

## Theoretical and empirical issues in Sustainable tourism

**Dr.Vinod C Sugathan**

HoD & Assistant Professor

PG & Research Department of Economics, SreeNarayana College, Sivagiri, Varkala

Received: February 16, 2019

Accepted: March 16, 2019

**ABSTRACT:** *Tourism is all activities undertaken by people staying away from home for twenty four hours or more on holiday, visiting friends or relatives, at business or other conferences, or for any purpose other than, for example, boarding education and semi-permanent employment. It does not include day trippers from a home address either outside the country or within. Tourism represents one end of a broad leisure spectrum. A basic distinction between tourism and other forms of leisure, such as that practiced in the home (e.g. watching television) or within an urban area (e.g. going to the local swimming pool), is the travel component. In the field of tourism, term 'sustainability' can be and has been hijacked by many to give moral rectitude and 'green' credentials to tourism activities. All the stakeholders and tourists themselves in the tourism industry manipulated the term according to their own analytical convenience. The WTO defines "sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourist and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support system."*

**Key Words:** *Tourism, Employment, Sustainability, Biological Diversity*

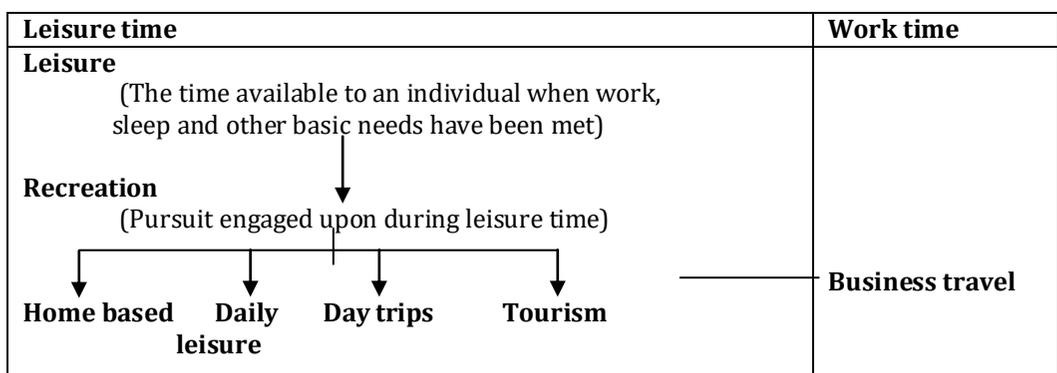
### INTRODUCTION

The key words throughout Brundtland are 'balance' and 'thought'. Brundtland introduced the issues of fairness of intergenerational equity to the debate, and also of international equity, requiring a greater convergence between rich and poor nations, for the global system to remain stable. It was closely linked to the whole sustainable development discussion and has two teasingly difficult areas such as the precautionary principle and the need for a holistic approach.

The institutionalisation of environment protection and conservation efforts by the tourism industry sector got a platform for the action programme. It requires a multi-disciplinary planning and conservation effort. To make tourism sector sustainable it is important and necessary to apply sustainable development principles in the tourism sector.

### CONCEPT OF TOURISM

Recreation is a term often associated with leisure and it relates to how leisure-time can be used. Tourism is one type of recreational activity. Leisure usually relates to time, and leisure-time is the amount of 'free time' available after working, eating, sleeping and personal or household chores have been completed. This does not mean that all 'free-time' is leisure-time. Many unemployed people would claim to have 'free-time' but would not always see this as leisure.



**Figure 1 : Framework on Leisure, recreation and tourism**

Source: Peter (1990)

The recreation activity can be classified into home-based recreation, daily leisure, day trips and tourism. Reading, gardening, watching television, socializing, etc. are home-based recreation activity. Visiting theatres or restaurants, sports (as participant or spectator) socialising etc come under daily leisure recreation. Visiting attractions, picnicking etc. comes under daily trips. The temporary movement to destinations outside normal home and work place, the activities undertaken during the stay, the facilities created to cater for their needs, atleast for twenty four hours or more can be considered as a tourism activity. There is obviously an overlap between leisure, recreation and tourism. It is often difficult to isolate the acts of tourism from other participants in recreation. The demands and effects recreation and tourism are thus closely linked.

**GROWTH FACTORS IN THE EVOLUTION OF TOURISM**

The explanations of evolution of tourism can be defined with the three crucial growth factors motivation, ability and mobility. The characteristics of each of these factors in each of four chronological eras of developments, pre-industrial, industrial, consumer society and future, are shown in Table 1.

**Table. 1**

**Murphy’s growth factors in the evolution of tourism**

<b>Era</b>	<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Ability</b>	<b>Mobility</b>
Pre-industrial	Exploration and business Pilgrimage/religion Education Health	Few travelers; those involved were wealthy, influential or received permission	Slow and treacherous
Industrial	Positive impact of Education, print and radio Escape from city Colonial empires	Higher incomes More leisure time Organised tours	Lower transport costs Reliable public transport
Consumer society	Positive impact of visual communication Consumer society Escape from work routine	Shorter work week More discretionary income Mass marketing Package tours	Growth of personal transportation Faster and more efficient transport
Future	Vacations a right and necessity Combined with business and learning	Self-catering Smaller families Two wage earners per household Demographic trends favour travel groups	Alternative fuels More Efficient transport Greater use of public transport and package deals

Source : Murphy (1985)

Tourism sector is directly related to the growth of transportation segment especially in air transport segment. Transportation segment gives tourism a multiplier effect in terms of tourist inflow and in the near future tourism industry is expected to grow rapidly due to the advancement in mobility.

**THE COMPONENTS OF TOURISM**

The location is a major component of tourism, which is known as the tourism destination and its importance depends upon three major factors, first is attraction, it can be either natural, such as the climate, or human made, such as historical buildings, festivals, exhibitions and congresses. The second is accessibility, which is related to the distance from the centers of population, or to tourist generating regions, and to transport facilities. Time taken to get tourist destination is also important in relation to accessibility, and the third is amenities at the tourist location, including entertainment, accommodation and catering facilities as well as local transport services, for this, usually tourist organizations provides the framework within which, tourism operates.

**TOURISM LIFE CYCLE AND STAGES**

Each destination has different stages in its development. Garay (2011) had traced out different stages for the evolution of a destination. The six stages of ‘Tourist Area Evolution’ are exploration stage, involvement stage, development stage, consolidation stage, stagnation stage and rejuvenation stage

Generally, visitors will come to an area in small numbers initially, restricted by lack of access, facilities, and local knowledge. As facilities are provided and awareness grows, visitor numbers will increase. With marketing, information dissemination, and further facility provision, the area’s popularity will grow rapidly. Eventually, however, the rate of increase in visitor numbers will decline as levels of carrying capacity are reached. These may be identified in terms of environmental factors (e.g. land scarcity, water

quality, air quality), of physical plant (e.g. transportation, accommodation, other services), or of social factors (e.g. crowding, resentment by the local population). As the attractiveness of the area declines relative to other areas, because of overuse and the impacts of visitors, the actual number of visitors may also eventually decline. Each stage is detailed below.

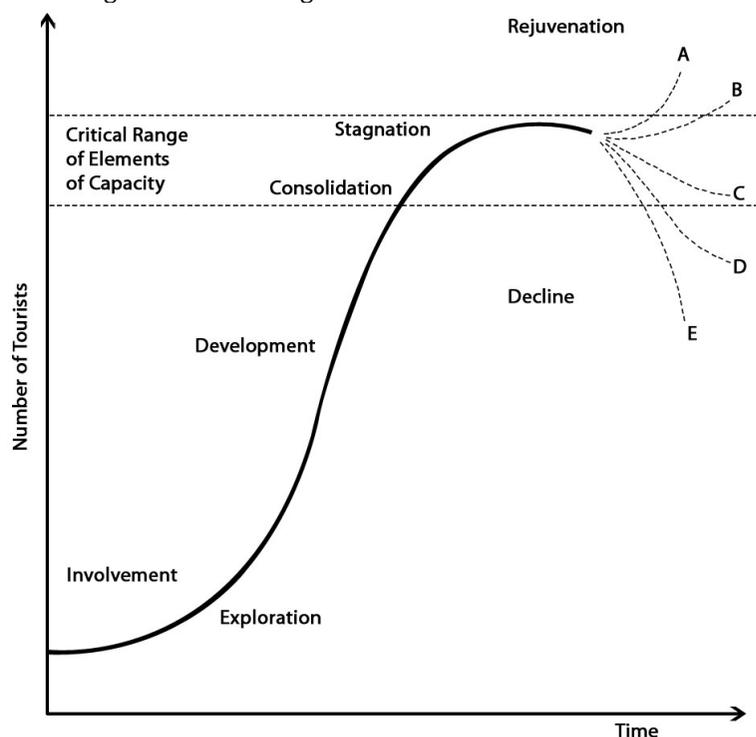
In exploration stage there were only a small numbers of tourists. Based on primary tourist attractions, these may be natural or cultural. There will be no secondary tourism attractions. Tourism has no economic or social significance to local residents.

The involvement stage, local residents become involved in tourism. A tourism season may develop in the emergence of secondary tourism facilities such as guest houses. Pressure also develops for governments, to improve transportation for tourists.

The development stage, high numbers of tourists that may exceed the local population during peak periods. Heaving advertising will create a well-defined tourist market. Local involvement and control of tourism declines rapidly. External organisations will provide secondary tourism attractions. Natural and cultural attractions will be developed and marketed. More often objections can be seen from the local people, who experience physical changes to the area.

In consolidation stage, tourism growth slowdown but the numbers of tourists exceeds the local population. This is also the point when the area can be considered to have a tourism-based economy. Marketing and advertising will be wide-reaching. Major franchises and tourism chains will be represented. Resort areas will have a well-defined recreational business. Tourism arouses opposition and discontent from some local people.

In the stagnation stage, visitor numbers have reached their peak. Carrying capacity has been reached or exceeded. Tourism causes environmental, social and economic problems. The resort becomes divorced from its geographic environment. Artificial tourism attractions now supersede the original primary attractions. Area has well-established image but will no longer be fashionable.



**Figure .2 :Tourism Life cycle and stages**

*Source :Garay (2011)*

The final stage of the Butler Model is that after reaching stagnation, Butler saw that rejuvenation or decline as possible alternatives. The last stage of his model offers five scenarios between complete rejuvenation and total decline.

Successful redevelopment leads to renewed growth. Minor modifications to capacity levels lead to modest growth in tourism. Tourism is stabilised by cutting capacity levels. Continued overuse of resources and lack

of investment leads to decline. War, disease or other catastrophe causes an immediate collapse in tourism. The decline scenario shows that they were unable to compete with newer tourism attractions. Holidaymakers replaced by weekend or day-trippers. Tourism facilities were replaced by non-tourism activities. Hotels may become retirement homes or flats for local residents. Ultimately, the area may become a tourism slum or drop out of the tourism market completely.

The rejuvenation scenario requires a complete change in tourism attractions. Previously untapped tourism resources maybe found.

According to the 1980 Butler model, tourism areas leaving stage five, will either decline or rejuvenate either way, the tourism area has evolved into the sixth stage of its development. It is misleading to identify a seventh stage in Butler's model.

**CONCEPTULISING TOURISM IN DEVELOPMENT**

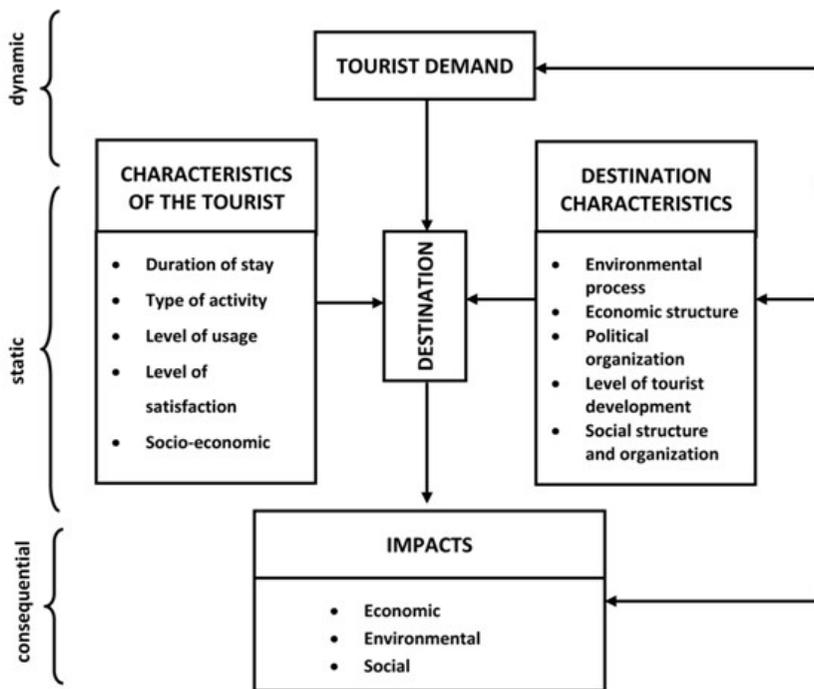
Two major approaches represent different schools of thought in the modern literature namely, the political economy approach and the functional approach. Political economy approach is based on the premise that tourism has evolved in a way which closely matches historic patterns of colonialism and economic dependency. The other view is much more concerned with classifying tourism in terms of its many functional parts without any political overtones (Lea 1989).

**Political economy approach**

The political economy approach, probes beneath the surface characteristics of the industry in its search for the causes of problems. To do this successfully requires us to briefly examine two interrelated subjects: The way the industry is organised and the distinctive structure of the Third World economies.

**Functional approach**

A different and more analytical way of generalising international tourism is to subdivide the travel process into three elements; a dynamic phase covering movement to and from destination; a static phase involving the characteristic of the tourism and destination and the consequent elements.



**Figure 3 The functional framework of tourism process**

Source : Mathieson (1982)

The functional classifications shown here, explains the impact of tourism occurring due to the interaction characteristics of tourists and the characteristics of the destinations which results in different impacts such as economic, environmental and social.

**THE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM**

There is no unarguable, comprehensive and all-encompassing definition that is acceptable by all in the case of the principle of sustainability in tourism. The more appropriate way is to examine and assess tourist

activity according to whether they satisfy a number of criteria of sustainability in tourism. In the following subsections discuss these criteria.



**Figure .4 : Criteriaoften used for sustainability in tourism**

*Source:Mentin (1998)*

### **Social Sustainability**

Social sustainability refers to the ability of a community, whether local or national, to absorb inputs, such as extra people, for short or long periods of time and to continue functioning either without the creation of social disharmony as a result of these or by adapting its functions and relationship so that the disharmony created can be alleviated or mitigated.

### **Cultural sustainability**

Society may continue functioning in social harmony despite the effects of changes brought about from the tourism. But the relationship within that society, the mores of interaction, the styles of life, the customs and traditions are all subject to change. Cultural sustainability refers to the ability of people to retain or adapt the elements of their culture which distinguish them from other people.

### **Economic sustainability**

Economic sustainability refers to a level of income gain from the activity sufficient either to cover the cost of any special measures taken to cater for the tourist and to mitigate the effects of the tourist's presence or to offer an income appropriate to the inconvenience caused to the local community visited-without violating any of the other condition or both. In other words, regardless of how much damage may be done culturally, socially and environmentally, it is perfectly acceptable if the economic profitability of the scheme is great enough to cover over the damage, ease the discontent or suppress the protest.

### **Ecological sustainability**

For sustainable development ecological sustainability is a must. The need to avoid or minimise the environmental impact of tourist activities is clear. For ecological sustainability these questions are need to be considered. How does the project work towards protecting the natural environment? How are the carrying/ecological footprints of activities taken into account? How is money used to promote conservation, preservation?

### **THE EDUCATIONAL ELEMENT**

The basic difference between the new form of tourism and the conventional tourism is found in an element of education input into the activity. Here by supplying the host population with comprehensive information about tourists and tourism, many misunderstanding could be eliminated and better hospitality can be created.

### **LOCAL PARTICIPATION**

The importance of participation of local population in the tourism destination is considerable. The only

debate is the degree of inclusion or control to be exercised by the destination communities. This debate is thrown into sharp contrast by the two standpoints of 'host' communities as object of tourism or as controllers of tourism.

### **THE CONSERVATION ELEMENT**

It is often stated that new forms of tourism helps in the conservation of specific aspect of the biodiversity or culture of a given area and hence that an essential element of new form of tourism should be such conservation.

### **CRITERIA FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

The four Criteria for Sustainable Tourism are Community Well Being, Natural and Cultural environment, Tourism product quality and tourist satisfaction & Management and monitoring.

Community well being is classified into Income and revenues, It is essential to enhance income and revenues in order to stimulate development within a community. Employment, next to economic benefits, sustainable tourism should also have an effort on labour conditions, social equity, etc. The dependency of the destination from the tourism sector has to be implicitly avoided. Strengthening of the local economy and of long-term economic viability, to avoid financial leakages, sustainable tourism development should be accompanied by efforts to strengthen the local economy. Local supplies like local goods and services. Improvement of living conditions, sustainable tourism should serve as a driving force for good governance; this implies the improvement of living conditions through a sound handling of public funds through local institutions. The participation of the local population is a priority. Tourism development needs to be approved by the locals in order to guarantee the successful implementation of the development process. Satisfaction with tourism, the evaluation of satisfaction with tourism can lead to conclusions about feelings and attitudes of the locals towards tourism and strengthening of social and cultural patterns, tourists should be encouraged to get to know everything the region has to offer including the hospitality of local people. A positive self-awareness among locals is what the tourists can contribute. A precondition for this criterion is that tourism itself does not destroy the socio-cultural characteristics of a region or lead to serious cultural changes.

Natural and cultural environment is classified into sustainable use of natural and cultural resources, one appropriate opportunity to guarantee the quality of sustainable tourism products are certification or labeling schemes. Protection of natural heritage, to support the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, direct contributions of the tourism sector towards their protection are important. Protection of cultural heritage, the proper design of tourism activities, the careful dealing with heritage, or the enhancement of the local's appreciation of heritage as well contribute decisively to long-term preservation of local goods. Environmental awareness should be encouraged among the local inhabitants as well as among the tourists.

Tourism product quality and tourist satisfaction can be classified into Quality of services and experience; This evaluates the quality of tourism products offered in a region, that is Transport, accommodation, food and visitor infrastructure as well as facilities for sport and leisure, cultural activities and other services (panels & brochures) that is the whole tourism chain. Tourist satisfaction, this evaluates the quality of tourism products directly from an expert point of view. "Tourist Satisfaction" measures the subjective impressions of tourist, like whether they are satisfied with their trip. Tourism product quality and economic viability, tourists satisfaction provided with tourism product quality, results in the returning of the tourists and their recommendations for the destination towards others. Besides quality maintenance, efforts should also be made to increase the level of visitor spending and to broaden range of tourism products and thus to prolong the tourism season. Communication of sustainability to the tourists, tourism products and services should include education on natural & cultural heritage conservation and to motivate tourists to behave appropriately. Cultural exchange as a driving force for peace is similar to strengthening of social and cultural patterns.

Management and monitoring can be classified into Planning and monitoring, it's crucial to support the quality of the region's tourism development by good planning and management. To provide sustainability, the carrying capacity should be constituted and restrained.

### **STUDIES IN ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM**

Lea (1988) analyses the use and misuse of tourist multiplier in Caribbean island. The multiplier was calculated in three different category namely sales and output multiplier, income multiplier and employment multiplier. The weighted average of all these came to 2.3 and were considered to be the value of the tourist multiplier. But the calculation was severely criticized by Douglas Pearce (1981). The critics stated that it is hard to determine measure of transaction or dollars 'changing hands'. In the recalculation of

tourism multiplier it was only 1.36. A number of other serious omissions were also noted by the critics, leading them to make the conclusion that the real tourist income multiplier for the Eastern Caribbean was unlikely to be more than 1.0 for any island or less than half in their calculation.

Lea (1988) examined the elasticity of the reliability of tourism. Tourism was largest single source of foreign exchange earner for Fiji in 1986. The country was shaken by the military coups which took place in May and September 1987. It has an adverse effect on the Fijian economy. By early September 1987 the secretary of the Fiji Trade Union Council was reported that 80 per cent of the staff in the hospitality industry had been sacked and the public servants had taken a 15 per cent cut in salaries. The Fijian currency was devalued by over 17 per cent shortly after the May coup and this coupled with reduced tourism receipts. So tourism is highly responsive to events in the country.

Young (1973), analysed the case of the Caribbean island of St. Lucia where the coming of tourism leads to flight of labour force from banana cultivation to the tourism industry. This leads to the fall in productivity and earnings. The growth of tourism industry led to high strain on the balance of payment as they want to import food products. So the net benefit to the island of the new industry was therefore marginal.

Tribe (2000) in a case study examined the diversification of farms into tourism and recreation in East Finland. The key to turning the farm into a tourism business would be to develop self catering accommodation. The good locations of the farm generate demand for overnight stays and outdoor recreation. The interesting feature is that tourism becomes the main source of income for the farm. In another case study, he examined the economic impact of Center Parcs on local rural economies. Center Parcs the destination developers have three sites in England that occupy over 400 acres of woodland situated in the countryside. The economic activity generated by the three sites provides considerable development in the area. More than 100 jobs were generated in each village providing an injection of more than seven million pound sterling's per year in wages and salaries into the local economy. Over fifty per cent of the supplies were from the local producers which create 140 extra jobs. The interesting factor is that 70 per cent of the visitors to the place were first time visitors, so other tourist attraction around the villages have benefited as a direct result Center Parcs' presence.

Johnston(1999) found that between 55 per cent and 72 per cent of Europeans traveling internationally desire some form of indigenous interaction on their holiday, on analysing relation between indigenous people and tourism. Despite this activity and growing market, indigenous people remain the poorest of the poor globally. The paper also reported the intellectual property piracy in tourism.

Budeanu (2003) study revealed that tourism is currently responsible for the largest, annual human migration in history. This great movement of people has significant positive and negative consequences on nature, societies, cultures and economies. Desired worldwide for its economic benefits, tourism is anticipated to double during the next 20 years, and the multiple consequences of such rapid growth, call for a preventative approach at all strategic and professional levels, in order to avoid negative impacts. Considering mass tourism as a reality of our contemporary life that cannot be neglected by current efforts to endorse sustainable tourism, this paper draws attention

Sustainable tourism emphasises the need for all kinds of tourism activities to apply sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices. The United Nations World Tourism Organization states that "sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development and a suitable balance must be established among these three dimensions to guarantee long-term sustainability

## Reference

1. Alister, Mathieson and Wall Geoffrey (1981) **Tourism: Economic, Physical and Social imports**, Lang man
2. Amelung, Bas and David Viner (2006), *Mediterranean Tourism: Exploring the Future with the Tourism Climatic Index*, **Journal of Sustainable Tourism**, June, Vol. 14, No. 4
3. Aryankavu Grama Panchayat (2011) *The year Report*, Aryankavu
4. B.S, Balan (1997) **Impact of Tourism in South India**, Commonwealth Publishers, New Delhi, India.
5. Budeanu, Andriana (2003), *Impacts and responsibility for sustainable tourism: a tour operator's perspective*, **Journal of Cleaner Production**, December, Vol. 13, No. 2
6. Young, George. (1973). **Tourism: Blessing or blight?** Harmondsworth: Penguin.
7. Lea, John (1988) **Tourism and Development in the Third world**, Routledge 11, UK.