

Cultural and Heritage Tourism Development in Postwar Regions: Concerns for Sustainability from Northern Sri Lankan Capital Jaffna

Ruwan Ranasinghe^{1*}

¹Department of Management Sciences, Faculty of Management, Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka

*Correspondence: Ruwan Ranasinghe, Department of Management Sciences, Faculty of Management, Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka. Tel: +94 777513464; E-mail: ruwan@uwu.ac.lk, ruwa.fm@gmail.com

Received: September 22, 2017 Accepted: November 24, 2017 Online Published: March 20, 2018

DOI: 10.12735/jotr.v4n1p1 URL: <https://doi.org/10.12735/jotr.v4n1p1>

Copyright © Ruwan Ranasinghe **

Abstract

Cultural and heritage tourism shows tremendous potential in developing countries and regions where traditional economic activities are no longer sustainable. Sharing and preserving cultural heritage in tourism is challenging while advocating economic benefits. An integrated approach to examine sustainability, tourism, cultural heritage and economic wellbeing is overseen. Theorizing above concepts in postwar context indicates laps in academic literature. This paper examines the cultural and heritage tourism development potentials and their sustainability issues in postwar development in Jaffna. The study argues that comprehensive analysis of cultural resources and their potential in ongoing development, drawing plans and institutionalizing the cultural and heritage tourism initiatives, enlightening authorities on cultural and heritage tourism and sustainable community development, stakeholder empowerment and fully engaging all development agencies in a single mission in postwar areas are prerequisites for sustainability of ongoing isolated activities. The empowerment of community and other key stakeholders of the cultural heritage is the key to address long-term sustainability.

Keywords: cultural and heritage tourism, postwar development, resident community, Sri Lanka, sustainability

1. Introduction

1.1. Introduce the Problem

A thorough understanding of the insights of stakeholders who are directly involving and receiving the consequences of ongoing developments could inform more sustainable and effective development process. Sustainable development is on the other hand is a journey, not a destination and hence, the directions,

**This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). 

Licensee: [Science and Education Centre of North America](#)

How to cite this paper: Ranasinghe, R. (2018). Cultural and heritage tourism development in postwar regions: Concerns for sustainability from Northern Sri Lankan Capital Jaffna. *Journal of Tourism and Recreation*, 4(1), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.12735/jotr.v4n1p1>

phases and involvements could be better understood if the journey itself is examined. The development policies and plans are expected to direct through stakeholder aspirations which need clear clarification (Lokuhetty, Jayawardena, & Mudadeniya, 2013). Such insights could also be applicable in the other cultural heritage and tourist destination development contexts striving for sustainability. Remote rural communities based on traditional agricultural activities such as farming, fishing and collecting are facing the challenge of getting along with the sharply uprising economic development process (MacDonald & Jolliffe, 2003; Fleischer & Felsenstein, 2000). Postwar regions on the other hand are facing the challenge of getting along with the socio-economic development phase in creating employment opportunities and enhancing socio-economic wellbeing of the communities who have been suffering for years (Pieris, 2014). Tourism is widely recognized as a tool to develop rural areas recognizing their cultural heritages as priceless resources.

However, it is often evident that economic benefits are reaped at the expense of cultural heritages making chaos in balancing socio-cultural, ecological and economic interests (Swanson & DeVereaux, 2017). The integration of sustainability into the picture together with other variables of tourism, cultural heritage and economic wellbeing has often been examined. However, an approach to theorize above concepts in the context of postwar extensive developments is yet to be accomplished. Thus, this paper examines the cultural and heritage tourism development potentials and their sustainability issues in the backdrop of postwar economic development in Northern Sri Lanka. It further argues that the existing tourism development models should be customized learning from the other destinations and should be adapted in the local socio-cultural context to address sustainability of both businesses and that of cultural heritages.

1.2. Explore Importance of the Problem

The central focus of this paper is to clarify the role of cultural and heritage tourism in the postwar sustainable development efforts in the Jaffna peninsula. Jaffna, the capital of Northern Sri Lanka and the home for centuries-old Hindu culture has been suffering from ferocious war nearly three decades. The dawn of peace in early 2009 has opened up a new passage of the socio-economic development of Jaffna which was at its rapid socio-economic development in early 70's. Thus, it provides a fertile ground to examine sustainable cultural and heritage tourism development potentials in its rapid postwar development context. This paper argues that local cultural heritages should be the central focus on which the tourism products are designed. Similarly, community empowerment and sharing substantial economic benefits with them in return for their shared cultural heritage would ensure the long-term sustainability of the ongoing developments. Further, it has opened up new avenues of socio-cultural harmony and ensures peace in the society provided that the war-suffered people are economically strengthened. This paper is divided into five sections. The introduction section is followed by literature review and methodology sections. Section four presents the findings and discussion followed by conclusions and suggestions of the study.

1.3. Describe Relevant Scholarship

1.3.1. Culture, Tourism and Sustainability

The UNESCO (1972) in Paris convention highlighted that “ *that the cultural heritage and the natural heritage are increasingly threatened with destruction not only by the traditional causes of decay, but also by changing social and economic conditions which aggravate the situation with even more formidable phenomena of damage or destruction.*”. Tourism can be a strong influence to recognize, preserve and economically strengthen such heritages for future generations through sustainable practices. Sustainability is in the form of three main aspects namely socio-cultural sustainability, ecological sustainability and economic sustainability. Each of these are essential components of the whole process and less or over focus of one component result compromising from other components and in the long run leading to socio-economic and ecological imbalances. Socio-cultural sustainability refers to vigilant employment of cultural heritage and social structures maintaining their core characteristics in the long run.

According to Roberts and Tribe (2008, p.584) it is hard to define socio-cultural sustainability due to its dynamic nature. It is understood that socio-cultural settings are in transition with or without tourism but the transition phase is of great concern in tourism and related activities in remote cultural settings. Ecological sustainability that we have focused in our study is mainly on natural and built environments and their vigilant use in human activities. Environmental sustainability is evidenced by businesses that preserve the health and integrity of both the natural and built environment for the future well-being of the destination (Roberts & Tribe, 2008, p.584). Usage of energy in tourism businesses, water use and dispose of solid and waste water as well as pollution environment are of our key concerns. Profitability and survival of business in the long run are key concerns of economic sustainability playing key role in local and national economies. The financial stability of tourism businesses, economic gains to local residents from tourism activities, economic opportunities create for local people through tourism and employment opportunities are key components of economic sustainability (Roberts & Tribe, 2008, p.584).

The term “Culture” has been researched extensively in anthropological context and within the tourism scope cultural impacts of tourism are widely discussed. For example Timothy (2011), postulates about living culture where communities are continuing their daily pattern of living based on the traditional norms. It is generally accepted that culture is a complex matter of existence due to its flux nature. Thus, sustainability itself is a challenge in terms of culture due to its fluidity. According to Jenks (1993, as cited in Swanson & DeVereaux, 2017) culture is of fourfold and is aspirational and cerebral, communal, descriptive and exclusive and is social as a whole. In the context of tourism it is considered as a core tourist motivation and a resource that make difference (Lehman, Wickham, & Fillis, 2014). Cultural heritage is an essential and delicate component of tourist attractiveness and it becomes the spirit of the community that gives its cultural landscape (Timothy, 2011). Authenticity and the connotation of place are key concerns of cultural heritage in the context of preserving cultural heritage. Swanson and DeVereaux (2017) suggest that authenticity is pivotal for culturally sustainable tourism and critical for both tourists and living cultures. Thus, the development efforts need to recognize authentic living cultures in order the development efforts to be sustainable.

Sustainability which has been in existence in the academic literature for decades is contextual and vague in nature that has been taken for granted in many contexts. Generally, it is referred to environmental value while it is the economic viability in business context. Similarly, the term has been used as against to development referring that it leads to destruction (Torres-Delgado & Palomeque, 2014). Triple bottom-line is often referred for sustainable development that consists of economic, ecological and socio-cultural focuses in development activities (du Cros & McKercher, 2015). The role of cultural heritage and its sustainability in development was extensively discussed by Soini and Birkeland (2014) and accordingly, the preservation of cultural capital for next generation, the role of culture as a resource for socio-economic development of communities and the role of providing the core or the foundation for whole sustainable development process. Thus, the development activities that take place in different settings need serious focus on the cultural landscape of the setting to ensure long-term sustainability of the whole system. Culture and heritage play the central role of an area in the cause of its development through physical and human processes. The potential and the popularity of cultural and heritage tourism is growing very fast and will continue to increase with the modern social trends (Surugiu & Surugiu, 2015). Considering the growing trends of the sector it is essential for new and emerging tourist destinations to craft their destinations in the lines of cultural heritage and device new marketing strategies to reach the market. According to Richards (2010) cultural tourism plays an important role in the development efforts of countries and regions in the years to come.

Culturally driven development is the key to preserve cultural values against intensive development programmes. Community cultural values, rituals and festivals used in tourism are the living heritages that need preservation. The community based tourism development which is widely discussed in tourism literature is mainly comprised of community empowerment, community controlled tourism activities and ecological sustainability (Swanson & DeVereaux, 2017). Both the individual and collective decisions in

the community and tourism related development activities should be centered on culture so that the long term sustainability is assured. Community empowerment and sustainability are core components of culturally sustainable development. Tourism brings not only benefits but also negative impacts over destinations and local communities. Hence, the issues of sustainability are key determinant of a tourist destination in the long run (Nawijn, Mitas, Lin, & Kerstette, 2013). Tourism creates competition at the destination for resources, it shares the local facilities and influences on the carrying capacity and it has commonly been referred to a cause that increase crime rates in the society (Jeon, Kang & Desmarais, 2016). When these negative impacts are above the positive impacts the residents' agitation against the tourism arise. Sustainability of tourism activities have largely been discussed as a response to the various unsustainable issues created by conventional mass tourism (Sirakaya-Turk, Ekinci, & Kaya, 2008). Paradoxically, learning from such failures to plan new destinations is challenging unless the whole process is at the early stage. The postwar development efforts in the Northern Sri Lanka have to begin from zero and this itself is an opportunity to focus on long-term sustainability of development efforts which are socio-culturally, economically and ecologically well-balanced.

The sustainability of cultural heritage in development context has drawn lesser analytical efforts as argued by Soini and Dessein, (2016). Further, they argue that cultural sustainability sets the boundary for development activities and all other activities take place in a cultural setting. Thus development projects are bound to be driven by cultural values of the communities they are taking place in order to make them integrated into local norms ensuring sustainability (Swanson & DeVereaux, 2017). Tourism development should be able to sustain the authenticity of socio-cultural settings while enhancing the overall standard of living of the communities through equal distribution of benefits to all concerned (Li & Wan, 2013). The rooted authentic cultural heritage of a community represents a developmental potential, which is further enriched by location and specific intangible characteristics such as rituals and festivals (Bole, Pipan, & Komac, 2013). Sustainability of cultural heritage cannot be understood in isolation since it is embedded into socio-economic and ecological development processes. On the other hand, cultural heritage of a particular area presents a unique opportunity to build competitive advantage through tourism development. Yet, how the local cultural heritages could be integrated into ongoing development processes remain contextual that need deeper examination (du Cros & McKercher, 2015; Hall, Gössling, & Scott, 2015). Thus, this paper adds to literature a framework for socio-economic development through a culturally sustainable way in a postwar development context. It positions the cultural heritage as a development potential within the domain of sustainability that draws developers' attention in ensuring socio-economic, cultural and ecological balance in their undertakings (Ranasinghe & Li, 2017).

1.3.2. Postwar Tourism Development

The three decades of ethnic conflict and civil war of the country has seriously impeded the growth prospects and socio-economic standards of people of Sri Lanka. Particularly, investments, trade and commerce and tourism have adversely affected by the war leading to invertible pernicious living standards of people (Pradhan, 2001). The tourism industry of the country has been affected not only by the three decades war but also by the postwar responses of the government of Sri Lanka. The postwar tourism industry development has raised the concerns of resilience and sustainability due to 1) rapid increase of international tourist arrivals; 2) governments excessive focus on large tourism operators at the expense of small operators; 3) absence of comprehensive development plans particularly in postwar areas; 4) developing tourism at the expense of other livelihoods (Buultjens, Ratnayake, & Gnanapala, 2016). In order to enhance the sustainability of tourism development therefore, the economic well-being of the community should be ensured through which cultural heritages, social equality and human rights could be achieved. Building up the social capital through the empowerment of local communities is a promising strategy for post conflict development (Biggs, Hall, & Stoeckl, 2012). The political stability of a country is pivotal in tourism development as well as for tourists to experience local cultures spontaneously. The postwar tourism development research suggests that creating political stability, economic benefits to residents and full involvement of residents in the process leads to sustainability (Causevic & Lynch, 2013).

According to Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority [SLTDA] (2015), the socio-cultural integration of key stakeholders in the postwar development context is a must for the future of tourism industry. Jayawardena (2013), the answer to the question of “how Sri Lankan postwar tourism should be developed” is the in-depth research on tourists and hosts ABC’s; A- attitudes and aspirations, B- beliefs and behavior and C- customs and culture. The much waited development warfare was put into operation by the government after 2009 covering the entire Island. The key challenges faced by the incumbent government are the socio-cultural integration and leading the nation towards socio-economic development ensuring the socio-cultural harmony in the society. Tourism however, has sought private investments and is growing rapidly around the island parallel to the improvement of other basic infrastructure such as highways, rail, electricity and water and so forth. According to Farmaki, Altinay, Botterill and Hilke (2015) the postwar development and sustainable cultural and heritage tourism research is an area with lack of theoretical developments. Thus novel theoretical and methodological approaches are needed to enhance this area of tourism research (Yasarata, Altinay, Burns, & Okumus, 2010). Thus the present study tries to bridge the above gaps of literature by examining the potentials of sustainable cultural and heritage tourism development in the context of postwar development efforts in Jaffna area.

2. Method

2.1. Data Collection Procedure

Based on the central focus of our study and the review of literature, the researcher devised a qualitative research approach to support the collection of intended data from various stakeholders of tourism and rural development in Northern region of Sri Lanka. The best approach to gather the industrial practitioners’ a local community’s knowledge as well as government perspectives was through the qualitative techniques. This mean that respondents are able to discuss their thoughts on the role of cultural heritage tourism development in Jaffna district also long term approaches for sustainability. The interviews also enabled more extended responses where interviewees discussed their experiences, attitudes and understanding the tourism development in Jaffna district.

2.2. Participant (Subjects) Characteristics

The composition of respondents were selected to obtain the best possible knowledge on the focused issue who are having years of experience and interactions in the region. Consequently, a series of in-depth personal interviews (28) and overt field observations (all over the Jaffna peninsula) were conducted with government officers who are responsible for rural development (05), military officers involve in postwar northern development (04), officials from INGO’S (04), religious and community leaders (03), academics form Hindu culture, heritage, tourism and regional development disciplines (04), rural community members (05) and tourist service operators (03). The series of interviews and observations were taken place during July 2015 to March 2017 in Jaffna areas with the assistant of three local tourism undergraduates.

2.3. Data Analysis

Qualitative data gathered from interviews and filed notes then were transcribed to support the data analysis. The interview transcriptions when were scrutinized through content analysis following the open coding and axial coding steps to trace thematic representations. The coding outcomes, qualitative narrations extracted through interviews, content analysis outcomes and pictures obtained during field work are collectively used to build up the key arguments in this paper. In addition review of documents and relevant reports were entrusted to gather important data which was completed through analysis of postwar development plan, Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission Report (LLRC) and proposed development plan for Jaffna by Northern Provincial Council. These documents were scrutinized through the keywords “cultural heritage”, “tourism”, “sustainability”, “community empowerment” and “rural development” and relevant contents were extracted to support the core arguments of the study.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Postwar Development: The Present Situation

Through field visit interviews, it can be observed that the tourism industry has made, and continues to make, a valuable contribution to Northern Provinces' economic and socio cultural development. The volume of direct and indirect employment increased steadily from 59,914 in 1990 to 319,436 in 2015 (SLTDA, 2016). In fact, figures specific to Jaffna District are not available to indicate the economic gains of tourism. Therefore, national indicators are relied upon to provide a broad understanding of these gains. However, the interviews reflected that the dawn of peace in 2009 has led great volume of inbound tourists to Jaffna particularly pilgrims and local visitors. Equally, the number of foreign tourists is increasing steady parallel to the increasing number of accommodation and other tourist services around the Jaffna city.

3.2. Culture and Heritage of Jaffna: The Tourism Potentials

Based on our analysis the cultural and heritage resources in Jaffna peninsula which could be employed for sustainable tourism development are categorized to six main sets. Historical – historical monuments, memorable places of significant events; Archeological-archeological monuments, ruins and places of excavations; Cultural-festivals, folklore, traditions and way of life; Ethnographic-ethnic groups, ethnic food and creations, cultures, language and outfit; Religious-rituals and ceremonies, relics and pilgrimage places, beliefs and religious constructions; Ecological-natural landscapes, wetlands, forest covers and wild life. The resources of above six categories belong to Jaffna peninsula were pooled and enlisted during the course of our study. The list turned out to be a pages long document reflecting the richness of the area in terms of resources.



Figure 1. Ruined dutch fort in Jaffna
(Source: Author 2016)

Dutch Fort of Jaffna embodies the cultural character and the reconstructions and provision of information to tourists is still ongoing. The place is transforming form a war ridden ruin to a tourist attraction which could take few more years (Figure 1). Interestingly, the tourist attraction is much higher during all the day in and around Dutch Fort which carries a centuries old heritage at the center of Jaffna peninsula. The similar Fort in Galle (Southern Sri Lanka) is a UNESCO world cultural heritage site due to its living heritage and the Jaffna Dutch fort could regain its glories through proper preservation. The ongoing preservation project is funded by the government of Netherlands and is expected to finish in 2018 making the Jaffna the cultural center (Figure 2). Once the project is completed the Jaffna cultural and heritage tourism center is expected to embody Hindu, Buddhist, Colonial and Maritime heritage entities with proper information and facilities including the Delft Island's colonial artifacts.



Figure 2. Preserved dutch fort in Jaffna
(Source: Author 2016)



Figure 3. Jaffna library complex seen over Durayappa ground
(Source: Author 2016)

Jaffna library and Durayappa grounds hide historical and cultural legends in the modern history of Jaffna. Particularly, the civil riots were started by assassination then the Jaffa mayor Hon. Durayappa and the main football ground at the center of Jaffna city was named in his commemoration. Jaffna library that hides the history and heritage of Hindus in Jaffna and in Sri Lanka was set fired in early eighties making the cultural conflict to its peak between Sinhalese and Tamils. However, extensive rehabilitation programme launched by Sri Lankan government through the public support made the library back to its

colonial glories. Massive cultural center funded by Indian government is hastily coming up in between Dutch Fort and library complex. Once it is finished in 2018 the area is expected to go for UNESCO classification through application procedure. The figure 1, bellow illustrates the preserved Jaffna library complex as seen over the Durayappah ground where the new cultural center is coming up. Jaffna library holds a historical legend of the Tamil civilization and culture of Northern Sri Lanka which was set fire in 80's and was rebuilt after the end of war (Figure 3).

Nallur Kannaswamy Hindu Temple (Figure 4 below) embodies the Hindu culture at the center of Jaffna and has become a central hub of pilgrimage for visitors in Jaffna. Fantastically, in Sri Lankan culture five Eswaran temples are well-known and are worshiped by all Hindus and Sinhalese (Buddhists) equally. Nagueshwarn, Muneshwaran, Koneshwaran, Tirukeshwaran and Mangaleshwaran temples are well known Eswaran temples which are worshiped by both Hindus and Buddhists in Sri Lanka and Kannaswamy temples are equally worshiped by all. Similarly, Nallur Kannaswamy temple personifies Hindu cultural heritage at which they perform annual rituals and celebrations in a large scale (Figure 5 below). These religious events are relics for cultural and heritage tourists through proper utilization of them in tourism services.



Figure 4. Nallur Hindu Kovil, Jaffna
(Source: Author 2016)



Figure 5. Annual festival and rituals at Nallur Hindu Kovil, Jaffna
(Source: Author 2016)

Based on our field observations and the interview outcomes the cultural heritage tourism activities and products of Jaffna area could be categorized in to following key areas.

Table 1. Potential cultural and heritage tourism products in Jaffna

Types of Cultural tourism	Potential Products and Activities
Heritage tourism	Physical- historical buildings, sites of historical heritage, memorials, sites of architectural value; Socio-cultural- folklore, literature and arts; Sites of cultural heritage- library, memorials of historical persons, museums and locations of historical
Traditions of ethnic groups	Local traditions, ethnic food, diverse ethnic groups
Rituals and festivals	Religious events, festivals, rituals, cultural celebrations, arts and music events
Themed cultural trails	War memorials, spiritual trails, colonial routes, culinary themes, artistic themes, spiritual trails
Religious and Pilgrimage	Pilgrimage trails of Hinduism, catholic and Buddhism
Innovative cultural tourism	Traditional performing and visual art festivals and events, craft, culture based audio-video and film tourism

Source: Author (2017)

3.2.1. Tourism: A Mode of Sustainable Cultural Harmony

Tourism is commonly identifies as a journey through corridors of time, space, history, people, cultures that explore diverse experiences. During the course of this journey intercultural understanding, harmony and tolerance should be enhanced rather challenging. The study found out that tourism makes a substantial economic socio cultural contribution to regional development and also promote intercultural connections. Irrespective of the fact that general cultural conflict between Sinhalese and Tamils over centuries an industry like tourism has opened up a new passage to harmonize such disputes. Specially, the visitors from South and their upright behaviors impress local community. The picture which was created during the war period was totally different to what they experience right now from the visitors. Hence, the study infers an excellent opportunity to promote intercultural harmony through tourism as social leaders and academics have extensively commented on.

“.....tourism is a tool to promote peace between South and North....now they really see who Sinhalese are....and are happy to see them here....”

Respondent RC1, July 2015

“...in 2009 people protested against the people vising from South and that was due to the brutal picture which was created here during last three decades.....the real interaction between citizens have created a much better social harmonylarger arrivals of tourists and better opportunities for residents here will sustain peace, harmony and will solve the long lasting social issues.....”

Respondent MO2, August 2016

3.2.2. Barriers to Overcome

One major problem of postwar development in Jaffna is absence of a common goal or documented plan as to how things should move and what the roles of each player involve in the process. Instead individual

bodies are following their own agendas which are not integrated to a one single plane with clearly defined outcomes. This multifaceted nature of development objectives and confrontations in the activities lead the postwar development programmes to chaos. The following comment clearly reveals this situation.

“.....now we don't know what those NGO's are up to...they have their own plans...we are given guidelines by the ministry of economic development.....provincial development ministry they also have their own plans....we all are working towards the same direction...but why we are isolated...I think a common platform for all us to perform to reach the ultimate goal is essential.....”

Respondent MO4, March 2017

A civil servant from Northern Province confirms that in case of Jaffna, post war tourism development programme has been implemented. However developers failed to design and offer appropriate destinations to development as tourist destination. It is considered as a main challenge to tourism boom in Jaffna district. As the figure 6 illustrates the barriers for sustainable tourism development process of Jaffna are both natural and socio-cultural. Poor infrastructure has been a key challenge though massive development projects such as Northern railway, harbor, and airport and road network are in place. The accessibility roads to tourist attractions and basic facilities such as accommodation, food and beverage, entertainment, sanitary and more importantly the social attitudes towards tourists need further enhancement for proper tourism business in Jaffna.

The resident communities of Jaffna, their perceptions and attitudes towards tourism and tourists still find unwelcome. Particularly, the older generation perceives the traditional Hindu culture and their religious rituals are on offer for sale through tourism. Tamils less hospitable attitudes together with their doubtful strangeness shows to visitors question the community readiness for a service industry like tourism. The social readiness should come over time and the attitudes, employability and service orientations are key aspects in training and development policies in Northern areas.

“....our people still have the habit of looking at people with suspicion.....of course things will not change overnight since we were with this for last 30 years.....it need confidence building, awareness and proper response form the visitors too....”

Respondent RC3, March 2017

Water level and salinity issues are critical issues to address immediately which otherwise will affect the whole human activities in Jaffna. The city atmosphere still remains ruins and portrays the look of an average town in 70's which demands rapid rehabilitation to give its personality. Proper garbage management systems and recycling process should be introduced at this stage to avoid mountains of garbage in the city soon. These processes need to recognize at this early stage and policies, practices and regulations should be in place to make sure the atmosphere is maintain eco-friendly.

“...we can see what has happened in Colombo....we don't want it to be the same here. It is challenging and a huge change of the attitudes and behavior of people towards environmental loving is necessary.....laws won't make it all....it's about attitudes and perceptions of people.....thus it needs perceptual revolution that should go through serious propaganda and awareness mechanism.....”

Respondent AC3, August 2016

Tourism has opened up a new era in terms of environmental regain. The ruins and ruined city together with its paraphernalia could have a better look for the sake of tourism industry. The environmental sustainability is inseparable from socio-cultural sustainability since it has been experienced for last three decades in Jaffna.

“..I think much damage to the environment was done during the war and what remained here were just ruins.....at least for tourism proper restoration and preservation of our

environment, and cultural heritage could be done and that will be the heritage of our future generation...”

Respondent CM4, March 2017

3.2.3. Stakeholder Responsibilities

The interview summary infers that all the stakeholders have a serious responsibility to maintain socio-cultural sustainability while developing cultural and heritage tourism for development. Development enhancing living status is necessary and the resources should be employed for this purpose, but not at the expense of destroying the centuries old heritages and values of local communities.

“...cultural alteration is invertible...in which ever the way cultural are fluid and changing.....what we have to control is the unacceptable phase of the change and the unhealthy involvements of both tourists and residents....learning from other destinations we can be a better place preventing drugs, child abuse and sex trade....”

Respondent GO2, July 2015

The responsibility remains at all the stakeholders who involve in tourism industry and the government alone can't make it effectively. Thus, everyone who is involve in tourism and related activities such as operators, suppliers, travel agents, hotels, community and tourists themselves together can make the goal of long-term sustainability of tourist destinations.

“...if the societies, cultures and communities are attractive then only tourists could come and experience, then only communities can do tourism and all the other who will have their stake doing the business.....” so, making sure the attractiveness and original cultural heritage and community values are preserved is the responsibility of all.....”

Respondent AC2, August 2016

A collective approach driven through solid policy planning for long-term sustainability in all key areas such as economic, socio-cultural and ecological will only help Jaffna to emerge as a promising tourist destination in the Island. Its unique physical character and cultural heritage are the pivotal components and their sustainability is critical in this effort.

3.2.4. Sustainability Issues

Cultural conflicts and political activists driven by racist ideologies severely hinder the ongoing development efforts. The areas have been suffering for three decades and it has been opened to the world of opportunities as at present. This should fully be grasped and the well planned development agenda could be put into operation that could address long waited sustainable development of these war ridden areas.

“....we have been fully involve in developing these areas from 2009 when the war is over.....our soldiers are deployed to construct houses, public places, road development and training youth and specially rehabilitated cadres for vocations.....we are facing serious problems and criticisms from local politicians who really have no interests of better living conditions for people here who are claiming to remove military from Jaffna.....it is our responsibility to perform the orders either to wage war of terror or war of development.....now we are into second and if they want to lose this and that will be last chance”

Respondent MO3, March 2017

Irrespective of the fact that tourism industry open new opportunities compared to traditional agricultural sector, the attitude of local residents continue to confronting for service industries like tourism.

The older generation particularly, Hindu Tamils considered being more traditional and strict of religious believes rituals and celebrations. Thus, many of them are opposed to open their rituals to visitors. On the other hand the arrogant attitudes of residents have made hard to employ them in hospitality services as many of the service operators' comment that are also from local community. They believe rigorous training programmes are necessary to mould freshers for their attitudes, flair and language skills.

"....it is really hard to work with these people.....specially guys from villages.....they never smile and have the attitude of serving another person....it will take so many years to change these traditional detrimental attitudes for tourism industry....."

Respondent TO3, march 2017

The price levels of consumables and fresh vegetables, fish and meat have gone up drastically due to the competition from the visitors and tourism industry as a whole. Specifically, the prices of consumables in Jaffna market are of steadily increasing and the local residents have to pay competitive prices with visitors from different regions. However, the market completion has been of open and price driven after 2009 since the products could be sent out of Jaffna and traders from outside arrives in Jaffna. Yet the increasing completion for living is one of the major challenge residents face parallel to booming tourism indication economic sustainability issues that need to be addressed simultaneously.

".....we used to live with our monthly income very happily and had a better consumption pattern...now if you go to market how much is a 1 kg of fresh fish....the prices have gone up unbelievably during last few years.....this is because of the arrivals of so many outsiders in Jaffna and their excessive demand.....we poor resident here have to compete with their money for our living...."

Respondent CM2, July 2015

The prices of several goods such as prawns, crabs, meat, grapes, mangos and jackfruit are rocketing and finds difficult for average local residents to buy due to extensive completion and increased prices. Thrust the sustainability of price levels or else the income levels of residents demand a balance to advocate their support for tourism. Contrarily, such issues lead to hostilities towards tourism and tourists in the long run from residents. In Jaffna the prices of fresh produces have increased considerably during the last few years. Many respondents indicate that government should pay more attention to maintain sustainable prices for the products that are attractive in tourism industry to prevent local residents' being trap in severe completion for consumables.

".....we ate good products of Jaffna before warand can we eat Jaffna prawn now or crab? No way it's a product for tourists and we are no more able to buy them with our income....."

Respondent CM23 August 2016

On the contrary, the commercialization of cultural heritage is a key concern of residents particularly those devoted to Hinduism. Further, socio-cultural space of the communities could affect largely by developing tourism in such fragile scapes. The visual pollution could affect the cultural character of the place as has happened already trough the appearance of sky-high concrete monsters in the holly areas. Conflicts and completion for local resources such as buildings, attractions and other cultural resources could affect traditional values of local residents intensifying cultural transformation.

".....Jaffna can be the Hindu cultural center of Sri Lanka and tourism cold be developed around Hindu cultural heritage in the area....importantly it has be linked to local communities and they should be benefited....not the big companies who have appeared now.....it is their heritage and they need to reap the harvest....."

Respondent RC3, March 2017

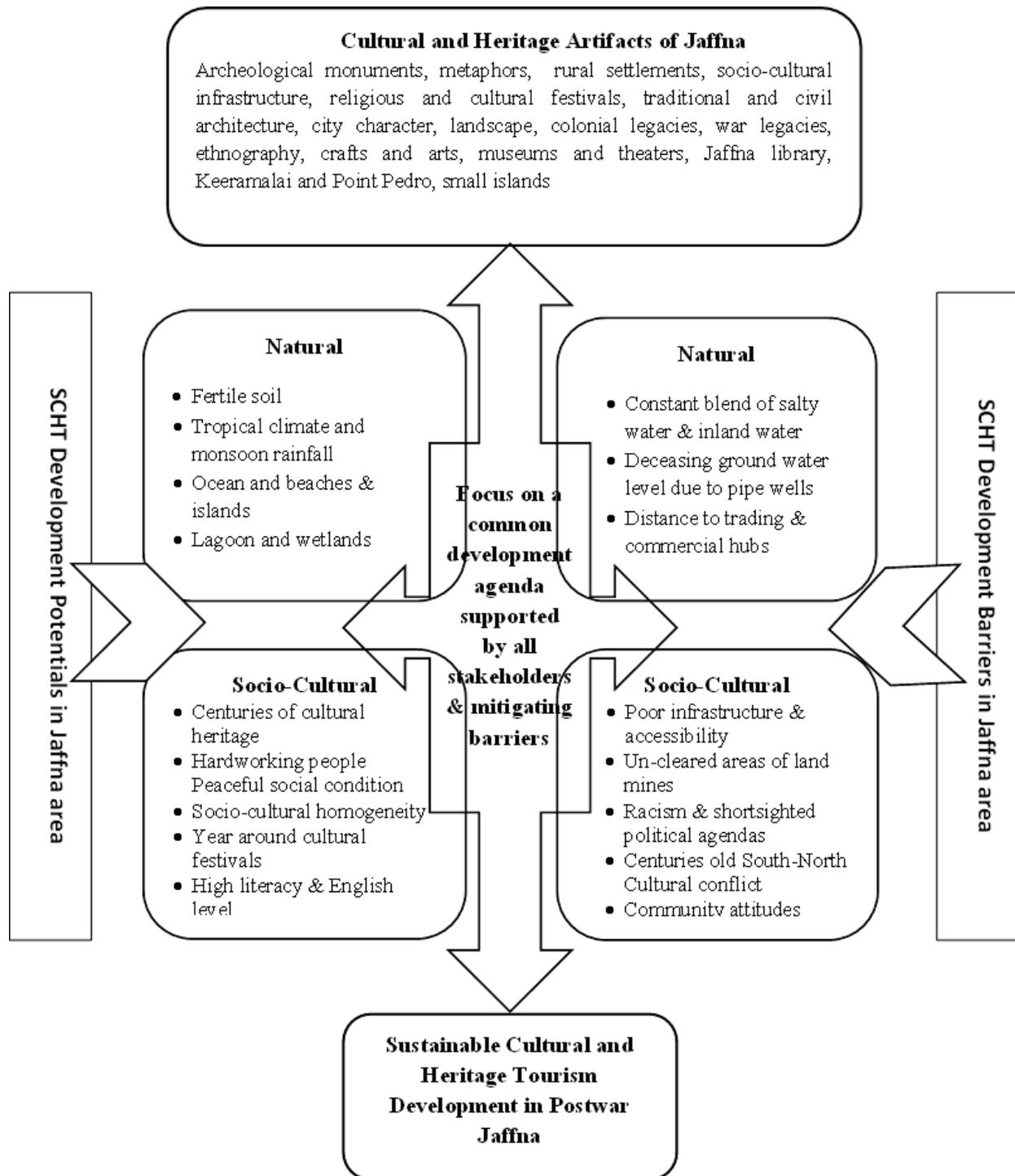


Figure 6. Continuum of sustainable cultural and heritage tourism development in Postwar Jaffna
 (Source: Author complied based on field work 2017)

The equity is a key factor in the sustainable development process and the community which is the weaker part of the whole process has to be benefited from these developments. Most importantly, the socio-cultural harmony and peace is possible though the economic strengthening of the community that is basic to all the other factors. Thus their economic conditions should be addressed through tourism

development to make sure the long term sustainability of cultural and heritage tourism in Jaffna as well as keeping the peace which was won after thirty years of brutal war.

“.....it is very important to keep these people economically strong and that will only assure their long term socio-cultural sustainability and peace in the society.....tourism is a good opportunity for people earn extra money if it is developed around local people.....the local people need to be empowered with capital they need....”

Respondent AC1, July 2015

3.2.5. Continuum of Sustainable Cultural and Heritage Tourism Development in Postwar Jaffna

Based on our analytical outcomes of the interview transcriptions, the following summary could be proposed as the continuum of sustainable cultural and heritage tourism development in postwar Jaffna. Accordingly the cultural and heritage sources of the peninsula appear at the top of the illustration based on which the whole development process is proposed. On the left side potentials identified for Sustainable Cultural and Heritage Tourism Development (SCHTD) are illustrated. They are further classified to two major categories namely natural and socio-cultural. Fertile soil which is the prime source for agriculture, water bodies and other natural resources of tourist attractions are enlisted here. On the bottom of the left side the socio-cultural strengths and potentials are listed including colorful cultural and religious festivals around the year, centuries old cultural heritage, highly educated people and so on.

On the right side top the natural barriers for SCHTD in Jaffna peninsula are enlisted which consists of water salinity issue arise from three places, drastic decline of ground water level due to increasing deep-pipe wells and the distance location of the city from other trade and commercial hubs of Sri Lanka. On the right bottom the socio-cultural barriers are offered and are poor infrastructure and utilities, areas yet not open for public due to land mines, centuries-old South-north cultural conflict (Sinhalese-Tamil), attitudes of the local residents and racism and shortsighted political agendas. Absence of a common development agenda for postwar development areas was a key concern and different stakeholders are acting in isolation with occasional confrontations as a result. This is illustrated at the center of the graph since it is critical that all stakeholders are in agreement and support the development efforts. Finally the SCHTD is placed at the bottom of the illustration which is the end goal and it has to be reached through mitigation the barriers and utilizing potentials. Meanwhile the full employment of the cultural and heritage resources could lead to a sustainable development in the postwar Jaffna peninsula.

4. Discussion

The key focus of this paper was to elucidate the cultural and heritage tourism potentials in postwar development efforts in Jaffna while emphasizing the reflections for sustainability. Thus it attempts to offer a multidisciplinary tourism research perspective linking the emerging research areas such as community based tourism, postwar development, cultural and heritage tourism and anthropological perspectives in economic development. Culturally sustainable development in postwar contexts is limited in literature and we present a framework for cultural and heritage tourism development with reflections for sustainability in postwar development efforts. Specific guidelines for developing agencies and policy making bodies are discussed in line with the reflections form stakeholder of tour study. Cultural and heritage tourism is growing rapidly compared with other forms of tourism and it is the cultural diversity that creates such opportunities for emerging tourist destinations. Tourism is a classic vehicle that combines way of life of people with that of others and history, metaphors, cultural artifacts and rituals and ceremonies enrich such experiences.

Larger part of travel and tourism business is spent on travel and accommodation while the cultural and heritage site entrance fees, activities (festivals, rituals) mostly are free of charge or offer nominal fees. Consequently, the communities' economic advantages are nominal. However, planned cultural villages or

zones with accommodation, entertainment and activities have become a trend in creative cultural and heritage tourism where the communities are empowered to run tourism business. Such initiatives could ensure community empowerment to run tourism activities and build up social capital for resident communities. Stakeholders believed that one of the key strengths of the tourism industry is that it provides new job opportunities compared with traditional agricultural sectors. Thus, the planning agencies and local authorities must ensure that economic benefits are equally shared with local communities to make sure their support is advocated continuously. Thus, the empowerment and education of the communities who are the owners of living cultural heritage to reap economic gains of tourism while preserving their own values are pivotal for sustainability.

Jaffna as a destination for cultural and heritage tourist boasts vast array of resources which are mostly underutilized or under renovation as at present. Postwar Jaffna is emerging as one of the top tourist destination particularly for domestic tourists as at present. The basic infrastructure and utilities are developing very fast and the issues of sustainability are of primarily important at this stage since the whole tourism product development and marketing process are at the early stages. Sustainability of cultural and heritage tourism in all six aspects that we have observed are facing challenges due to mismanagement or misunderstandings among different stakeholder groups. Thus, it is significantly important at this stage to reach a development agenda that is supported by all stakeholders. Socio-cultural and ecological sustainability principles should incorporate to ongoing tourism development efforts and the proposed general tourism development strategy should be devised to address long term sustainability of culture, heritage, ecology and community support through sharing economic benefits adequately with them. Cultural and heritage experiences should be developed for tourists who are willing to save the heritage of Jaffna. For, this effort the Hindu culture department, archeological department, tourism and regional department of Northern Province and community leaders could be actively involved.

It is modern renaissance in Jaffna since all its colonial legacies and Hindu cultural heritage are back to normal surfaces though the ongoing rehabilitation efforts. The Dutch Fort, Jaffna library, Durayappah ground, Keeramalai, Nallur Hindu Kovil, Hindu rituals and celebrations, archeological sites of Kadurugoda, Delft Island and significant places of war could embody the cultural and heritage tourism appeal of Jaffna peninsula. Thus product development, activity planning, marketing, promotion and positioning should encircle these significant artifacts around them. It is also stressed the fact that the whole process are starting from the foundation and therefore, the sustainability measures should be incorporated to prevent, preserve and profit out of the potential sources. The cultural tourism practices allow developing the regional culture in Jaffna enhancing the value of its unique characteristics. The natural way of living of the rural communities and their habitat are recognized as resources need to be preserved. Specific communities and their rituals can be highlighted in cultural and heritage tourism. The local traditions and cultural values can be strengthened to attract tourists around the year avoiding seasonal fluctuations (Ranasinghe, 2015). The ongoing discussions on moving from MDG's to SDG's could be supported though sustainable cultural and heritage tourism while making the communities' economically resilient. However, all that is possible if only the sustainability issues are addressed at these early stages of development.

Our study focused on Jaffna peninsula which is relatively a small geographical area consisting a history of war legacies between Tamils and Sinhalese. Specifically, the postwar perceptions of Tamils people and separatist political interests were reflected in the course of this study. Thus our findings are contextual to the study setting due to its specific geopolitical, socio-economic and cultural aspects. Lack of community involvement in decision making and development efforts were evident and a study to understand best methods of community participation and advocating their support for cultural and heritage tourism development call for future researchers' attention. Even through the war is over and peaceful context is prevailed the underground hatred and cultural conflict was observed particularly from local residents and social activists. It once went up to level of displaying banners not to visit Jaffna from south and such reflections hinder domestic tourism as well as appeal for foreign tourists. An anthropologic approach to

understand such perceptions and drives of local thinking would open up new directions for socio-economic development in Jaffna.

Finally, there is a need to go beyond this research and elucidate as to how tourism development could be integrate into local residents aspirations and such suited may need long-term anthropological approaches. Postwar development activities in socio-cultural background which are strongly embedded in religious beliefs claim longitudinal studies based on anthropological approaches. Thus, further research should continue to document the direct connection between living cultures and enhancing living standards through tourism activities. For example to what extent promoting and sharing of Hindu cultural heritage of the residents in Jaffna would enhance their living standards as against to socio-cultural costs they are incurred. Stakeholder analysis the key approach of this study and the involvement, relevance, education and experience and the active and passive involvement of stakeholders differ significantly. Achieving sustainable development hence should be seen as a journey instead a destination. Thus, sustainable development is an ongoing process which needs considerable work (Lyon, Hunter-Jones, & Warnaby, 2017).

References

- [1] Biggs, D., Hall, C. M., & Stoeckl, N. (2012). The resilience of formal and informal tourism enterprises to disasters: Reef tourism in Phuket, Thailand. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 20(5), 645-665. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2011.630080>
- [2] Bole, D., Pipan, P., & Komac, B., (2013). Cultural values and sustainable rural development: A brief introduction. *Acta Geographica Slovenica*, 53(2). <http://dx.doi.org/10.3986/AGS53401>
- [3] Buultjens, J. W., Ratnayake, I., & Gnanapala, W. K. A. C. (2016). Post-Conflict tourism development in Sri Lanka: Implications for building resilience. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 19(4), 355-372. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2014.1002760>
- [4] Causevic, S., & Lynch, P. (2013). Political (in)stability and its influence on tourism development. *Tourism Management*, 34, 145-157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.04.006>
- [5] du Cros, H., & McKercher, B. (2015). *Cultural tourism* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- [6] Farmaki, A., Altinay, L., Botterill, D., & Hilke, S. (2015). Politics and sustainable tourism: The case of Cyprus. *Tourism Management*, 47, 178-190. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.09.019>
- [7] Fleischer, A., & Felsenstein, D. (2000). Support for rural tourism: Does it make a difference? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(4), 1007-1024. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(99\)00126-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(99)00126-7)
- [8] Hall, C. M., Gössling, S., & Scott, D. (Eds.) (2015). *The Routledge handbook of tourism and sustainability*. London: Routledge.
- [9] Jayawardena, C. (2013). Innovative solutions for future tourism development in Sri Lanka (2013-2026). *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 5(5), 512-531. <https://doi.org/10.1108/WHATT-05-2013-0033>
- [10] Jeon, M. M., Kang, M. M., & Desmarais, E. (2016), Residents' perceived quality of life in a cultural-heritage tourism destination. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 11(1), 105-123. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-014-9357-8>
- [11] Lehman, K., Wickham, M., & Fillis, I. (2014). A cultural tourism research agenda. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 49, 156-158. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2014.09.004>
- [12] Li, X., & Wan, Y. K. P. (2013). Residents' attitudes toward tourism development in Macao: A path model. *Tourism Analysis*, 18(4), 443-455. <https://doi.org/10.3727/108354213X13736372326073>

- [13] Lokuhetty, A., Jayawardena, C., & Mudadeniya, D. (2013). Developing a shared vision for tourism in post-war Sri Lanka. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 5(5), 486-494. <https://doi.org/10.1108/WHATT-05-2013-0030>
- [14] Lyon, A., Hunter-Jones, P., & Warnaby, G. (2017). Are we any closer to sustainable development? Listening to active stakeholder discourses of tourism development in the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve, South Africa. *Tourism Management*, 61, 234-247. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2017.01.010>
- [15] MacDonald, R., & Jolliffe, L. (2003). Cultural rural tourism: Evidence from Canada. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30(2), 307-322. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(02\)00061-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(02)00061-0)
- [16] Nawijn, J., Mitas, O., Lin, Y., & Kerstetter, D. (2013). How do we feel on vacation? A close look at how emotions change over the course of a trip. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(2), 265-274. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287512465961>
- [17] Pieris, A. (2014). Southern invasions: Post-war tourism in Sri Lanka. *Postcolonial Studies*, 17(3), 266-285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2014.987899>
- [18] Pradhan, G. (2001). Economic cost of Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 31(3), 375-384. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472330180000221>
- [19] Ranasinghe, R., (2015). Modeling visitor perceptions on homestay tourism in Sri Lanka. *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, 7, 18-29.
- [20] Ranasinghe, R., & Li, C. (2017). Dimensions of mobilities, tourism and transition of cultural hegemony: A qualitative inquiry from Sri Lanka. *International Journal of Tourism Anthropology*, 6(1), 21-40. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJTA.2017.088023>
- [21] Richards, G. (2010). Tourism development trajectories – From culture to creativity? *Tourism & Management Studies*, 6, 9-15.
- [22] Roberts, S., & Tribe, J. (2008). Sustainability indicators for small tourism enterprises – An exploratory perspective. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 16(5), 575-594.
- [23] Sirakaya-Turk, E., Ekinci, Y., & Kaya, A. G. (2008). An examination of the validity of SUS-TAS in cross-cultures. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(4), 414-421. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287507308328>
- [24] Soini, K., & Birkeland, I. (2014). Exploring the scientific discourse on cultural sustainability. *Geoforum*, 51, 213-223. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2013.12.001>
- [25] Soini, K., & Dessein, J. (2016). Culture-sustainability relation: Towards a conceptual framework. *Sustainability*, 8(2), 167. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su8020167>
- [26] Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority. (2015). *Annual statistical report of tourism industry performance*. Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- [27] Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority. (2016). *Monthly statistical bulletins – 2015*. Retrieved January 20, 2017, from <http://www.sltda.lk/node/704>.
- [28] Surugiu, M., & Surugiu, C., (2015). Heritage tourism entrepreneurship and social media: Opportunities and challenges. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 188, 74-81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.03.340>
- [29] Swanson, K. K., & DeVereaux, C. (2017). A theoretical framework for sustaining culture: Culturally sustainable entrepreneurship. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 62, 78-88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2016.12.003>
- [30] Timothy, D. J. (2011). *Cultural heritage and tourism: An introduction*. Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications.

- [31] Torres-Delgado, A., & Palomeque, F. L. (2014). Measuring sustainable tourism at the municipal level. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 49, 122-137. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2014.09.003>
- [32] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO]. (1972). *The world heritage convention*. Retrieved from <http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext>.
- [33] Yasarata, M., Altinay, L., Burns, P., & Okumus, F. (2010). Politics and sustainable tourism development – Can they co-exist? Voices from North Cyprus. *Tourism Management*, 31(3), 345-356. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.03.016>

