSEs from getting involvement in PPT at Cox's Bazar beach destination. In this destination, the MSEs are commonly operated by the poor local community of Cox's Bazar. MSEs in tourism related ventures plays a vital role in creating livelihood opportunity for the poor people in comparison to the large scale tourism organizations (Scheyvens and Russell, 2012). Large scale tourism organizations prefer educated employees who are capable in many ways and simultaneously limiting the

opportunity for the poor who are not experts. Nevertheless, without enhancing the benefits for the poor community people through tourism activities, PPT approach would be beyond of enforcement (Espiner *et al.*, 2017). Tourism MSEs are the absolute platform for the poor community to explore the opportunities underlying in this destination as it is a less formal type of business and can be initiated effortlessly. However, a number of challenges need to be complied and overwhelmed for involving in MSEs in tourism in ensuring PPT by the local community in this destination. The main challenges relating to the tourism MSEs at the Cox's Bazar beach destination are clarified in the following sections as per the research participants' statement along with comparative discussion with the existing literature.

#### **4.3.1 Lack of Initial Capital and Financing Support**

In this study, initial capital crisis and subsequent financing support for the tourism MSEs are revealed as a crucial challenge for the poor community of Cox's Bazar. Although it does not require a large amount of money to set up MSEs in tourism, it cannot proceed without minimum amount of investment used in getting approval from the authorities, such as business license, location rent, raw materials and so on. Findings show that the local people of the Cox's Bazar area are struggling against poverty and thus, initial capital collection is hardly possible for these community members. According to government report of BBS (2017), as this is a poverty-stricken area of Bangladesh, to manage initial capital for launching a business is beyond their financial capability. Consequently, it was found that they looked for an engagement option into the tourism MSEs, either by a salesman or by a worker initially. Afterwards, they can gain more experience and are able to set up a tourism business for themselves. A tourism MSE operator at Cox's Bazar said:

*To start such a business, we need very small amount of money as capital. However, I had not sufficient capital for this business. In the early stage of my business, I was not the owner of this micro business. Firstly, I was involved into MSEs as a salesperson in the year 2007. My main motivation was to do something independently and I used to save money in this regard from my*

*little income. Although it was not easy to me, I did it and now this is my own outlet. (PN 01)*

From above statement, the initial capital poses a significant challenge for the poor community people who are well behind in the society. This view is corroborated by a trade union leader and MSE tourism operator:

*...I started my business at the early stage of my life with a bucket of conch products and selling conch garlands at this beach to the tourists under a shop owner only because of incapability to manage the initial capital. I used to sell the products by walking as I do not have any stall. (PN 15)*

On the other hand, it was found that financial support is compulsory to operate a business in a smooth way regardless of the size of the enterprise. Proper financing sources for the entrepreneur lead the enterprise growth over the time. From the field visits, it was perceived that after a long struggle, they would start a business aiming to provide services towards tourists in this destination. Consequently, they realize the deficiency of finance for shaping the business as per tourists' requirements. Since these MSE owners are poor and have limited capability and have no financial institutions, NGOs or governmental organizations normally agree to approve loan for their businesses. This case study uncovers that due to lack of trustworthiness on the poor community, these institutions are reluctant to provide loan which is a great challenge for them. However, sometimes these tourism MSE owners can convince the financial institutions, NGOs or family and friends and obtain financial support, but they impose higher interest rate and pressure for instalment which is quite difficult to proceed for the poor community. Extracts from one of the participants clearly illustrates this:

*When a tourism MSE owner intends to expand the business used to get loan from different parties with a high interest rate, it becomes a huge amount at the end of each year which is nearly impossible to repay, while in a cyclic way, it is increasing as a burden for the poor MSEs owners. (PN 17)*

Findings from the statements of the key participants of this research revealed that the inadequate initial capital and financing support for the poor community are critical challenges in tourism MSEs to implement PPT approach in this destination. This finding is quite similar to the existing literature agreeing that these factors are a great challenge for small tourism businesses (Zhao, 2009, Page *et al.*, 1999, Thomas *et al.*, 2011). Chowdhury (2012) mentioned that a lack of working capital is a major hindrance for maintaining MSEs in the manufacturing sector in Bangladesh that limits the involvement of the poor community. Similarly, MSEs in tourism are also struggling to find reliable working capital source to run the business (Zhao, 2009), although few NGOs in Bangladesh do provide micro credit to the poor, that is insufficient for maintaining a business (Islam and Carlsen, 2016). This study confirms that to comply with the changing demand of the tourists, it is required to invest more amount of money that leads to seek more financing sources for the MSE owners (Hwang and Lockwood, 2006). Moreover, this study suggests that employment opportunity for the poor can be offered through extending business capability which also leads to manage more capital for the business. Thus, inadequate initial capital and financing sources for the tourism MSEs are ongoing challenges for the poor local community at the Cox's Bazar beach destination.

#### **4.3.2 Lack of Technical Skills and Tourism Knowledge**

In this case study, lack of technical skills and tourism knowledge are exposed as crucial challenges for the poor community of Cox's Bazar to be involved MSEs in tourism. A multi-cultural community lives at the Cox's Bazar region of Bangladesh, including the tribal communities in which most of them are struggling against poverty. These impoverished communities are well behind in terms of fulfilling fundamental needs. It was observed that providing education for children is difficult and is beyond their financial capability. Consequently, the poor inhabitants of this destination remained illiterate and do not have proper tourism knowledge which might be crucial for reducing poverty. Vocational education is quite suitable for them as it helps and places them in the main stream of the society. Unfortunately, there is very limited scope for technical education in this area that can equip them to be

skillful at work. Eventually, it was perceived that tourism activities are the possible ways to survive in the society where tourism MSEs in this beach plays the vital role for involving poor people although they lack in tourism knowledge. Since they do not have skills in maintaining a particular MSE, they have to work as subordinate employees in the MSEs for a long period. Views of a tourism MSE owner are presented in the following statement:

*I have no academic certificates and formal technical knowledge as my parents had no financial capacity to send me in the school. From my childhood, I started to work as a hotel boy at this beach destination and tried to learn the way of business. ...Eventually, I came out from that job and started conch products business as a hawker. Today I own this permanent shop and three young boys working for me as sales assistant. (PN 09)*

However, very few government agencies, NGOs and voluntary tourism organizations offer skill development program at this beach destination which is really important for the poor local community but insufficient as per the demand. A photographer at Cox's Bazar beach said:

*I was a traveling as a coffee seller at this beach and looked for better option for settling myself. Once I got an opportunity to participate in a photography training course provided by TOAC. After completing the training on photography, I contacted with a studio who provided me with a Digital Single Lens Reflex (DSLR) camera with conditions. (PN 12)*

Findings from the participants revealed that that the limited scope of technical and vocational education abstained the poor from participating in tourism activities which makes PPT approach questionable. This finding also corroborates to the existing literature sources as the lack of education is a challenge for the poor to be involved in tourism business since it is needed to deal with diversified tourists at the destination (Briedenhann, 2011, Islam and Carlsen, 2016). Meanwhile, Mitchell and Ashley (2010) emphasized on human resource development for reducing poverty through considering tourism sector advancement that benefits the poor community directly and indirectly. Capacity building of human being is necessary to ensure PPT approach at any cost. Likewise, Zhao and Ritchie (2007) stated that the lack of education and

training is a significant challenge for the poor people to be involved in tourism sector. Thus, this study perceived that inadequate technical skill and tourism knowledge of the poor community prevails due to the lack of vocational training opportunity which is a significant challenge to be involved in tourism MSEs in this destination.

#### **4.3.3 Political and Administrative Exploitation**

From the interviews, it shows that political and administrative exploitation is a common phenomenon in Bangladesh which is a challenge for the poor community people to operate businesses. It is also prevailing at the Cox's Bazar beach destination by the local leaders in various forms through their undesirable activities. Tourism MSE operators at this destination are commonly victimized due to dominating mentality of the powerful political leaders. These leaders were found to force the MSE owners to provide subscription fees on a regular basis for their business and compelled the business operators to obey their commands. These types of illegal demands by the political leaders adversely affect to their business and ruined the hopes of the poor. A tourism MSE operator at the Cox's Bazar beach said:

*...Powerful local leaders impose subscription upon us for doing business. If they are not satisfied with you, you cannot do business. Although tourist police are over here, they cannot take steps against them due to political issue. (PN06)*

From this statement, it is clearly found that the political power is seriously abused at this destination which hinders the poverty alleviation significantly. Although tourist police are supposed to maintain discipline and provide security to all, they remained silent in this regard. This statement was also echoed by a key informant of the volunteer tourism organization TOAC:

*...Compulsory subscription must be paid by the poor MSE owners in national day's celebration of Bangladesh which is really shocking for the community. (PN17)*

Moreover, it is evident from the participants' statement of this research that there is a number of illegal business syndicates dominated by the members of the political parties and powerful business owners. As a result, the access of the poor community into the tourism MSEs turns passive which is very crucial for implementing the PPT approach at this destination. Basically, every tender offer relating to MSEs in tourism in this beach destination is deceptively won by those powerful political leaders with the cooperation of the government agencies that limit the poor people's income and accessibility. Eventually, this case study found that the poor community is bound to work under their projects with a nominal payment compared to their potentiality and hardship. A photographer at the Cox's Bazar beach said:

*...most of the poor people are compelled to work under the capable person due to public tender relating to tourism at this destination won by those political leaders. Therefore, exploiting tendency of local political leaders is another major obstacle for the poor. (PN12)*

Likewise, administrative corruption at Cox's Bazar beach destination significantly discouraged the poor community to be involved in the tourism businesses. It was found that it is mandatory to get approval from the concerned authority to operate business at this beach destination. Meanwhile, there is a need to renew the license of the business annually through paying fees and taxes imposed by the government. Although this process seems easy, this study found that illegal syndicate in the administrative authority makes it complex for the poor community who are not conscious and knowledgeable. A key informant at Cox's Bazar said:

*Administrative corruption is severe in this destination. For example, if a photographer wants to get permission for doing work, he might have to pay BDT 25,000 whereas government only charges BDT 5,000 as a fee. This extra money will have to pay as bribe to the controlling syndicate which is bitter for the poor community at this destination. (PN 17)*

Findings revealed that the Cox's Bazar beach destination is controlled by the political leaders who are used to exploit the poor community for their fortune. This finding agrees with the literature sources that political pressure is a significant threat for the



poor community and also responsible for excluding the poor from tourism activities (Islam, 2012). This research found that the severity of the political and administrative exploitation is compounding gradually in this destination, and it turns more problematic when it is shifting the ruling political party in Bangladesh. Political uncertainties prevailing in Bangladesh is unfavorable for the growth of the MSEs (Chowdhury, 2012) and it is crucial for the tourism sector where most of them are living under poverty line.

In this case study, it was found that the poor local community is compelled to compromise with political and administrative authorities as they might not get the approval for their desired tourism MSE without paying extra charges. Although existing literature sources recognised political exploitation as critical challenge for the poor community people to be involved in tourism enterprises (Chowdhury, 2012, Islam and Carlsen, 2016, Ashley *et al.*, 2001a), administrative exploitation towards these poor community is yet to be investigated. In this regard, administrative exploitation and abuses revealed a significant new finding for PPT approach that hindered the participation of the poor local community in this destination. However, to implement PPT through tourism MSEs there are no alternatives other than including the poor local community by mitigating social and political exploitation (Ashley and Roe, 2002). This case study confirms that that political and administrative affiliation is highly needed to create scope for the poor which pulls them into the main stream and enhance the PPT approach at Cox's Bazar beach destination (McGehee, 2002).

#### **4.3.4 Inadequate Infrastructure Development**

From the interviews and field visits, it was noticed that inadequate infrastructure is a great challenge for the poor local community to operate tourism MSEs at the Cox's Bazar beach destination. In this destination, the basic communication systems, constructions, electricity, gas supplies, pure water supplies are out of their range which is highly needed to operate an MSE in tourism related business. Unfortunately, at the Cox's Bazar beach destination, these facilities are available only for the large-

scale tourism organizations via private investment since these organizations are more financially capable. However, it was observed that the poor community who is operating such tourism MSEs has to comply with these deficiencies which impacts negatively on their business. Moreover, MSEs in tourism at the Cox's Bazar is fragmented which is not favourable for the enterprises as well as for the tourist's accessibility. Notably, under communication system, transportation is quite problematic for the tourism stakeholders to reach the beach comfortably. Although rail is a popular transportation mode in terms of safety, time and cost, Cox's Bazar is still out of railway network which causes difficulty for the poor community to participate in tourism MSEs from their locality. A key informant from the destination stated that insufficient infrastructure at this beach destination has limited the poor to be involved in tourism activities:

*... and we have very limited permanent shops to operate business compare to number of MSEs. Most of us can only do business during daylight on a temporary basis. There is a need to create categorized market on a permanent basis. We are out of water supplies and sanitation facilities which are primary requirements for long term business. (PN 14)*

From the site visits and majority of the participants statement, it was perceived that the infrastructural development took place in a fragmented way in this destination. Interviewing a studio operator [PN 16], this study found that with the changing of the government of the country in each term, altering the plan is a common phenomenon in Bangladesh which disrupts the business environment extremely. The poor community must comply with the changing direction that is to some extent intolerable for the tourism MSEs owners. However, the capable business people are constructing multistoried residential hotels and motels adjacent to the beach, ignoring the master plan of the city corporation in this destination. They are somehow managing the responsible authority and consequently, depriving the poor local community through acquiring their land property. A conch products seller at Cox's Bazar beach said:

*Recently, our business outlet's location has been shifted from our earlier place to here by the administration and it impacts on our business very badly because of the new location. In this beach point, there were 210 outlets of our MSEs, however, due to shifting our position 150 outlets are approved by the BMCF. (PN 09)*

The dominant role of the monitoring authority caused the poor people to be excluded from the tourism activities in this destination. Even though, the acquired land is still vacant for years and no one is allowed to use the land in this destination. Eventually, for this reason, the utility of the land position cannot be capitalizing for a long run and leading to unemployment has via limiting the scope of MSEs in tourism.

Findings revealed that the lack of infrastructure development is an ongoing challenge for the poor community to operate the business at this destination whereby the poor community becomes unemployed. This finding is similar to the present literature sources as insufficient infrastructure is the reason that keeps the people under poverty line (Barnes, 2005). Due to unavailability of the required infrastructure, the poor community is compelled to leave the urban places although this area offers greater employment opportunity in terms of tourism MSEs (Islam, 2012). Kabeer (2006) also stated that the business opportunity is available in the urban areas but excluded the poor owing to inadequate infrastructure for their living as well as for their business outlets.

Presently, the overall infrastructure of Cox's Bazar beach is considered insufficient for tourism MSEs operation due to the lack of specific market, power supplies, pure drinking water supplies, health and sanitation, roads for easy access, entertainment options and so forth. Due to these drawbacks, the poor community cannot supply their products smoothly to the tourism MSEs at this destination and thus, they remain under extreme poverty as well. Although few NGOs along with United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Government units endeavor to boost up the infrastructure scenario at this destination, they are still well behind to ensure the poor accessibility on infrastructure in a up to mark level. Ashley *et al.* (2001a) suggested that the upgraded infrastructure encourage the poor to participate in tourism related activities. In this study, it is also found that inadequate infrastructure limits the participation of local community into MSEs.

#### 4.3.5 Conservative Outlook of the Society

Another identified challenge for the local poor community involvement in MSEs in tourism is the conservative outlook of the society at Cox's Bazar beach destination. It was found that people tend to follow strict rules in terms of life style and behavioral pattern regardless of the social class in this destination. To some extent, Bangladesh is a male dominated country where women hardly find work outside of their residence and it is highly applicable in case of poor communities especially those who have no education. In tourism activities, there is a great scope for women involvement which would be vital for reducing poverty in the destination and conducive for implementing PPT (Misango and Ongiti, 2013). However, this study found that the social ties and the negligence attitude towards women in the society create obstacles for implementing the PPT approach through tourism MSEs in this destination. According to a domestic tourist:

*For women in our society, it is very difficult to be engaged in MSEs compared to men as we belong to a conservative society that is tied with religious beliefs. In our society, women are neglected, and we fear to work outside of home. (PN 23)*

Similarly, when asked should this mentality be changed for the betterment of tourism and poverty alleviation, a local resident and travel agency service provider replied:

*Of course, it should be changed and support our women to work independently. When men and women can work together, I think development will be no longer be far. In case of tourism related business, it is more crucial than other types of job. I think there is lack of counseling and misunderstanding which are the main barriers for women's involvement in tourism directly. (PN 05)*

On the other hand, at Cox's Bazar, there is no bars or pubs, massage or reflexology outlets except in very few five-star hotels due to social aspects although tourists are highly interested to get such facilities. People are coming at this beach destination for entertainment purposes. However, tourists have to remain satisfied with this natural beauty of the beach only which is the result of conservative approach of the society. Views of a homestay owner at the Cox's Bazar beach are presented in the statement:

*...Tourists are always looking for hard liquor (wine) since they wish to enjoy their pastime and in particular, international tourists become disappointed for not finding such services. (PN 10)*

Findings revealed that the conservative outlook of the society existing in Bangladesh is a major challenge for the women to be involved in work, thus limiting the scope of the MSEs in tourism. This finding agrees with literature sources that the tourism MSEs is a significant option for women involvement compared to other sectors of business (Zhao, 2009, Ashley *et al.*, 2000). However, women are being neglected and undervalued in work although the government of Bangladesh emphasizes on equal opportunity (Amin, 2018). A comprehensive effort from both the male and female is needed to reduce poverty from the destination and small tourism businesses are suitable for the female workers (Zhao and Ritchie, 2007). This research showed that the participation of women into the tourism MSEs enhance the PPT strategy through giving benefits to the poor.

On the other hand, allowing entertainment facilities e.g., bars, massage parlors for the tourists is the demand of time which creates job opportunity for the poor community (Mao, 2015). Unfortunately, at Cox's Bazar beach destination, such opportunities are forbidden which demotivates tourists and limiting the scope of tourism MSEs. Consequently, the scope for the poor people's involvement in tourism MSEs is shrinking and notably, domestic tourists prefer to visit other countries like Malaysia, Thailand, Nepal, Bhutan because of such facilities are available over there. Similarly, the international tourist arrival rate remains static and Bangladesh is losing the opportunity to earn foreign currency as well. This is a new finding and new contribution for the PPT approach that creates obstacles to capitalize the benefit of the tourism MSEs. The existing literature is only focused on employability of the women in tourism enterprises but has yet to investigate the effects of narrow viewpoint of the society that restrains their participation in tourism activities (Misango and Ongiti, 2013, Zhao, 2009, Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018). This study found that conservative approach of the society does not only restrain the women participation in tourism MSEs but also shrinking the scope of new business opportunity which discourages tourists to visit this destination. Considering the fact that conservative outlook of the

society is prevailing in this destination, it is a major challenge for the poor community to be involved in tourism MSEs and advancing the PPT approach.

#### **4.3.6 High Cost of Living**

High cost of living at this tourism destination is considered as a vital challenge for the poor local community to be involved in MSEs in tourism. From the field visits, it was found that it is required for those who are involved in tourism activities, to stay near to this destination. A micro enterprise owner [PN 04] stated that since there is a lack of infrastructural development in Cox's Bazar in terms of transportation, it is difficult to stay outside of the tourism destination for both the tourism MSE owner and the employees. Besides a number of benefits for this beach tourism destination, there is also some negative impacts such as higher living expenses compared to non-tourism-based area. One of the major challenges for the local poor community is to comply with the extended price of the necessary products at this destination. According to a local resident allied with the voluntary tourism organization TOAC, it was mentioned that:

*Owing to tourism destination our costs of living is high compared to other parts of Bangladesh. Regardless of financial condition of a person, we have to pay more for the same product and comply with the increased price. (PN 17)*

Similarly, a local investor at the Cox's Bazar beach destination said:

*Thousands of tourists exist in this small city and it results in high cost of food and other items in which our local people who are operating tourism business also have to comply with this high price, which is really an obstacle for the tourism MSEs owner at this destination. (PN 16)*

Despite numerous benefits from tourism destination for the poor community, high cost of necessary commodities is a big challenge for them. However, when asked about the impacts and remedies of high living costs for the poor MSEs owner and the associated people, a local participant commented:

*...Eventually, high living cost is sometimes considered as a reason of moving out of poor from this destination. If authority enforce a rule as local community can get products at a reasonable price, this would be life saving for us. (PN 22).*

Findings show that the high cost of living at the Cox's Bazar is critical for the tourism MSE owners and for the employees as well which causes the exclusion of the poor from the tourism activities. This finding appears to corroborate with the present literature sources that the high living cost of the destination lowers the benefits of tourism towards the poor (Islam, 2012). This view is also consistent with Tao (2018) and Saito *et al.* (2017) that increased price of the necessary commodities at tourism destination limits the perceived benefits for the poor and deter the smooth implementation of the PPT approach. To implement the PPT initiative, it is vital to ensure net benefits for the poor community who are associated with tourism activities (Tolkach *et al.*, 2012, Manwa and Manwa, 2014). This research intends to ensure benefits for the poor through involving them into tourism MSEs in view of fair execution of PPT approach. However, this case study found that high cost of living to some extent demotivates the inclusion of poor community into tourism MSEs that stays close to this beach location.

#### **4.3.7 Threat of Seasonality**

Though Bangladesh is a land of six seasons, due to climate change effect, there are now four seasons in recent years. Monsoon is being considered as a critical challenge for the poor community at the Cox's Bazar beach destination who are dependent on tourism activities. Interviewing a local transport service provider [PN 19], this study found that during the monsoon period, tourists are reluctant to visit due to adverse weather. Findings show that there is an attraction named Saint Martin's Island which is located at the south of Cox's Bazar beach where it is only reachable via sea. Unfortunately, in the rainy season, the ship services used are closed due to destructive waves, in which this significantly reduces the flow of tourists. A local resident [PN 22] stated that most of the business outlets are compelled to close during the monsoon

period from May to August every year. The poor community has to struggle during this period of time since they are involved in tourism businesses and to some extent, unable to be involved in other types of works. A local transport service provider stated:

*We cannot be active all the year round due to monsoon period. Practically speaking, it is difficult for the poor MSE owners like me to survive as tourists are not coming. Meanwhile, we cannot pay our employees as our income decreases sharply. (PN 02)*

From the above statement, it is seen that the monsoon affects not only the owners of the tourism MSEs, but also the community dependent on tourism sectors. Similarly, this statement is echoed by a local resident and a member of a voluntary tourism association at Cox's Bazar beach, in which it was mentioned that:

*...Another type of barrier is season or weather. During rainy season, tourists are not available here and it affects the existing MSEs badly. They need to save money for those unfavorable days, otherwise they are bound to be in debt from borrowing. (PN 17)*

Along with the seasonality effects, natural calamities are common owing to geographical location of this destination. Very often the poor community is affected by natural incidents since they are completely dependent on tourism MSEs either as an owner or a worker. A participant said:

*As they live in the coastal area, natural calamities are common here where tourists number drops significantly in this destination. Consequently, they become workless which impacts their life negatively as they habituated by hand to mouth. (PN 21)*

Findings show that the threat of seasonality along with the natural calamities significantly appears as a challenge for the poor community at the Cox's Bazar. Particularly, people relating to various tourism MSEs are affected a lot for this reason in this destination. As these people cannot go for other types of work in that period, this results in unemployment during that crucial time. This study has provided



empirical evidences to show that the threat of seasonality discourages the tourists from visiting this place during rainy season. Consequently, the poor local community is compelled to close the tourism MSEs and become unemployed. Although tourism MSEs appears to provide employment opportunity for the poor community in this destination (Islam and Carlsen, 2016, Hossain *et al.*, 2013), seasonal effects demoralized them and to some extent, force them to seek for another livelihood option. Obviously, it is hard to cope during these months, especially to those who are involved in tourism businesses. This study discovers that to cope with this adverse situation, they save a portion of their income so that at least they can survive in the period of uneven days in this destination.

This finding appears to be a potential contribution to the PPT approach in terms of challenges faced by the poor community's involvement in MSEs in tourism at Cox's Bazar. Existing literature still lacks in identifying this crucial issue which hinders the momentum of PPT approach through tourism MSEs (Thomas *et al.*, 2011, Hwang and Lockwood, 2006, Ashley and Roe, 2002). Although these studies highlighted mainly on challenges of small businesses in tourism, no study yet to investigate the effects of season that influence the tourists to visit the tourism destination. However, this study found that in the dull season (referring to monsoon period), tourists are reluctant to visit Cox's Bazar beach. This tendency of the tourists impacts on the poor local communities who are completely dependent on MSEs. Thus, this is a challenge for this community who is associated with tourism MSEs in this destination.

#### **4.3.8 Summary of Findings on Research Question 2**

Research Question 2 aims to investigate the challenges faced by tourism MSE owners and the poor community at Cox's Bazar beach tourism. The constraints in confronting tourism MSE operators in this destination have a great impact on the livelihoods of the poor local community. These identified challenges include lack of initial capital and financing support, lack of technical skill and tourism knowledge, political and administrative exploitation, inadequate infrastructure development, conservative outlook of the society, high cost of living, and threat of seasonality. It was found that these recognised constraints have hampered the PPT implementation through tourism

MSEs at this destination while conservative outlook of the society and threat of seasonality appeared as a new observation. As such, it can be concluded that the challenges faced by the tourism MSEs should be taken into consideration by the relevant stakeholders to mitigate the crisis of the poor in view of successful implementation of the PPT approach at this destination. Findings on research question three will be conferred in the following section.

#### **4.4 Research Question 3: How do tourism stakeholders support MSEs involvement in PPT initiative?**

The foremost aim of the third research question was to find out the supporting strategy of tourism key stakeholders for the tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach in order to evolve the PPT initiative. In fact, tourism stakeholders can play a vital role in PPT development at the destination (Shah and Gupta, 2000). In this research, the term stakeholder denotes the key individuals or groups who are linked with the tourism MSEs at the Cox's Bazar beach destination i.e., tourists, MSE investors, MSE employees, MSE cooperative society, local community, community leaders, NGOs and volunteers, and government agencies. Explicitly or implicitly, these stakeholders can support the tourism MSEs development considering smooth implementation of the PPT approach (Khazaei *et al.*, 2015). The term support, on the other hand, refers to the cooperative attitude on tourism MSEs development, creating scope for the poor community, execution of policies on poverty alleviation, promoting indigenous cultures and products, arranging capacity development program, ensuring infrastructural advancement and so on (Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018). Hence, the comprehensive effort of the key stakeholders is highly appreciated for the tourism MSEs to ensure PPT approach. PPT approach seeks utmost support from the key stakeholders' end to guarantee net benefits for the poor community through creating linkages with tourism MSEs (Manwa and Manwa, 2014). In this study, tourism MSEs has been considered as the most feasible path to include the underprivileged community who are living under the poverty line. The subsequent sub-sections seek to highlight on the key stakeholders' role for supporting the tourism MSEs at the Cox's Bazar beach to ensure PPT approach.

#### 4.4.1 MSE Owners or Investors and Employees

MSE owners or investors and employees have been regarded as vital cohort of stakeholders in this beach destination. Findings indicate the existence of hundreds of tourism MSEs at the Cox's Bazar beach with variety of products and services for the tourists. Most of the MSEs investors and employees are from the local poor community of Cox's Bazar whereby employees have been recruited to assist in operating the business. From the interviews with the participants, it was found that to operate such tourism enterprises, they are required to link with relevant parties for their desired elements of business. Findings show that the owners or investors in tourism MSEs were interested to employ the local poor community instead of people from other parts of Bangladesh. In addition, these owners were found to be flexible in terms of recruiting poor community as they do not emphasize on initial experience of such people. A tourism MSE investor and owner of a studio lab at Cox's Bazar beach stated:

*...in my business, near about 31 local boys who are from poor community and had no experience initially are involved in my business. As they are enthusiastic to work, and I always wish to help the poor people for local development, I prefer to give opportunity to them. (PN 16)*

When asked about potential benefits of hiring local employees for operating the tourism MSEs, a transport service provider replied:

*...They do not need to shelter or food from me. Simultaneously they can save their time and cost staying with their family. Moreover, I can trust them easily rather than an employee from outside of my zone. In addition, contributing to reduce poverty is another issue in my mind. (PN 19)*

This statement is also echoed by a restaurant operator at Cox's Bazar beach which is very significant for implementing PPT approach:

*I always look for raw materials for my business from the local producers so that they can sell it easily with fair price. Besides, the employees should provide quality service and have accountability to the tourists. (PN 10)*

It was found that the poor community means of livelihoods is through their involvement in tourism related enterprises at Cox's Bazar beach destination. Findings from the participants' statement revealed that the tourism MSEs are employing the local people for their assistance in business but disregarded paying living wage. This finding agrees with the existing literature sources that the tourism enterprises are looking for locally produced supplies so that the poor community can get benefits from the tourism industry (Rogerson, 2006, Cuervo and Cheong, 2017). However, these existing studies overlooked the essence of paying living wage for the poor employees' contribution which is much needed for alleviating poverty.

#### **4.4.2 Tourists**

Tourist is one of the core stakeholders at Cox's Bazar and the success of the tourism enterprises mostly depends on tourists' spontaneous availability and purchasing. As the rate of tourists' availability where it is increasing in this destination, the benefits of the tourism enterprises impacts on the poor positively (WTTC, 2017). The tourism MSEs are being operated by the lower-class community of the society who are underprivileged and are completely dependent on the tourists' frequent purchasing from them. A tourist at the Cox's Bazar beach presented the following statement:

*We should give priority for indigenous products with an aiding mindset to the poor and we need to buy more products and services from such outlets instead of looking for branded items at the tourism destination. (PN 23)*

This statement also echoed by another tourist at the Cox's Bazar beach and emphasized on buying from the poor community who are offering different types of product for their livelihood. This participant also added:

*As a tourist I think everyone should have some responsibility considering our country development. In fact, those who are coming here for entertainment in general they are financially sound. We should avoid the branded outlets and*

*purchase from the local people who offers different services at this destination. (PN 21)*

Findings show that the tourists' obligation is more crucial to ensure sustainability of the tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach destination. This finding corroborates with Cuervo and Cheong (2017), and Mao *et al.* (2013) that the tourists' attraction to the MSEs products and helping attitude towards the poor is invaluable for PPT approach. In particular, the poor community displays traditional products along with few trendy products as sell items through their MSEs in this destination. In this case study, it was found that by operating tourism MSEs, not only they are getting their livelihoods, but they are conserving local cultures and traditions which is much valuable as it introduces and preserves the identity of the nation. This study suggests that tourists can support the poor community at this destination through purchasing more products from the tourism MSEs in view of implementing PPT approach.

#### **4.4.3 MSE Cooperative Society**

MSE cooperative society is regarded as an organization which intends to keep the interest of the members. It was found that the main objective of such society is to ensure businesses that are environment friendly so that tourism MSE owners can operate business smoothly at Cox's Bazar beach destination. Moreover, this study found that each trade union or cooperative society encourages related MSEs to provide quality service for attaining tourists' loyalty and protect them from crisis. A vice president of a multipurpose conch cooperative society at Cox's Bazar beach said:

*We support our members in all aspects of business such as providing loan with minimum interest rate, mitigate grievances, building awareness about tourism and tourists, encourage in ensuring tourists satisfaction, sharing information, training on business development, entertaining through arranging picnic party and so on. (PN 15)*

Similarly, a local resident and a tourism MSE owner at Cox's Bazar mentioned that business trade union is a significant stakeholder as they become guardians and patrons during moments of crisis. This participant also added:

*...our business trade union authority makes business friendly agreement with the administration, focuses to poor community inclusion, encourages us to provide customized services, promotes to keep ecofriendly beach environment and so forth. (PN 01)*

Findings show that the cooperative society is regarded as a crucial stakeholder that is responsible to protect their business. It was found that the tourism cooperative support for their members in terms of mitigating concurrent challenges i.e., administrative complexity, grievances, tourists' complaints, natural disasters, financial crises is quite remarkable in keeping them in track. This view is identical with Yang and Hung (2014) that the tourism cooperatives are important to reduce poverty through providing necessary benefits to the poor community who are associated with tourism businesses. It also confirms that the inclusion of poor community in tourism activities reduces poverty in this destination (Islam and Carlsen, 2016). This study suggests that the tourism MSE cooperative society is an important stakeholder for MSEs in tourism.

#### **4.4.4 Local Residents**

Local residents are viewed as part and parcel of the community members at the Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination who are also significant stakeholders in developing tourism enterprises. The local community is associated with tourism activities regardless of their financial status. Considering the socio-economic condition of Cox's Bazar, the local community is mostly poor who depends on tourism enterprises. Those who are financially stable can easily establish a tourism business whereby they can employ the poor who are seeking for jobs in this destination. Nevertheless, the attitude of the locals towards the tourism MSEs plays a significant role in developing the PPT approach in this destination. For example, the local community as land

owners is found to charge reasonable house rent to the poor community who are engaged in tourism MSEs at this destination. This study also discovered that the local communities of this destination can get an opportunity to display and conserve their own traditional products in view of earning from the tourists' purchase through tourism MSEs. A local resident and volunteer of a tourism association expounded:

*I think the local community who is directly involved in tourism MSEs should respect on the tourists' preferences and be well behaved so that the tourist can enjoy the travelling moment. They should exhibit indigenous products, which can represent our glorious past. Those who are involved with tourism MSEs indirectly should support MSEs to grow well through providing rational dealing. (PN 17)*

Likewise, a local resident and an owner of a tourism related MSE at the Cox's Bazar added:

*My family members are operating my business at this destination. Besides, I employed three local young boys in my business as a salesman for a monthly payment. ...I always guide them how to behave with the tourists and advise them to build good relationship with the tourists. I am also concerned with charging fair price for the products to each tourist. (PN 20)*

Findings show that the local community or resident engagement in tourism activities is highly required for developing PPT initiative in this destination in which the poor can be benefited. This viewpoint corroborates with the existing literature as the local communities' spontaneous participation in tourism activities enhance the potentials of PPT approach (Khazaei *et al.*, 2015, Saito *et al.*, 2017). At the Cox's Bazar beach, tourism MSE appears to provide employment opportunity for the poor community in a great extent which is contributes largely to reduce poverty. This interpretation is consistent with Akbaba (2012) that the local community's participation in tourism enterprises as an owner/investor or as an employee is very significant to reduce poverty as well as supporting the philosophy of PPT approach. They can represent indigenous culture towards the tourists leveraged by tourism MSEs (Islam and Carlsen, 2016, Maureira and Stenbacka, 2015). This case study suggests that the local

community may have a welcoming attitude towards the tourists as well as developing friendly relationship with the MSE investors.

#### **4.4.5 Community Leaders**

Community leaders are also viewed as an influential stakeholder at this beach tourism destination. A number of indigenous communities exists at the Cox's Bazar region in Bangladesh in which each community have their distinctive leader. As the indigenous cultural products have great appeal to tourists, community leaders form groups to produce handmade products. From the interviews and field visits, it was noticed that these indigenous communities are living under the poverty line and in a great extent depend on tourism businesses. However, they are expert in producing handicrafts items despite of their lack of education and training. It was found that the community leaders intended to preserve the indigenous culture via the efforts of the poor community while anticipating the benefits of tourism. The community leaders of the Cox's Bazar motivate the women for their unique designs in traditional handicrafts. In this case study, it was found that the tourism MSEs in this destination display their creative products towards the tourists and simultaneously, this created work opportunity for the poor community which matches with the concept of PPT approach in a great extent. An indigenous community member at Cox's Bazar mentioned:

*Community leaders try to promote own cultural products through inspiring the indigenous people to be involved in tourism MSEs. Community leaders also convince the financial institutions in arranging micro loan for their businesses. ...I believe that these unique products and coordination of the community leaders saves the life of such people. (PN 22)*

Moreover, a key informant from the tourism board of Bangladesh highlighted the essence of community leaders in the view point of PPT approach. He added:

*It would be impossible for the NGOs and the government agencies alone to build trust and confidence among the local communities without the help of*



*the community leaders. Since the community concept among indigenous communities is strong, community leaders can be utilized in order to motivate communities to become involved in tourism-related businesses. (PN 24)*

Findings from the participants' comment revealed that the community leaders are the influential personnel for the indigenous community who are impoverished in this destination. In Bangladesh, indigenous communities mostly live at the Cox's Bazar zone and they are dependent on the tourism MSEs through their unique handicraft products. This view corroborates with Fletcher *et al.* (2016) and Islam and Carlsen (2016) that the community leaders are supposed to build awareness among indigenous community about tourism benefits and their prospects in terms of involving them into tourism businesses through supplying handicrafts. In this study, it was found the community leaders are crucial supporting role players for the tourism MSEs through incorporating the local poor community. However, from the participants statement, the community leaders were found to practice nepotism or partial treatment. This study suggests that the community leaders as tourism destination stakeholders may have obligations towards their followers for pulling them into mainstream of the society.

#### **4.4.6 NGOs and Volunteers**

From the interviews and field visits, NGOs and volunteers were found as crucial stakeholders in this tourism destination in which it can greatly support the tourism MSEs in implementing the PPT approach. It was found that NGOs are involved in social activities and they aim to reduce poverty in Bangladesh. It was noticed that the NGOs are working in developing human skills at Cox's Bazar region so that the local poor community can be involved in various works. It was found that this area is well behind in terms of education and health, and the NGOs have taken many initiatives to alleviate this issue which is helpful for PPT approach. According to the research participants, NGOs are contributing remarkably through providing technical training and financing for the poor local community. In this case study, it was noticed that the NGOs are devoted in providing training in different categories of effort linked to

tourism businesses i.e., agriculture, handicrafts, entrepreneurship and so on. Moreover, this study also found that the volunteers are building awareness among the local communities about the tourism benefits through their activities in this area. A key informant from an NGO who is a manager of Cox's Bazar branch said:

*Our organization focuses on reducing poverty through developing skills of the poor local communities. Since it is a tourism destination, we do arrange training program linked to tourism activities which is supportive for the local community to get a job or to start a tourism MSE...moreover, we provide loan mainly for the micro and small enterprises at this tourism destination. (PN 25)*

Similarly, an MSE operator among local community people at Cox's Bazar commented:

*NGOs can effectively support the poor community because they operate their activities in the root level where poverty is prevailing. Although they are charging higher interest against the given loan, it helps the poor to start a micro business at the tourism destination. (PN 03)*

Findings show that the NGOs and volunteers are contributing incredibly to reduce poverty from Cox's Bazar region through encouraging the local community to be involved in tourism activities. This finding matches with the present literature sources that NGOs can provide relevant training to the poor community for building their capacity to be involved in tourism MSEs (Khazaei *et al.*, 2015, Islam and Carlsen, 2016). Since the poor community is not aware of the tourism MSEs benefits, NGOs and volunteers can disseminate and make them understand so that they feel enthused (Proyrungroj, 2018). In this case study, it was found that the NGOs are providing micro credits in Bangladesh to the poor community members for productive purposes since no other financial institutions provide loans to this group of people (Yunus, 2007). It is also confirms that there is a dissatisfaction that exists among the poor community because of the conditions of the provided loan relating to interest rate and installment policy (Islam and Carlsen, 2016). This study suggests that the NGOs and

volunteers may have the opportunity to guide the local poor community and influence them to be involved in tourism MSEs in this destination.

#### **4.4.7 Government Agencies**

Government agencies are revealed as inevitable stakeholders in this tourism destination where they are engaged in supporting the poor local communities to be involved in tourism MSEs to accelerate the PPT approach. Government agencies relevant to tourism development at Cox's Bazar have undertaken noticeable initiatives to protect and support the tourism MSEs in order to ensure PPT approach. It was observed that principally, the tourism MSEs have created livelihood opportunities for the poor at Cox's Bazar beach destination. Upon such realization, government agencies have enhanced their support towards the tourism MSEs and the associated people linked to tourism. Government agencies at Cox's Bazar provide infrastructural development so that the poor community can get easy access of infrastructure. It was found that infrastructural development was the precondition to support tourism MSEs as well as ensuring PPT approach in this tourism destination where the government has paid attention for the betterment of the poor community. In addition to infrastructural development, government agencies play a crucial role in developing human resource so that they can efficiently and effectively participate in tourism enterprises in this destination. However, this study found several mismatches among local government agencies of Cox's Bazar in terms of mitigating administrative complexity to start a new enterprise by the poor community. This study also found dissatisfaction among the poor community people linked to tourism MSEs in this destination regarding financing crisis alongside high rate of interest. Extracts from a small business operator at Cox's Bazar are presented in the statement:

*There is a need for more support for tourism MSEs from government in terms of approval of business, micro credit with flexible conditions, law and orders, categorized market. ...Besides, there is a need to ensure more tourist facilities at the beach so that in the dull season, tourists are also attracted to come. (PN 04)*

Similarly, a key informant from BPC stated:

*Cox's Bazar beach is required to upgrade compared to other beach tourism centered countries i.e., Indonesia, Maldives, Thailand, Malaysia whereby the government has been assumed to take necessary steps. (PN 24)*

In Bangladesh, National Tourism Organization (NTO) is under Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism and is solely responsible for tourism development and is supposed to create livelihoods sources for the poor through tourism activities. From the field visits and participants statement, it was observed that initiatives undertaken by NTO are not satisfactory to the poor local community who are linked with tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach. However, this study also found that considering the expectations of the poor community people of this area, NTO planned to execute the PPT approach through tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach destination. A key informant from the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism commented:

*NTO provides training for the development of the local poor to help them to be efficient in tourism work. We are planning to cluster the business meticulously according to similar features and help them to settle in their specific business with registration. Then, training will be arranged according to their types of business. (PN 11)*

Findings show that the government's support for tourism MSEs in view of implementing PPT approach is the most crucial factor at Cox's Bazar beach destination. This finding agrees with the current literature sources that the government agencies play a vital role in empowering the local poor people that are focused in tourism businesses at the destination (Teye *et al.*, 2002, Agyapong, 2010, Manwa and Manwa, 2014). Capacity building for the poor community can be developed through ensuring vocational education and training by the government relating to business (Novelli *et al.*, 2012). Realizing the benefits of tourism MSEs for the poor community, the government may encourage them through ensuring infrastructural accessibility, waving fees and taxes, providing financial support and so forth. This view is consistent with Wasudawan and Rahim (2018) that the poor community commonly struggle in collecting capital for business and feel burdened to pay the fees for licensing. Majority of the research participants stated that there was an ongoing

corruption in the Cox's Bazar beach destination relating to obtaining business approval along with tender or leasing systems whereby government intervention is highly required. Besides, this study also suggests that the government may help the poor community linked to tourism MSEs in the low tourism seasons through enhancing tourists' attractions at Cox's Bazar (Islam, 2012).

#### **4.4.8 Summary of Findings on Research Question 3**

Research question three examines the supporting strategy of the tourism destination stakeholders relating to tourism MSEs for ensuring PPT approach. It was found that the stakeholders support for tourism MSEs is inevitable to enhance the PPT approach in the Cox's Bazar beach destination. For example, it was found that several NGOs, government agencies and cooperative society provide training and loan to the poor local community in starting MSEs in this destination. Community leaders were found to inspire and help the local residents to produce and preserve traditional culture via MSEs in tourism. In addition, tourists were found as enthusiastic to buy traditional products from local MSEs where the local residents and MSE owners show amiable attitude towards the tourists. These findings agree with the existing literature sources that the stakeholders conducive effort is highly required for the PPT implementation (Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018, Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2016, Ghasemi and Hamzah, 2014). However, it is expected that the government agencies and the NGOs have to take such initiatives that can help to eliminate the challenges faced by the local poor community to be involved in tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar. Thus, it can be said that the MSEs in tourism is the best gateway for the poor whereby the stakeholders' supporting attitude plays a significant role.

#### **4.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented findings from the in-depth interviews from Cox's Bazar tourism beach destination. The next and final chapter concludes the research by

summarizing the entire study, discussing the implications and limitations of the research and some recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Chapter Overview

The previous chapter has discussed on the findings of this study as per the addressed research questions in themes and sub-themes and simultaneously comparing them with the existing literature sources to reveal the new contributions the research has made. This chapter concludes the research through presenting the contributions. It starts with key findings of the entire study followed by the theoretical contributions along with managerial and social implications of the study. Finally, the limitations of the study are conferred as well as addressing some directions for future studies.

#### 5.2 Key Findings of the Study

Bangladesh tourism has grown greatly in recent years. This development has provided huge employment scopes as well as tourism MSE opportunities for the poor residents. In Cox's Bazar, the tourism enterprises have been a catalyst to alleviate poverty for the local community. While local poor communities can afford to diversify their means of livelihoods, or create tourism related enterprises, others have attained employment linked to tourism enterprises. This has allowed them to improve their standard of living alongside household economy and ensured the execution of PPT approach in this destination. PPT enhances the linkages between the poor local community and the tourism enterprises in view of reducing poverty from the destination (Duim and Caalders, 2008, Proyrungroj, 2018). PPT initiative includes the support for micro and small enterprises by the stakeholders linked to tourism which enables the local poor communities who are skilled in business management to be involved in tourism destination development (Mowforth and Munt, 2016, Ashley *et al.*, 2001a).

This thesis has reviewed the PPT and tourism enterprise literature and has identified the existing literature gap on tourism MSE stakeholders, particularly in terms of the issues of recognizing MSEs stakeholders, and understanding the perceived benefits, challenges, and supporting strategies in view of implementing PPT approach. Although the concept of stakeholder has been broadly investigated in organizational and firms' perspectives, there is still scarcity of stakeholder research in the tourism MSE context in view of PPT approach implementation. Moreover, the mainstream tourism enterprises studies have been conducted mostly in the developed country's context relating to SMEs. Thus, this research has been set out to conduct its study in a developing country- Bangladesh, to examine the influencing factors of the local poor community to be involved in tourism MSEs in order to implement PPT approach. The Cox's Bazar beach in Bangladesh, exhibited a unique case for exploration since it has a diversified social, political, ethnic and linguistic background. By investigating the influential factors of the poor community involvement in tourism MSEs, this research brought new insights into the PPT approach. The uniqueness of this research is that it is focused on the tourism MSEs that are existing at Cox's Bazar beach area of Bangladesh, in which there is no identified published work done on how tourism MSEs benefit the poor communities in order to ensure PPT initiative to the best knowledge of the researcher. The main aim of this thesis was to explore the involvement of micro and small enterprises in pro-poor tourism in Cox's Bazar beach destination. To achieve the aim of this study, three research questions were asked in the following statements.

RQ1: What are the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?

RQ2: What are the challenges faced by MSEs from getting involved in PPT initiative?

RQ3: How do tourism stakeholders support MSEs involvement in PPT initiative?

To answer the aforementioned research questions and achieve the research objectives an interpretivism paradigm within a qualitative-inductive case study research method was adopted to explore comprehensive information of the investigated phenomenon. Primary data were collected from 25 in-depth interviews using an electronic audio voice recorder with relevant tourism MSEs stakeholders from Cox's Bazar beach



area. In view of triangulation and confirming the credibility of the collected data from the participants, secondary data were also obtained from multiple relevant sources as documentary evidence and participant observation was also considered. Afterwards, the gathered data were transcribed properly and analyzed thematically in the light of existing literature. The findings of this thesis are presented in the following subsections based on the research questions of the thesis.

### **5.2.1 Perceived Benefits**

The analyzed data revealed that enhancing the family's standard of living under economic benefit is the main reason local poor communities are involved in MSEs in tourism related ventures at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination. Other identified economic driving forces that lead to the involvement of MSEs in tourism include leverage on tourism network and expansion of business. It was found that the local community at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination is very poor and they are in search of sources of employment to alleviate poverty. Findings indicated that MSEs in tourism is one of the possible means in overcoming unemployment problems at Cox's Bazar. MSEs in tourism provides regular income and improve their family standard of living. Besides, the poor local communities at Cox's Bazar are involved in tourism MSEs related ventures because it is easier to expand their businesses due to the support from tourism networks through developing liaison with large companies that provide market information and guidance.

In terms of non-economic benefits, findings show that the poor local community at Cox's Bazar preferred to achieve social recognition through their involvement in MSEs in tourism related businesses. For example, it was found that non-economic benefits include training and development, regional socio-cultural development, enhancement in environmental awareness and participation in decision making. Considering the socio-economic condition at Cox's Bazar and the setting of this area social recognition attainment and environmental awareness are viewed as new findings for the PPT literature that heavily influence the poor community. Most of the research participants who are operating tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar are seeking to

establish their social identity whereby these tourism MSEs are viewed as the only means of fulfilling their needs.

To ensure a more fruitful and sustainable PPT approach at Cox's Bazar beach region, this study adopted MSEs in tourism as an avenue that allows the poor community's involvement and combines the PPT strategy provided by Ashley *et al.* (2001a) into two broad categories: (i) economic benefits and (ii) non-economic benefits. The new categorization in PPT strategies and inclusion of social recognition and environmental awareness as non-economic benefits attained through MSEs in tourism eliminates some overlaps found in the Ashley's *et al.* (2001) PPT strategy.

### **5.2.2 Challenges**

In-depth interviews with the research participants revealed that the poor local community is faced a wide range of challenges to be involved in MSEs in tourism related ventures at Cox's Bazar beach destination. It was found that the local community of the Cox's Bazar region is living under poverty whereby tourism activities were found as the only means to survive. However, participating in tourism MSEs either as an owner or an employee is an ongoing challenge to them since they have limitations in terms of technical skill and tourism knowledge. These cohort of people of this area also have major problems relating to initial capital management and financing support for their business as well as the lack of access to the infrastructure to operate such businesses. Moreover, high cost of living owing to tourism destination is a critical challenge for the poor community related to the MSEs in tourism at Cox's Bazar. For example, the price of daily needs and products at Cox's Bazar is comparatively higher than any other parts of Bangladesh whereby the poor MSE operators are forced to comply if they are to stay here.

In addition, this study found several severe challenges for the poor community to be involved in tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar which are liable to exclude the poor from tourism businesses, including political and administrative exploitation, conservative outlook of the society and threat of seasonality. These challenges are viewed as new insights for PPT literature as it creates hindrance to implement PPT approach at this

destination. Thus, the challenges faced by the poor local community to initiate and operate tourism MSE at Cox's Bazar have to be taken into account meticulously for ensuring benefits of the poor which is consistent to the PPT approach.

### **5.2.3 Stakeholder's Support**

It was found that the tourism stakeholders relating to MSEs at Cox's Bazar can play a vital role to ensure PPT approach through supporting the poor local communities. Tourism stakeholders linked to MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach come from different roles such as MSE owners, MSE employees, tourists, MSE trade union, local communities, community leaders, NGOs and volunteers, and government agencies. It was found that each and every stakeholder is responsible for supporting the poor community who are operating businesses at this destination including the poor community itself. Support is important from these respective stakeholders as it can mitigate the challenges faced by the local community to be involved in tourism MSEs at this destination. For example, tourists were found to purchase indigenous products from the local MSEs rather than branded outlets which is becomes a way of supporting the poor communities. Likewise, NGOs and government agencies were found to arrange training programs to boost up efficiency of the poor MSE operators in this study. However, it was also found that there is still scope for the responsible tourism stakeholders to provide support in terms of low interest micro credit, ensuring transparency in administration, access to infrastructure, adequate vocational training, ensuring equal opportunity etc. for the poor community associated in tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach destination.

As such, it can be concluded that it is needed to ensure support from every stakeholder linked to tourism MSEs to overcome the challenges faced by the poor community people of this destination in view of successful implementation of PPT approach. Hence, this research offers a new dimension of PPT approach that can be achieved through adopting MSEs in tourism at Cox's Bazar beach destination which intends to give net benefits to the poor community.

To sum up, this research has contributed to the scholarship of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh based on the findings from the study context as follows:

- a. It has produced a theoretical framework for MSEs involvement in PPT initiative.
- b. It has applied a tourism destination stakeholder-based map to understand the three main components of the conceptual framework which includes perceived benefits of MSEs in tourism, challenges of local communities and supporting strategies of tourism destination stakeholders related to MSEs.
- c. It has identified two constructs that influence the local community to be involved in tourism businesses to ensure PPT approach through MSEs in tourism. These are economic benefits and non-economic benefits where intention to achieve social recognition and environmental awareness is viewed as new findings that strongly influence the poor community to be involved in MSEs.
- d. It has identified seven crucial challenges that are faced by the poor local community of Cox's Bazar to be involved in tourism MSEs.
- e. It has addressed the stakeholders supporting strategies relating to MSEs in tourism to mitigate the challenges of poor community in order to implement PPT approach in Bangladesh.

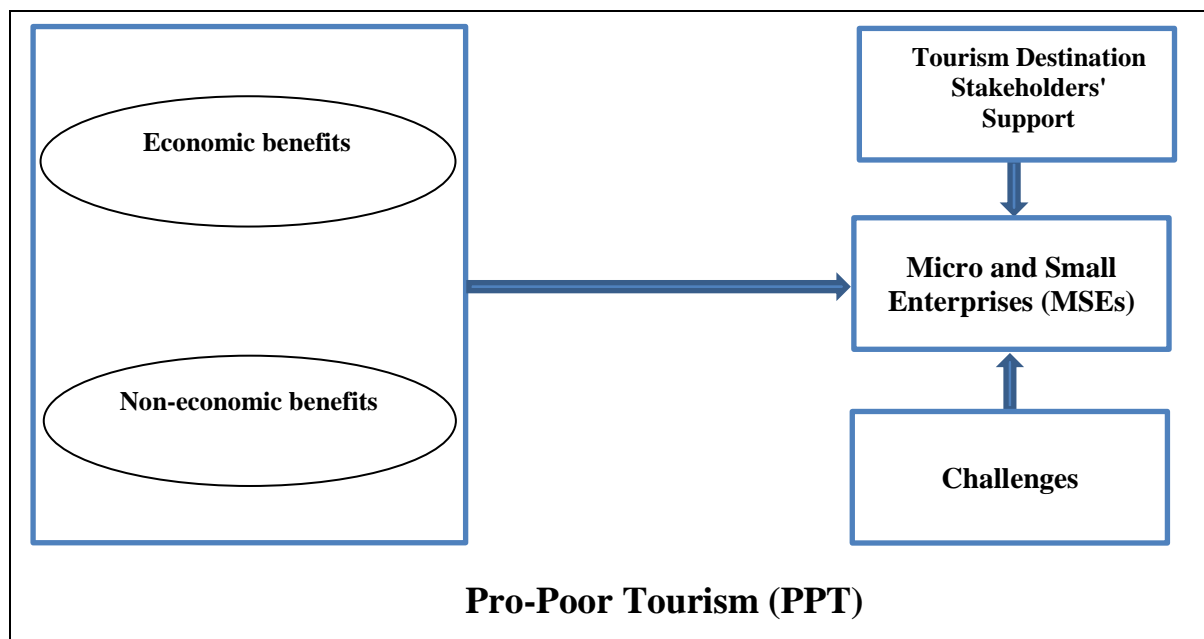
### **5.3 Research Main Aim and Objectives Achieved**

The summary of the findings on the three key components of the proposed conceptual framework, namely perceived benefits of the MSEs in tourism, challenges associated involving in MSEs for the poor local community and the supporting strategies of destination stakeholders related to MSEs indicates that the main aim and objectives of the research have been achieved through answering the research questions. Likewise, the documentary evidence and participant direct observation corroborate with the findings linked to the research objectives and research questions of this study as a part of data collection. Thus, the findings of this study were compared with the

preliminary conceptual framework and were modified in developing a theoretical framework for MSEs involvement in PPT approach.

#### 5.4 Theoretical Contributions of the Research

As discussed in the literature (see Chapter 2), limited studies applied the concept of the PPT as a research tool in exploring the interrelationship between tourism and poverty. This research has contributed to the existing body of literature on PPT approach (Chok *et al.*, 2007, Burke, 2019, Chhetri, 2019, Zeng, 2018). It provides an understanding of adopting MSEs in tourism in view of implementing PPT approach through incorporating local poor communities into the tourism MSEs. No publications in academic journals, research reports and/or in academic books have observed the effectiveness of the MSEs in tourism contribution on PPT implementation in Bangladesh, to the best knowledge of the researcher.



**Figure 5. 1: A framework for MSEs Involvement in PPT Initiative**

The uniqueness of this research is that it has considered the MSEs in tourism as vital means of employing local poor community at Cox’s Bazar beach destination in order to ensure PPT initiative. Simultaneously, this study explores the opportunities and

challenges of these local people to participate in tourism MSEs along with identification of the tourism stakeholders' supporting strategies in overcoming these challenges in view of successful PPT implementation. The proposed framework is presented in Figure 5.1.

Due to its comprehensiveness, this research adopted the PPT strategies provided by Ashley *et al.* (2001a) and showed these strategies as a driving force to be involved in tourism MSEs to ensure PPT approach at Cox's Bazar beach destination. It was found that the economic benefits and non-economic benefits directly influenced the poor local communities to be engaged in tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach region. In terms of economic benefits, the major motivation behind choosing tourism MSEs involvement for the local people of this destination are such as enhancement in family's standard of living and leverage on tourism network and expansion of business.

Likewise, non-economic benefits also significantly inspired the poor community of Cox's Bazar to be involved in MSEs in tourism for their livelihood. It was found that not only economic benefits encouraged the poor community to take part in PPT development, non-economic and participation benefits motivate them as well. Non-economic livelihood benefits and partnership and participation benefits as PPT strategies provided by Ashley *et al.* (2001a) have been merged as non-economic benefits to minimize the overlaps and are discussed together in this study. Under non-economic benefits, motivation for getting social recognition and enhancing environmental awareness (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.2) are viewed as unique contribution in terms of ensuring PPT approach at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination. In addition, participation in decision making by the poor community of Cox's Bazar occurs via their involvement in tourism MSEs. It was found that the administrative authority arranged open discussions with the respective stakeholders to formulate tourism policies. Consequently, the poor local community can participate by selecting their representatives as trade union leaders or community leaders of each categorized enterprise. Thus, the modified PPT strategies of Ashley *et al.* (2001a) eliminated some overlaps found in the original framework.

It was also found that the poor local communities were squeezed with a number of challenges due to their involvement in tourism MSEs to ensure the PPT approach at Cox's Bazar. For example, the challenge of political and administrative exploitation, conservative outlook of the society and threat of seasonality (see Chapter 4, section 4.3) are viewed as unique findings for this study which is significantly liable for excluding the poor local communities from tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach destination. Likewise, inadequate access to infrastructure, lack of skills and tourism knowledge, high living cost and most importantly the scarcity of initial capital and financing sources for MSEs in tourism are liable in blocking the poor communities' participation and is deterrent to the implementation of PPT approach. In addition, this study contributes to the stakeholder theory in terms of normative approach through outlining the social welfare as a whole via tourism MSEs. Thus, this study revealed that identifying stakeholders' support is needed to annihilate these challenges they face in participating and launching tourism MSEs at this destination. This research therefore suggests that apart from the perceived benefits of local poor communities' involvement in tourism MSEs, the challenges they are faced must be investigated alongside stakeholders' support to alleviate these issues in order to understand and implement PPT approach through tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach destination as shown in Figure 5.1. Though this framework was developed based on tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar in view of implementing PPT, it can also be applied to similar contexts of other countries.

## **5.5 Practical Implications**

The current study aims to explore the involvement of MSEs in PPT approach at Cox's Bazar beach in Bangladesh. From the managerial point of view, it is very essential to have transparent knowledge of why poor communities are involved in tourism MSEs and what are the challenges they have to face for this participation at Cox's Bazar beach so that the authorities could mitigate those challenges (Ashley and Roe, 2002, Borden *et al.*, 2017). Since MSEs in tourism is viewed as a significant employment source for the poor community of Cox's Bazar, tourism stakeholders should pay full attention to support MSEs in view of advancing PPT approach. Thus, the findings of

this thesis have significant implications for the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism-Bangladesh, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC), Bangladesh Tourism Board as the National Tourism Organization (NTO), Cox's Bazar Development Authority (CoxDA), NGOs, tourism MSEs trade union and other policymakers in Bangladesh relating to tourism development.

First, this research found that tourism MSEs at the Cox's Bazar beach destination is a significant way of involving the poor local community to work in supporting their livelihood which is highly related to PPT approach. However, the collection of initial capital for business start-up and lack of financing sources for expansion of their businesses are revealed as a crucial challenge for such an impoverished community. These findings could help the policymakers to provide required support regarding easy conditioned micro loan in view of incorporating more poor community in this venture. Thus, the responsible tourism stakeholders e.g., government agencies, NGOs should take such initiatives which can facilitate the poor in terms of supplying initial capital for launching tourism MSEs in this destination (Ghasemi and Hamzah, 2014, Burke, 2019).

Second, the study also showed that human skill development is highly required in ensuring the PPT approach so that the poor can take part in tourism activities. It was observed that to operate a tourism MSE at this destination, technical skills and tourism knowledge relating to entrepreneurship are required which is unfortunately absent among poor communities of Cox's Bazar. However, the scope of such technical skill enhancement is very limited according to the demand. For example, in beach photography, it is required to have good understanding concerning the functions of camera which requires training, while a tour guide is required to have diverse linguistic skills along with broad knowledge about destination, a salesman need to know manners when approaching tourists, a chef required to know a variety of recipes etc. (Torres *et al.*, 2011, Adeyinka-Ojo, 2018, Wasudawan and Rahim, 2018). These findings could help the policymakers such as NTO, BPC and NGOs to formulate strategies in supporting the poor community in order to influence them to be involved in tourism MSEs. Therefore, technical and vocational education, with the comprehensive effort by the identified destination stakeholders relating to tourism



MSEs will be immensely needed for the poor community at this destination to ensure the PPT approach.

Third, political and administrative exploitation is revealed in this research as a major challenge for the poor local communities of this destination where it is liable to exclude them from tourism activities and simultaneously, being critical for PPT approach. Findings from the participants' statement exposed that the administrative corruption is an intolerable issue for the poor community to operate tourism MSE at this destination. This finding is alarming to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism-Bangladesh since it is an obstacle for ensuring benefits towards the poor communities. Considering these issues, the supreme authority of the government, such as tourist police of Bangladesh, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) should take initiatives immediately to ensure the poor communities' participation in tourism MSEs in an enthusiastic manner (Islam, 2012).

Forth, the access to the infrastructure by the local poor community for tourism MSEs is quite inadequate at Cox's Bazar beach area although it is mandatory for operating a business. This research revealed that large-scaled tourism enterprises have complete access to the infrastructure whereas the MSEs were overlooked and ignored although these MSEs provide major employment opportunities for the local communities (Sultana, 2016). It was also exposed that due to the lack of infrastructural access and development for the tourism MSEs, the poor community is compelled to close their businesses which is a severe impediment to PPT approach as well. These findings might help the concerned authorities, such as CoxDA, local government, NTO to develop infrastructure in an organized manner so that poor can get access and survive smoothly through operating tourism MSEs. Moreover, this study suggests that the government should take initiatives to develop beach infrastructure considering the tourists' expectation as it is available in abroad.

Fifth, this research found that the conservative outlook of the society is one of the major issues in this destination that limits the women's participation in tourism MSEs as well as limiting the potential MSE options such as pubs or bars, reflexology centers, night clubs and so forth. This finding clearly provides an understanding of the socio-cultural scenario of this destination which in a great extent demotivates the

tourists to visit this location. This outcome is alarming to the related stakeholders, such as community leaders, MSE owners, MSE employees that conservative outlook of the society greatly affects the employment opportunity for the poor community and consequently, they remain under the poverty line. The media could produce short films for their better understanding and inspire through highlighting the benefits of equal participation of men and women in tourism MSEs and its impact in alleviating poverty. In particular, this study suggests that the community leaders of this destination should play an anchor role in eliminating the superstitious beliefs prevailing in the society which hinders equal participation in the tourism MSEs (Chhetri, 2019, Saito *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, the policymakers and the destination stakeholders (e.g., NGOs, government, community leaders, co-operative society) should take proper approaches to convince the poor communities and pursue such opportunities for the tourists so that the poor can get more scope for tourism MSEs.

Sixth, it was found that threat of seasonality is a critical issue for the poor local community who are operating tourism MSEs in this beach destination. During the monsoon period, the tourists are reluctant to visit the Cox's Bazar beach because the only coral Island, Saint Martin, is closed due to the adverse weather. Therefore, the policymakers need to formulate planned tourism policy (e.g., festival/cultural tourism) for the Cox's Bazar beach tourism so that tourists can be inspired to visit all the year round and the poor tourism MSE owners could operate business as well. BPC and NTO should strategize and promote other form of tourism such as cultural/festival tourism to grab the attention of the tourists in view of overcoming the seasonal complications in operating business for the poor community. This study also suggests that it is required to establish more amusement options for the tourists by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism-Bangladesh so that they can visit throughout the year in other attractions besides the beach and St. Martin Island. Eventually, the poor community will be benefited without any interruption through tourism MSEs and PPT approach will make sense at this beach tourism destination.

This study also found that poor communities' participation in tourism decision making to a limited extent at this destination which is very crucial for PPT approach. Therefore, the government agencies and other policymakers of Bangladesh (e.g., CoxDA, BPC, NTO) relating to tourism development must hold regular dialogues in a

broader perspective through ensuring poor communities participation relating to tourism MSEs at Cox's Bazar beach destination in view of supporting the poor local communities. This can help the poor and indigenous communities at Cox's Bazar beach destination to place their opinion in formulating tourism strategy. Thus, collaborating with concerned stakeholders and their comprehensive support in tourism MSEs might alleviate poverty while ensuring PPT's initiatives since tourism MSEs are being operated by the poor local communities in this destination.

Finally, this study will also create awareness of benefit MSE involvement in PPT initiative and enhance consciousness on safety and security at the destination for the local community in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Moreover, the traditional culture and history of the region would be better preserved through MSEs in tourism that attracts the tourists and eventually provides benefit towards the local community. Thus, this study suggests to the tourists to purchase traditional and indigenous products from the MSEs through skipping the branded outlets in view of supporting the poor community. Besides, the MSE owners/investors, employees and local communities should ensure quality service for the tourist so that it can build a strong relationship and attachment. In a nutshell, on the basis of findings of this study, it is suggested that the potential implication for the community to develop relationship among different stakeholders linked with MSEs in tourism would lead to enhancing benefits for the poor community through realizing the essence of PPT approach application.

## **5.6 Limitations of the Study**

The main purpose of this thesis was to explore the involvement of micro and small enterprises in pro-poor tourism in Bangladesh. The researcher experienced a number of restrictions while conducting the research in conjunction with that purpose and accordingly like every research work, this thesis has some limitations.

Firstly, in selecting the research study sites, emphasis was given to the ability to access the tourism MSEs operating by the poor community in beach destination for selection of study sites. Therefore, owing to these criteria and inadequate time and resources, study site was limited to only one beach destination while several beach

destinations in Bangladesh remain penurious, and thus limiting the generalizability of the findings. However, the findings might be relevant to other beach destinations of Bangladesh or countries which have a similar socio-cultural environment as that of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Secondly, the researcher experienced a number of constraints while determining the suitable sampling unit for this study. Since this was the first endeavor to explore tourism MSEs involvement in PPT implementation in the context of Cox's Bazar beach, determining a representative sampling unit for the researcher was a great challenge. Gaining access to the poor communities who were linked with tourism MSEs and associated key stakeholders was an early constraint. Considering these constraints, the researcher had to trust on purposive sampling to reach knowledgeable participants for this study. Owing to time constraints and the dispersed location of tourism MSE stakeholders, it was unconvincing to organize focus group discussions or any other techniques of data collection that poses as a limitation for this study.

Thirdly, a total of 25 in-depth interviews were conducted to get information for this study which may not cover the whole range of demographic or every group of stakeholders. For example, the researcher found that the women were extremely reluctant to be research participants as interviewees due to the prevailing socio-cultural factors in Bangladesh while only four women agreed to be interviewed. Consequently, the limited portion of female participants may not generalize the given information over the investigated phenomenon which poses as another limitation for this research. Lastly, another limitation of this research is that it could not endeavor to capture comparisons among MSEs and large-scale tourism enterprises in terms of contribution to ensure PPT approach at Cox's Bazar beach destination.

## **5.7 Recommendations for Future Research**

Besides adding a new avenue to the existing PPT literature through capitalizing tourism MSEs, this study offers an opportunity to extend the scope for future research. On the basis of identified limitations, several recommendations can be made for imminent studies. Firstly, this research could be replicated in other beach destinations of Bangladesh through applying multiple case study of the investigated phenomenon in view of improving credibility and transferability of the research

findings. Simultaneously considering the same viewpoint of this research, future research could be conducted in other countries with similar socio-cultural environment context as Cox's Bazar beach destination. Secondly, to make sure the research findings are more representative of the investigated phenomenon, future research can endeavor to apply focus group interviews with different key stakeholders in addition to face-to-face interview method of data collection which is considered as less prone to bias and enhance simplification of the findings.

In this study, it was observed that the female participation in tourism MSEs was a crucial issue in terms of socio-cultural, economic and practical aspects of PPT initiative. However, most of them were reluctant to face in-depth interview although their responses might be crucial for generalizing of the investigated phenomenon. Thus, future studies could attempt to capture significant number of women participants to elicit their complications to be involved in tourism MSEs in ensuring PPT approach.

As this thesis only focused on tourism MSEs involvement in PPT approach, future research could adopt all tourism activities that is linked with poor local communities including the large-scale tourism enterprises. In addition, future research might endeavor to apply quantitative methods of research to explore the tourism MSEs significance and stakeholders supporting strategy for advancing PPT approach that yields net benefit for the local poor community of the destination.

## **5.8 Chapter Summary**

In this study, tourism MSE is revealed as the most crucial development tool to reduce prevailing poverty at Cox's Bazar region through employing the poor local communities. Economic and non-economic benefits of tourism MSEs have been shown as the main reason to be involved in tourism MSEs by the poor communities of this destination in view of implementing successful PPT approach. Even though Bangladesh has commenced the SDGs of the United Nations for eradicating extreme poverty, often, the tourism MSEs' effectiveness in reducing poverty and

implementing PPT has not been recognised by key stakeholders. It is observed that the tourism MSEs can be an effective means of incorporating local impoverished communities through key stakeholders' support. Thus, this study has explored the perceived benefits of MSEs in tourism towards local poor community and shown its effectiveness in the implementation PPT approach at Cox's Bazar beach destination. Specifically, this research found that it is imperative to identify the challenges faced by the poor communities to be involved in tourism MSEs. Besides, this study contributes through identifying the key stakeholders related to MSEs in tourism at Cox's Bazar and explores the supporting role for mitigating these challenges faced by the poor communities to be involved in tourism MSEs. As such, this research proposes a comprehensive framework for studying and understanding to attain PPT approach in adopting MSEs in tourism as a significant means of employment generator from Cox's Bazar and other similar contexts. This research has advanced its theory development in the field of pro-poor tourism approach related to the identification of key stakeholders, challenges and supporting strategies for tourism MSEs. In a nutshell, this thesis answers all three research questions addressed for this study and thus, attains the research objectives.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Introductory Letter

Dear.....,

#### **Request to gather data for academic research**

I am undertaking this study as part of my MPhil. studies titled: '*Micro and Small Enterprises Involvement in Pro-poor Tourism: Evidence from Bangladesh*' in the Faculty of Business at Curtin University Malaysia. The main aim of this thesis is to explore the involvement of micro and small enterprises in pro-poor tourism in Bangladesh. More specifically, this thesis seeks to identify the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative, such as economic, non-economic and participation standpoints besides; to uncover the challenges faced by the tourism MSEs from getting involved in PPT, and to identify tourism stakeholders' support for MSEs involvement in PPT.

I am writing to kindly request your assistance and support in the study. Participation will involve in-depth interviews with the tourism destination stakeholders related to MSEs and individuals at varying levels within your organization. The interviews will last for approximately one hour at a convenient place and schedule preferred by the interviewee. I have enclosed an open-ended question so that you may review the same prior to interview. Your kind consent is most vital in accessing the potential interviewees in your organization. Participation is voluntary, and all interviews will be totally confidential, and anonymity assured. Participants may also withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty.

If confirmation of these details is needed, please feel free to contact my supervisor **Dr. Junaid M. Shaikh**, Associate Professor, Department of Accounting, Curtin University, Malaysia, via email: junaid.s@curtin.edu.my or my co-supervisor **Dr. Samuel Adeyinka-Ojo**, Senior Lecturer, Department of Marketing, Curtin University, Malaysia, via email: samuel.adey@curtin.edu.my.

I wish to express my appreciation and gratitude for your assistance. I will contact you in the near future with the anticipation of your kind consent in accessing your organization for interviews.

Sincerely,

Rudrendu Ray

MPhil Candidate

Faculty of Business

Curtin University, Malaysia

**Email: rudra@postgrad.curtin.edu.my**

## Appendix 2. Participant Information Statement

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

<b>HREC Thesis Number:</b>	<b>HRE2018-0324</b>
<b>Thesis Title:</b>	<b>Micro and Small Enterprises Involvement in Pro-poor Tourism: Evidence from Bangladesh</b>
<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	<b>Dr. Junaid M. Shaikh</b> , Associate Professor, Department of Accounting, Curtin University, Malaysia.
<b>Student Researcher:</b>	<b>Rudrendu Ray</b>
<b>Version Number:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Version Date:</b>	<b>01/Aug/2014</b>

#### What is the thesis About?

The tourism industry has become one of the fastest rising sectors of the world economy and is now considered as one of the significant pillars of economic, social, and cultural enhancement in many nations in the world. Research on pro-poor tourism (PPT) predominantly focuses on its benefits, sustainability, and development issues. However, there are limited studies on the factors influencing Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) involvement in pro-poor tourism especially in tourism beach destination. To achieve the main aim of this thesis, a general question is asked - How do micro and small enterprises involve in pro-poor tourism in beach destination? Thus, the study context is placed within a theoretical framework exploring the perceived benefits of MSEs in PPT engagement, which is underpinned by stakeholder theory. In-depth semi-structured interview will be conducted from an operational tourism destination among the MSEs stakeholders using a purposive sampling technique. The collected data will be analyzed thematically. Findings from this research will have implications for the existing knowledge, tourism operators and policy makers, and the host community – Cox's Bazar (the study context) in Bangladesh.

#### Who is doing the Research?

The project is being conducted by Rudrendu Ray. The results of this research project will be used by Rudrendu Ray to obtain a Master of Philosophy at Curtin University and is funded by the University under Curtin Sarawak Postgraduate Scholarship.

#### Why am I being asked to take part and what will I have to do?

- I am looking for tourism destination stakeholders who are affecting or affected by tourism in Bangladesh. In particular, perceived benefits of micro and small enterprises involvement in pro-poor tourism initiative.
- The study will take place at Cox's Bazar Beach area in Bangladesh.

- I will ask you questions about your perceptions and experiences about the micro and small enterprises involvement in pro-poor tourism initiative at this beach as a stakeholder.
- I will arrange an in-depth interview session by taking consent of the respective participants followed by a digital voice recorder, and it requires about 30-40 minutes to complete.
- There will be no cost to you for taking part in this research and you will not be paid for taking part.

**Are there any benefits' to being in the research thesis?**

- In general, participating in a research would be a positive experience for respondents. In particular, it is a great opportunity for the respondents to be able to contribute in the development of their own community. Additionally, their contribution will be viewed as an honour by the fellow community members. The researcher will also express his gratitude towards them for their participation and cooperation in this survey by handing out courtesy gifts (e.g. writing pen).
- I hope the results of this research will help policy makers to improve their policies to ensure more benefits for the poor at this destination that will in turn increase their income, create more employment and revenue for the government. Moreover, local community can find more facilities at this beach destination that might help to reduce poverty in Bangladesh.

**Are there any risks, side-effects, discomforts or inconveniences from being in the research thesis?**

In general, the researcher does not foresee any significant potential risks to the respondents for participating in this survey. However, spending between 30 to 40 minutes of their time to complete the interview may interrupt the participants' daily activities or family time. Although in the context of Bangladesh, where people are naturally friendly and welcoming, the participants may feel anxious and uncomfortable to find a stranger at their place. They may also be concerned about confidentiality, their identity or if their opinions stated in the session are disclosed.

**Who will have access to my information?**

The information collected in this research will be non-identifiable (anonymous). Any information I collect and use during this research will be treated as confidential. The following people will have access to the information I collect in this research: Principal Investigator - Dr. Junaid M. Shaikh (junaid.s@curtin.edu.my), Co-Investigator - Dr. Samuel Adeyinka-Ojo (samuel.adey@curtin.edu.my), and the Curtin University Ethics Committee.

- Electronic data will be password-protected and hard copy data will be in locked storage.

- The information I collect in this study will be kept under secure conditions at Curtin University for at least 7 years.
- You have the right to access, and request correction of, your information in accordance with relevant privacy laws.
- The results of this research may be presented at conferences or published in academic journals. You will not be identified in any results that are published or presented.
- Whilst all care will be taken to maintain privacy and confidentiality of any information shared at in-depth interview.

**Will you tell me the results of the research?**

- I am not able to send you any results from this research as I do not collect any personal information to be able to contact you.
- If you ask me for a copy of research summary, I can give you upon completion of this study.

**Do I have to take part in the research thesis?**

- Taking part in this research project is voluntary. It is your choice to take part or not. You do not have to agree if you do not want to. If you decide to take part and then change your mind, that is fine, you can withdraw from the project. You do not have to give a reason; just state that you want to stop. Please let me know you want to stop so I can make sure you are aware of anything that needs to be done so you can withdraw safely. If you chose not to take part or start and then stop the study, it will not affect your relationship with the University, staff or colleagues.
- If you choose to leave the study I will use any information collected unless you tell me not to. Then, I will destroy any information I have collected from you.

**What happens next and who can I contact about the research?**

- If you have any inquiries about this research, please contact me via email [rudra@postgrad.curtin.edu.my](mailto:rudra@postgrad.curtin.edu.my) or phone number +06 01116140269 for any other clarification.
- If you decide to take part in this research, I will ask you to sign the consent form. By signing it is telling me that you understand what you have read and what has been discussed. Signing the consent indicates that you agree to be in the research project. Please take your time and ask any questions, you have before you decide what to do. You will be given a copy of this information and the consent form to keep.
- Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has approved this study (HRE2018-0324). Should you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, in particular, any matters concerning the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, or you wish to make a confidential complaint, you may contact the Ethics Officer on (08) 9266 9223 or the Manager, Research Integrity on (08) 9266 7093 or email to [hrec@curtin.edu.au](mailto:hrec@curtin.edu.au).



### **Appendix 3. General Interview Questions**

#### **Interview Questions**

1. What are the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?
2. Do you think the involvement of local community in MSEs will reduce the level of poverty among the members of local community at Cox's Bazar beach? If yes, how?
3. What strategies do you think can be adopted to involve the local community more in MSEs especially in tourism related business?
4. What are the challenges faced by MSEs from getting involved in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?
5. How do tourism stakeholders support MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?
6. What do you think are the critical success factors of MSEs in PPT in beach tourism destination?

## Appendix 4. Interview Guide

### Interview Guide

#### Ice Breaking

- a. (Establish rapport) Good morning/afternoon/evening Mr/Ms .....  
Thank you very much for accepting to have this interview with me. My name is Rudrendu Ray, a postgraduate research student at Curtin University, Malaysia.
- b. (Purpose) I would like to find out from you the perceived benefits of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) involvement in pro-poor tourism (PPT) initiative for my research project.
- c. (Time line) The interview would take about 1 hour.

#### Transition

**Introduction:** Please could you briefly introduce yourself?

**(A) Research Question One: What are the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?**

- 1.(a) How would you describe (explain) micro and small enterprises in tourism?  
(b) What do you understand from pro-poor tourism (i.e. tourism that benefits the poor to reduce poverty)?  
(c) What do you think should be the roles of MSEs in PPT initiative at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination?
- 2.(a) What do you think are the factors influencing MSEs involvement in PPT initiative at Cox's Bazar beach?  
(b) What are the economic benefits influencing MSEs involvement in PPT initiative?  
(c) Are there any non-economic benefits influencing MSEs involvement in PPT initiative? If yes, what are they? If not, why not?  
(d) Do you think business collaboration (partnership) benefits also encourage MSEs involvement in PPT initiative? If so, what are these potential benefits?

**(B) Research Question Two: What are the challenges faced by MSEs from getting involved in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?**

3.(a) What do you think should be the relationship between MSEs and local community at Cox's Bazar beach?

(b) Do you think the involvement of local community in MSEs will reduce the level of poverty among the members of local community at Cox's Bazar beach? If yes, how?

4.(a) What strategies do you think can be adopted to involve the local community more in MSEs especially in tourism related business?

(b) What are the challenges faced by the local community members from getting involved in MSEs, particularly in tourism related ventures?

**(C) Research Question Three: How do tourism stakeholders support MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in Bangladesh?**

5.(a) How do you think the tourism stakeholders (e.g. Tourists, Government agencies, NGOs, MSE Co-operative society etc.) can provide support for MSEs in tourism business?

(b) What specific roles should government plays in supporting tourism related MSEs in PPT initiative?

6. What do you think are the critical success factors of MSEs in PPT in beach tourism destination?

**Closing**

*Could you please recommend the name(s) of any other individuals who can contribute to this study?*

*Thanks for your kind participation in this research.*

## Appendix 5. Consent Form

### CONSENT FORM

<b>HREC Thesis Number:</b>	<b>HRE2018-0324</b>
<b>Thesis Title:</b>	<b>Micro and Small Enterprises Involvement in Pro-poor Tourism: Evidence from Bangladesh</b>
<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	<b>Dr. Junaid M. Shaikh</b> , Associate Professor, Department of Accounting, Curtin University, Malaysia.
<b>Version Number:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Version Date:</b>	<b>01/Aug/2014</b>

- I have read the information statement version listed above and I understand its contents.
- I believe I understand the purpose, extent and possible risks of my involvement in this thesis.
- I voluntarily consent to take part in this research thesis.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received.
- I understand that this thesis has been approved by Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee and will be carried out in line with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research.
- I understand I will receive a copy of this Information Statement and Consent Form.

Participant Name	
Participant Signature	
Date	

**Declaration by the researcher:** I have supplied an Information Letter and Consent Form to the participant who has signed above, and believe that they understand the purpose, extent and possible risks of their involvement in this thesis.

Researcher Name	
Researcher Signature	
Date	

## Appendix 6. Demographic Profile

### Demographic Profile of the Participant

Name:.....  
.....

Gender:..... Marital Status:.....

Age:.....

Relationship with the destination (Tourist, Resident, NGOs, Entrepreneurs,  
Government Tourism Board, Media etc.)  
.....

Profession:.....

Educational Level: (Please Tick Mark One)

- ❖ Elementary/Primary School
- ❖ Secondary School
- ❖ Certificate/Diploma
- ❖ Graduation Level
- ❖ Postgraduate Level
- ❖ Others

\*\*\*For MSE operators Only: Monthly Gross Income in US\$:.....

Country of Origin:.....

Email:.....

Phone

No:.....

Date:.....

Signature:.....

## Appendix 7. Confirmation of Ethical Clearance



Office of Research and Development

GPO Box U1987  
Perth Western Australia 6845

Telephone +61 8 9266 7863  
Facsimile +61 8 9266 3793  
Web [research.curtin.edu.au](http://research.curtin.edu.au)

06-Jun-2018

Name: Junaid Shaikh  
Department/School: Curtin University  
Email: Junaid.Shaikh@curtin.edu.au

Dear Junaid Shaikh

**RE: Ethics Office approval**  
**Approval number: HRE2018-0324**

Thank you for submitting your application to the Human Research Ethics Office for the project **Factors Influencing Micro and Small Enterprises Involvement in Pro-poor Tourism: Evidence from Bangladesh**.

Your application was reviewed through the Curtin University Low risk review process.

The review outcome is: **Approved**.

Your proposal meets the requirements described in the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*.

Approval is granted for a period of one year from **06-Jun-2018** to **05-Jun-2019**. Continuation of approval will be granted on an annual basis following submission of an annual report.

Personnel authorised to work on this project:

Name	Role
Shaikh, Junaid	CI
Adeyinka-Ojo, Samuel Folorunso	Co-Inv
Ray, Rudrendu	Student

Approved documents:

Document

### Standard conditions of approval

1. Research must be conducted according to the approved proposal
2. Report in a timely manner anything that might warrant review of ethical approval of the project including:

- proposed changes to the approved proposal or conduct of the study
  - unanticipated problems that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project
  - major deviations from the approved proposal and/or regulatory guidelines
  - serious adverse events
3. Amendments to the proposal must be approved by the Human Research Ethics Office before they are implemented (except where an amendment is undertaken to eliminate an immediate risk to participants)
  4. An annual progress report must be submitted to the Human Research Ethics Office on or before the anniversary of approval and a completion report submitted on completion of the project
  5. Personnel working on this project must be adequately qualified by education, training and experience for their role, or supervised
  6. Personnel must disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest, including any financial or other interest or affiliation, that bears on this project
  7. Changes to personnel working on this project must be reported to the Human Research Ethics Office
  8. Data and primary materials must be retained and stored in accordance with the [Western Australian University Sector Disposal Authority \(WAUSDA\)](#) and the [Curtin University Research Data and Primary Materials policy](#)
  9. Where practicable, results of the research should be made available to the research participants in a timely and clear manner
  10. Unless prohibited by contractual obligations, results of the research should be disseminated in a manner that will allow public scrutiny; the Human Research Ethics Office must be informed of any constraints on publication
  11. Approval is dependent upon ongoing compliance of the research with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#), applicable legal requirements, and with Curtin University policies, procedures and governance requirements
  12. The Human Research Ethics Office may conduct audits on a portion of approved projects.

**Special Conditions of Approval**

None

**This letter constitutes low risk/negligible risk approval only.** This project may not proceed until you have met all of the Curtin University research governance requirements.

Should you have any queries regarding consideration of your project, please contact the Ethics Support Officer for your faculty or the Ethics Office at [hrec@curtin.edu.au](mailto:hrec@curtin.edu.au) or on 9266 2784.

Yours sincerely



Catherine Gangell  
Manager, Research Integrity

## Appendix 8. Snapshots of Thematic Analysis of Data

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A3 RQ1: What are the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in beach destination? Q1.(a) How would you describe m

Thematic Analysis of Coding: In-depth Interviews						
RQ1: What are the perceived benefits of MSEs involvement in PPT initiative in beach destination?						
Q1.(a) How would you describe micro and small enterprises in tourism?						
<b>Coding- RCN 01</b>	<b>RCN 05</b>	<b>RCN 15</b>	<b>RCN 21</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Theme</b>	
Low capital, small size, few products, little revenue, start by low income group people <b>RCN 02</b> Small amount of money, limited numbers of manpower, suitable for poor people	Does not require big amount to start, limited risk, sole proprietorship, effective control <b>RCN 10</b> Need low amount of money, quick decision making, limited number of employees	Nominal capital, suitable for poor, remove poverty, lucrative business <b>RCN 19</b> Aims to serve tourists, less capital, less power, few manpower	Offers products and services to the tourists, local poor people involvement, low capital, limited employees <b>RCN 24</b> Limited knowledge on business, fragmented/unstructured business	Low capital, small scale, local poor people involvement, low risk, fewer employees, effective control, offer products and services to the tourists	Features of tourism MSEs	
Q1.(b) What do you understand from pro-poor tourism (i.e. tourism that benefits the poor to reduce poverty)?						
<b>Coding- RCN 01</b>	<b>RCN 06</b>	<b>RCN 09</b>	<b>RCN 12</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Theme</b>	
Increase benefits for poor, upgrade life style, provide livelihood source <b>RCN 03</b> Supporting family, fulfilling fundamental needs, main source of livelihood <b>RCN 05</b> Part-time jobs for poor students as a tour guide, increasing per capita income	Earning through tourism functioning, overcome fasting/striving situation <b>RCN 14</b> Impacts on real life of the poor positively, spontaneous participation in MSEs by the poor <b>RCN 25</b> Access to nutritious foods, standard outfit, shelter	Income generation for tourism, managing foods for family, shelter, clothes, health and education for kids <b>RCN 10</b> Favors the poor, ensure basic needs of the poor <b>RCN 23</b> Livelihood source for the poor, smooth life leading of the poor	Benefits for marginal poor people, help to survive the orphans <b>RCN 16</b> Easy access for the poor, access for the illiterate person, increase per capita income, lowering the rate of unemployed person, make the poor as skilled manpower	Earning through tourism functioning, increase benefits for the poor, livelihood source for local community, life style upgradation of the poor	Meaning of PPT	
Q1.(c) What do you think should be the roles of MSEs in PPT initiative at Cox's Bazar beach tourism destination?						
<b>Coding- RCN 01</b>	<b>RCN 03</b>	<b>RCN 08</b>	<b>RCN 17</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Theme</b>	
Supporting poor community, create working opportunity, standard wages, allow illiterate person into work <b>RCN 02</b> Priority for the poor engagement, local recruitment, offer local product towards tourists <b>RCN 20</b> Open the business all the year round, ensure accessibility of the poor, secured employment for the poor community	Local people engagement, exhibition of indigenous culture, honor foreign culture, stop imitating foreign culture, motivate for craft work, equal pay for women <b>RCN 04</b> Supporting the poor employees in dull season <b>RCN 22</b> Display traditional products, create resistant to abolish traditional cultures, inspire the poor to produce handicrafts	Recruit employees permanently, recruit known face who is enthusiastic to work, develop business tactics, allow rural poor community for work, purchase raw materials from rural poor for MSEs <b>RCN 10</b> Fixing minimum wage rate, allow part-time jobs for students <b>RCN 23</b> Interrelation with poor, retain cultural and social representation	Grooming the poor through including into MSE, giving fair price for local products, display traditional products for tourists, helpful for workers/employees, allow holidays for MSE workers, provide incentives for quality service providing	Priority for the poor engagement, standard wages, indigenous culture retention, display traditional products, inspire the poor to produce handicrafts, give fair price for local products	Roles of tourism MSEs in PPT	

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Thematic Analysis of Coding: In-depth Interviews										
2.(b) What are the economic benefits influencing MSEs involvement in PPT initiative?										
16	<b>Coding- RCN 01</b>	<b>RCN 04</b>	<b>RCN 11</b>	<b>RCN 24</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Theme</b>				
17	Consistent income, expansion of business, recruiting poor people, meeting family expenses i.e. health and education <b>RCN 02</b> Job opportunity, supporting for surviving the poor, increasing salary/wages for the poor <b>RCN 06</b> Local employment, foreign currency	Opportunity for tourism enterprises, employment opportunity for the poor, personal income source, lift government income earning <b>RCN 07</b> Platform for the poor, raise standard of living of the poor <b>RCN 17</b> Enhancing output	Government revenue, business environment, business scope, employment scope, earnings for the poor, savings for future investment <b>RCN 12</b> Employment opportunity, net income, enhance standard of living <b>RCN 19</b> Extension of business opportunity	Family solvency, education for kids, future entrepreneur, employment for poor community <b>RCN 25</b> Government revenue/tax enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment opportunity</li> <li>• Expansion of business</li> <li>• Consistent income</li> <li>• Enhance standard of living</li> <li>• Increase government revenue</li> </ul>	Economic benefits				
2.(c) Are there any non-economic benefits influencing MSEs involvement in PPT initiative? If yes, what are they? If not, why not?										
19	<b>Coding- RCN 01</b>	<b>RCN 03</b>	<b>RCN 07</b>	<b>RCN 12</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Theme</b>				
20	Risk free investment, orientation with multi-cultural people <b>RCN 02</b> Independence as an owner, training opportunity, boost up experience, keeping right track with honesty <b>RCN 04 &amp; 20</b> Indigenous culture retention <b>RCN 22</b> Becomes role model for new starter <b>RCN 24</b> Enjoying natural beach environment, meet with multicultural tourists	Mental satisfaction, mitigate anxiousness for earning, scope to familiar with strangers <b>RCN 05</b> Learn approaching to strangers, self-dependency realization, guide for future development <b>RCN 06</b> Restrain antisocial activities, retain indigenous custom <b>RCN 25</b> Capacity development	Social recognition, social stability, change of behavioural pattern, best use of scarce resources <b>RCN 08</b> Increase trust worthiness to others, social recognition, value opinion, experience and focusing power relating to business, contribute to society welfare <b>RCN 11</b> Social stability, restrain from illegal activities, environmental balance, revoke deforestation	Certain life leading, training for boosting efficiency, restrains anti-social activities (illegal drug business, robbery, snatching), violence free society <b>RCN 16</b> Ethics development, reduce violence, understand the value of money, know the best use of limited resources, effective use of natural resources <b>RCN 19</b> Deforestation, hill landslide, violence in society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and development</li> <li>• Social recognition</li> <li>• Retention of indigenous cultures and customs</li> <li>• Social stability</li> <li>• Keep environmental balance</li> <li>• Effective use of natural resources</li> </ul>	Non-economic benefits				
2.(d) Do you think business collaboration (partnership) benefits also encourage MSEs involvement in PPT initiative? If so, what are these potential benefits?										
22	<b>Coding- RCN 01</b>	<b>RCN 03</b>	<b>RCN 07</b>	<b>RCN 15</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Theme</b>				
23	Updated information, more product availability, contribution in decision making, keep poor peoples interest, quality of products and services, collaborate with big concerns, low price <b>RCN 02</b> Expansion of business, can place opinion in tourism planning <b>RCN 24</b> Proper supply chain management <b>RCN 21</b> Overcome the knowledge gap	Partnership development with large concern, technical know-how, proper direction <b>RCN 05</b> Linking with private owned organizations, sense of timeliness, fasten the information flow <b>RCN 06</b> Accessibility of new product, trade loan, updated information, ventilation of market demand	Proper idea of business, certainty of product supply, market trends, tactics in operating business <b>RCN 09</b> Business liaison, technical know-how, ventilating customer feedback, provide opinion in new product development, building confidence <b>RCN 10</b> Perfect planning, develop leadership traits <b>RCN 13</b> Encourage to do business.	Quality product, import product with minimum cost, alliance with private owned company, commission on sell, reduced level of work and engagement, time saving, information access, more people involved opportunity for levels of work, utmost support, minimize cost of products <b>RCN 17</b> Bargaining power of MSEs owner, alliance with large scale...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utmost support and direction</li> <li>• Fast access of market information</li> <li>• Build liaison with large scale enterprise</li> <li>• Participation in decision making</li> </ul>	Participation and partnership benefits of PPT through MSEs				

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E32 Promoting benefits of tourism MSEs, vocational training for young generations, inclusion of tourism topic in academic education, produce shortfilm for the poor, increase the number of beach poi

Thematic Analysis of Coding: In-depth Interviews					
RQ2: What are the challenges facing MSEs from getting involved in PPT initiative in beach destination?					
3.(b) Do you think the involvement of local community in MSEs will reduce the level of poverty among the members of local community at Cox's Bazar beach? If yes, how?					
Coding- RCN 01	RCN 08	RCN 11	RCN 16	Sub-theme	Theme
Monthly salary/wages, use of local product RCN 02 Sustainable income, stable livelihood source, certain customer RCN 05 Certainty of wages, contribute to fulfill primary needs of the poor, turns as a referee for further workforce selection	Effective weapon for reducing poverty, Local involvement ways: as an owner, as an employee, as a producer and as a supplier of the materials RCN 10 Socio-economic changes, increasing the income from zero level to a satisfactory level	Enhance earning power, boosting purchasing power, human rights consciousness arise RCN 15 Stable source of earning, develops new MSEs, invests for education, getting medical facility, managing food and shelter, reducing terrorism activities RCN 20 Infrastructural development, increasing awareness, enthusiastic to lead quality life	Capability to meet daily needs, depositing for future uncertainty, employees/workers can start own MSEs, turning into self-dependent person RCN 19 Possible to stay with family, need not to search work opportunity outside, saves living cost, saves transport cost, family maintenance RCN 21 Per capita income enhancing	Local poor employment, sustainable income, awareness of human rights, developing new MSEs, self-dependency	Poverty reduction through tourism MSEs
4.(a) What strategies do you think can be adopted to involve the local community more in MSEs especially in tourism related business?					
Coding- RCN 01	RCN 04	RCN 07	RCN 16	Sub-theme	Theme
Training and development program, confidence development, positive attitude building on tourism business RCN 02 Ventilating benefits of MSEs, pursue as sustainable earning source, making expert through training, building awareness RCN 18 Accessibility in government projects, making expert manpower	Vocational training, motivate young for MSEs RCN 05 Allow time to learn for a new employee, teach well the business concern RCN 06 Elementary education for street-urchin, vocational training RCN 20 Free technical courses for the poor, provide easy conditioned micro loan, inclusion of tourism topic in all educational curriculum	Limiting the domination of elite class people in tourism sector, supporting illiterate person, grooming rural young guys RCN 09 Extension of number of beach points, capitalization of world's longest beach, planned beach decoration RCN 25 Inspire women participation, create space for women, ensure equal wages RCN 21 Short film production for the poor	Focus on tourist satisfaction, focus on grabbing tourists attention, focus on efficient manpower development RCN 17 Seminars and symposiums, show best use of investments, make expert in specific task, increase number of beach points RCN 19 Proper utilization of unused land, shopping mall development, inspire young generation for technical learning	Promoting benefits of tourism MSEs, vocational training for young generations, inclusion of tourism topic in academic education, produce shortfilm for the poor, increase the number of beach points	Local community involving strategy in tourism MSEs
4.(b) What are the challenges facing the local community members from getting involved in MSEs, particularly in tourism related ventures?					
Coding- RCN 01	RCN 06	RCN 10	RCN 16	Sub-theme	Theme
Family ties, prestige concern, lack of capital/ affordability, approval of setting business, competitiveness among business, political pressure RCN 02 Weather/Seasonality, business syndicate, land acquisition by the government RCN 03 Trustworthiness, finidine	Local powerful leaders, illegal subscription, political pressure RCN 05 Conservative family attitude for women, lack of counseling and misunderstanding, lack of training, lack of capital, suitable location/place, capitalistic conception RCN 08 Lack of skill, lack of capital, bribe for	Police harassment, daily subscription, corruption in approval committee, lack of fixed location RCN 11 Escaping tendency of gov. rules and regulations, financing crisis, powerful business owners exploitation, monopoly tendency RCN 15 Competitive market.	Unplanned land acquiring, limiting the scope of MSEs, corruption existence, illegal subscription to political titles, demoralization of the investors, high living cost, ineffectivity of cooperative society RCN 17 Administrative corruption, illegal syndicate, seasonality, high	•Lack of initial capital •Lack of financing support •Lack of technical and vocational education •Lack of administrative support •Inadequate infrastructure •Threat of illegal syndicate •Political exploitation	Challenges of MSEs involvement in PPT

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Thematic Analysis of Coding: In-depth Interviews						
RQ3: How do tourism stakeholders support MSEs involvement in PPT in beach destination?						
5.(a) How do you think the tourism stakeholders (e.g. Tourists, Government agencies, NGOs, MSE Co-operative society etc.) can provide support for MSEs in tourism business?						
Coding- RCN 03	RCN 08	RCN 15	RCN 17	Sub-theme	Theme	
Develop positive attitude for MSEs, enhance tourism facilities for tourist, ensure satisfaction of tourists, tourists obligation to consider local products from MSEs, NGOs should focus on poor community capability development <b>RCN 06</b> NGOs: capacity development program for the poor, tourism business awareness program MSE Openness: trade loan, grievances mitigation, ensuring business friendly environment Tourists: loyal to MSEs product, helping attitude to the poor <b>RCN 19</b> NGOs: minimize the loan condition, lower the rate of interest, focus on supporting the poor MSEs: ensure the accountability to the tourists	MSE cooperative: keep the interest of MSE owners and employees, settle the disputes, loyal to poor people inclusion, create consciousness about tourism satisfaction through MSEs owner and employees <b>RCN 10</b> NGOs: counseling on livelihood sources, work for the poor upgradation, short training program on MSEs development, building confidence, focus on education for poor <b>RCN 11</b> Aware about benefits of the poor, enthusiastic to favor MSEs <b>RCN 13</b> Need to give priority for indigenous products, aiding mindset to poor, boost up patriotism	Cooperative society: stall rent settlement, employees/workers grievances mitigation, tourists complainants mitigation, support MSEs in natural calamities or accidental issue, giving credit on emergency, motivate employees to be well behaved, inspire to make sustainable relation, promote green beach environment <b>RCN 16</b> Tourists: sensible behaviour, keen to help poor, environment consciousness, attraction to local products NGOs: building awareness for tourism business, provide training for dealing tourists, develop expertiseness, loan facility Trade Union: settle the license renewal process, provide support in crucial time	Local community: welcoming attitude development, helpful to MSEs, cordial behaviour, conserve traditional culture <b>RCN 23</b> Tourist: be frequent visitor, encourage others to visit, loyal to indigenous product MSEs: provide quality service, ensure quality service, keep space for poor freshers, environment consciousness, ensure consumer rights	Tourists attitude to MSEs, NGOs initiatives, MSEs cooperative society's movement, local community's thinking, Investors availability, MSE employees perspective	Stakeholders supporting strategy for PPT through tourism MSEs	
6. What do you think are the critical success factors of MSEs in PPT in beach tourism destination?						
Coding- RCN 01	RCN 04	RCN 10	RCN 22	Sub-theme	Theme	
Quality products and services, low price, customized services, less price sensitivity of tourists, good behaviour, sincerity and honesty <b>RCN 02</b> Number of tourist arrival, focus on tourist desire, awareness on PPT development, devotion in work <b>RCN 03</b> Quality work, sense of respect, avoid fraudulent practices	Talent, decision making skill, forecasting power, understand the mind of the tourists <b>RCN 05</b> Creativity, diversity, patience and hard work <b>RCN 06</b> Understand the market trend, perseverance in work <b>RCN 18</b> Diversification of MSEs products/services	Awareness of tourist demand, well presentation of products, cleanliness <b>RCN 19</b> Commitment to the tourists, loyalty to tourists, economic life of business, perfect employee selection, perfect supplier choice	CO-operation, unity, availability of tourists, available financing sources <b>RCN 20</b> Administrative support, nature of business, location of business, quality of services, and personal traits <b>RCN 25</b> Rational pricing, quick understanding the demand of tourists	Customized product/service for the tourists, diversified products/services, accountability in all aspects, rational pricing, personal traits	Critical success factor of tourism MSEs	

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