A Case Study on Sustainable Development in terms of Adventure Tourism-Ecotourism

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I. INTRODUCTION

Travelling for the pleasure of it refers to *Tourism.* Tourism, in any of its forms, be it modern, active or international, is encouraged by the ever-progressing globalisation. With the world taking an upgrading pace, tourism is marking its importance in building the global economy largely. Potgieter et al. (2010), suggests the tourism industry is taking a toll in constructing a highly competitive and dynamic scenario on a global level adding to its nature are the complex features influencing its existence.

Ceballos - Lascuráin (1996) mentioned during the middle age era, people generally travelled for the sake of religious purpose and crossed a whole continent in the verge of visiting holy shrines. The ever-increasing developments in terms of telecommunication and transportation, tourism is extravagantly contributing to the international economic status (Ceballos - Lascuráin 1996), and new middle class society who now could afford to travel for pleasure, had triggered the well-known tourism development. Butler and Pears (1995) referred with the emergence of recent technicalities, tourism has widely grown to become a modern phenomenon and can be considered as the sector most influenced by the advancement as compared to other sectors.

Also, tourism has vastly become a term of bilateral significance which deals its importance both with the people take part in touring and those who make provisions for the needs and services of tourists (Butler, 1993). Tourism majorly focuses on delivering a travel experience which is exclusive in each way comprising a wide range of individuals, places, businesses as well as organisations (Cooper et al., 1993). Leiper (1979, 1990), conductively inferred that tourism should be understood as a network of various intrinsic elements connected openly. There were number of factors that are responsible for the current trend include transit regions, destinations regions, transit routes, generating regions and service providers, the tourist industry (Leiper, 1979).

Going by the scenario of the last few decades, the convenience of spending a holiday is directly in proportion with the ease and amount of money being spent on it. Therefore, this has given rise to a sea number of holiday packages keeping in mind the budgets of varying tourists that has had a drastic impact on mass tourism. (Mowforth and Munt 1998: 82-90).

With the changing trends, tourism has become a matter of great importance worldwide and therefore, this has established the need to check and manage the sustainability of tourism industry as a prime responsibility of various communities all over. Human communities have come to allure both primary as well as secondary resources that are required for the nurturing of tourism industry. One of the major reasons responsible for bringing in tourists are the local and distinct communities that attract people to get in sync with the lives of different communities, experience their lifestyles and exploring new cultures and civilisations. Therefore, sustaining the local touch in communities, no matter how greatly has modernity affected lifestyle, is one of the essential factor to nurture the widely growing tourism today. This also helps in maintaining the heritage and riches of the destination place for the future generation. Hall & Richards (2010), the rational tourism development in terms of sustainable development mainly depends upon a region's renewability and maintenances in terms of its culture, society and economy and its environment. Taylor (1995, 487) argues that the involvement of local communities in the boost of tourism has gradually become the central point of debate on sustainability. The concept of sustainability of resources and tourism must be coordinated well. It is important that the tourists visiting a particular place or region must respect and preserve the social, cultural and economic norms in order to sustain them for the future generations. Fennel and Dowling (2003), not just identifying the responsibilities of sustainable development towards the future is essential but also to take appropriate and steady actions to bring forth the desired results must also be encouraged and devised. The current scenario of the world depicts the worst picture ever as there is great imbalance in terms of growth of economy. At one point if certain countries are majorly developed, certain other countries are at the ground level considering their economic growth. It is also observed that if one field has extravagant developments, this may lead to unemployment in some other field. This introduces us to the concept of green economy that largely

focuses on welfare and social equality for everyone in the society. At the same time, green economy also keeps a note of limited and judicious use of non-renewable resources in order to preserve them for the future generations. Thus, it tends to maintain the green cover and ecological balance of the earth. The recent examples of increasing concerns are that of deforestation in Himalayas, the littering of Nepalese mountains and water of Mediterranean Sea getting polluted which has tensed the countries on an international level. Not just Everest is the place to keep the norms and principles of sustainability in mind but also at every other place for a better tomorrow (Fears 2011). Mowforth and Munt (1998), it has now become the need of the hour to devise and implement alternative forms of tourism. From the point of view of the destination tourism management, it should not be misinterpreted to control the tourism industry but it implies to keep in check appropriate forms of tourism to ensure sustainability and liability (Ritchie and Crouch 2003).

Thus, keeping in mind the requirements of standardized growth, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has defined green economy or economic model as the type of economy that makes sure that the development taking place must be sustainable and manages the ecological balance simultaneously. It has mentioned that ecosystem is one of the vital components of this green economy. Factors affecting the sustainability and viability of green economy are, we as individuals, taking care of waste management, land management, efficient use of resources- renewable and non-renewable both and so on. Since pollution from vehicles stands alone to be the major cause of environmental degradation but practically it is impossible to give up on such an amenity. Thus, not just complying to modern technology but also embarking a modern mind set of people is what is required. A rational and feasible mentality that rooms both modernity as well as sustainability should be established to ensure of not depriving our future generations of the rich heritage of our earth. Mowforth and Munt (1998), states that sustainability can be further classified into ecological, cultural, economic and social sustainability, to be precise.

II. Impact Of Tourism

Keyser (2009) has derived a strategical approach in a holistic way giving the three pillars of sustainable development namely, environmental integrity, social justice and economic efficiency. All then mentioned features should be maintained and implemented in order to provide our future generation a reasonable and feasible way to lead a good life. The above mentioned strategies are mandatory for any developing tourism initiative or industry to promote and manage the impact of tourism. It is the approach and principles combining various strategies which are responsible for any region's tourism industry to undertake the measures and build its economy (Turinangan, 2006).

2.1 SOCIAL IMPACT

Tourism is immensely emerging as one of the vital sources to maintain amity among various nations thus, contributing to the social and cultural exchange and strengthening ties at international level. It is developing the plethora of raising hands of friendship and optimistic attitude. It also develops a sense of respect and honour for the destination country which imbibes its significance at a greater level. When a tourist visits another place or region, he/she becomes aware of the distinctive culture and tradition of that particular place and it leads to interaction among people coming and belonging from different walks of life. This creates an ambience of psychological satisfaction .(Mirbabayev & Shagazatova, 2002.).

2.2 ECONOMIC IMPACT

Today, we stand witness to the fact that tourism is that one industry which is immensely growing on an ever-changing and fast pace. The study from recent years shows that major developments in the infrastructure and inflow of foreign currency are evidences that there is greater foreign exchange taking place in every niche. Tourism is also an industry that has built large number of employments and has immensely contributed to the taxation further contributing to the economy. The capital acquired from the lodging, transportation and food has had of a great importance to the economy. Thus, directly or indirectly, tourism has generated a wide range of different jobs and has benefited earnings from foreign exchange. Tourism industry consumes a number goods and services, food and transportation which also include taking care for the privileges and safety of tourists. Tourism encourages entrepreneurship, trade and income. Adding to this, is the capital raised by the visa charges and royalty that significantly contributes to the economy (Bista 2006, 26). Many tourist bring back to their homes things bought from the destination countries as souvenir. Exempting a few exception, overall tourism has a positive effect on the growth of a region. As stated in one of the laws of economics, "when the demand for a

particular good or service increases, on the other hand it decreases the price value of that good or service" (Bista 2006, 26).

2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

It is a known fact that the perseverance of a tourist spot can be largely maintained by maintaining its natural bounties. This is the case where elements of nature signify the attraction of many tourists and to sought to develop viable links to explain that environment is the inherited element of attraction of any tourist spot (Newsome, Moore & Dowling, 2002). Butler (1993) has seconded this point by sought to have developed viable links that connect the elements tourism greatly inclined to the natural heritage with the preservances of environmental quality. Although, the quality of environment and ambience, be it man-made or natural, is vital for tourism but many tourism activities have proved to be hazardous and destructive for the natural environment (Newsome et at, 2002). Most of this destruction is due to the setting up of roads, concrete structures, golf courses, hotels, shops and many such developments (Newsome et at, 2002). It was also argued upon that whenever there is a mass emergence of people as visitors, it largely affects the not just the culture and traditions of that particular region but also exploits the local resources of that region and leads to environmental degradation due to water pollution, noise pollution, traffic congestion and many other similar reasons (Hunter & Green, 1995; Liddle, 1997; Newsome et al., 2002; Mason, 2003, Pandey et al. 2010).

III. Sustainable Concept In Tourism Development

The concept of tourism is a well-defined example of sustainable development. Tourism is one of the most active industries that are entirely dependent upon the presence of a healthy environment. Thus, from here we can understand and realise the importance of looking after our natural environment and preserving it not just for the purpose of greater tourism opportunities but also for our future generation which has equal right as us to cherish the bounties of nature. It must be noted as an issue of great concern to keep a check on the over-exploitation of resources and raising awareness for the maintenance of the natural bounties of that region especially considering the environment (Butler and Boyd 2000). It is observed in the current scenario that there exists a lack of consensus when there occurs a situation to define the appropriate meaning of sustainability or indeed, the point to relate sustainability to that with tourism (Sharpley, 2000; Tao & Wall, 2008; Wall, 1995).

Sustainable tourism is also termed to be a responsible tourism as each participant shares his portion of responsibility that includes respecting not just the local culture and norms but also going by the rules laid for the local environment. This is also helping in preserving the endangered flora and fauna of the tourism regions. It is the fundamental responsibility of the tourists to take care and judiciously use the water and other energy giving resources so that this will preserve the inherited heritage to take benefit of it further and enjoy the bounties in future (Thomas Cook 2010.).

Managing the resources in such a way that it not just takes care of the social, aesthetic, cultural and economic conditions of the host region but also keeps in mind the natural processes of support systems, biological diversity and ecological balance (Wight 2002).

Dixon & Pretorius (2001), sustainable development is that development that does not only takes care of the needs of the present but also checks the needs for the future generation to meet their own requirements. This is a concept of equality and integrity that believes that the natural resources are not just for those who are alive but also for those who will be a part of the future generation (Seap, 2010). The concept in which environmental quality and economic status coexist, the statement of Brundtand Commission that sustainable development refers to that concept of utilising the resources in a feasible way so that it fulfils the requirements of today without compromising the needs of the future (Brundtland Commission for Sustainable Development 2005).

Brundtland report on sustainability was prepared by WCED which concluded that it was only due to the manifestation of the judicious use of environmental resources that a nation can achieve its target of the specified economic status (Fennel and Dowling 2003). The world conservation strategy was established and presented to people that was based on the sustainability report prepared by the Bruntland Commission along with WCED.

IV. Ecotourism

Ecotourism refers to that form of tourism which involves the green alternatives that is a form that deals with providing tourist services but considering the green phenomenon of conservation of natural resources alongside. Thus, the concept of encouraging tourism can be viewed as the consciousness to maintain the right structure of ecology and maintaining a balance in environment. Given the present scenario, many people consider tourism and ecotourism as almost similar but that is a false perception. Many authors have tried to

differentiate the two but it was, (Nagle 1999), which stated that ecotourism can be viewed as that kind of tourism which continues without damaging the environment and also invites the local communities to participate in developing measures for tourism in order to preserve their natural heritage. Some ecotourism might be a case of where the local people are not benefited. For example, the funds raised with the influx of tourists for the African safari is not really used to help those people who were displaced due to the creation of this utmost famous tourist spot (Patterson 2002).

Patterson (2002) mentioned certain characteristics for ecotourism business:
  a) Guidance for tourists in visiting the spots of attraction.
  b) Involvement of highly recreational yet low impact techniques.
  c) Local elites can be highly benefited to look for a source of income.
  d) Involvement of the local communities would help provide the local touch of the place and getting to learn an entirely new environment.
  e) A boost to the efforts of organisations involved for the conservation of nature.
  f) Setting a limit to the number of visitors in order to avoid rush.
  g) Privacy of the local elites must be respected and maintained.
  h) Guides a boon for this industry as they provide the natural history and environment of that place.
  i) To ensure not to disturb the wild life of that region.

On the other hand, many authors have customised certain requirements which must be made mandatory for a business to be termed as ecotourism business. Ceballos - Lascuráin (1996) mentioned these requirements:
  a) Concentrating on the intrinsic values instead of the extrinsic ones.
  b) Must be beneficial for the environment as well as for the wildlife.
  c) Must not harm any resources.
  d) Must consider the active participation of the local communities for the establishment.
  e) Appreciation or education should measure the level of gratification.
  f) Must consider the natural environment as the centre of attraction and not the man-made resources.
  g) The demands of people and leaders must be fulfilled with deep knowledge and research.
  h) Must promote ethical behaviour of the tourists and endowing moral values.
  i) The first encounter must be with the natural environment.

It is noted that the rich experience one gains undergoing ecotourism marks a significant difference of what would have been the experience from other form of tourisms. It has been prominently assumed that the emergence and adverse of mass tourists must be the reason for the establishment of ecotourism (Weaver 2001).

V. Ecotourism Versus Adventure Tourism

As the adventure is heard, rush of various images and associations occur flooding our thoughts. Varied people have varied perceptions regarding adventure trips and tourism (Swartbrooke et al, 2003). Cashmore (2002), most of the people consider adventure as something that leads to their adrenaline rush and something that relates to the death wish. Standeven (1999), adventure is described as something which seems to be a 'quest for excitement' which creates rejuvenation and excitement at the same time which is said to have counterbalanced the daily routine of the lives of people in the modern world. Adventure activities such as hiking, river-rafting, mountaineering, trekking and so on do not only provide with exciting experiences but also gives an opportunity to the tourists to get one with nature. People, now a days, tend to seek more recreational pleasure in adventure based trips rather than anything else (Gorge 2004 & Hudson 2003). Whereas, on the other hand, Crouch (1999), described adventure tourism as an activity which helps in building friendly ties with the local communities and get to understand their culture, traditions and lifestyle. Also, strengthening mutual cooperation and imbibing empowerment among varied nationalities. Differentiating adventure tourism and ecotourism can be controversial. It is the hectic daily life routine of the modern era that people tend to seek pleasure from going away from their homes and busy city life into niche of peace and harmony to revitalise their systems with natural surroundings. It is believed that this trend is responsible for the emergence and development of ecotourism which indeed, to a certain level is a fact. Adding to it, adventure trips are also economically feasible and naturally viable if not extended to a par certain limit. It is these limitations that are set

as norms in both ecotourism and adventure tourism that define the difference between the two terms. Adventure tourism is defined as a leisure form of activity at a remote, exotic place full of wilderness involving a high pitch of excitement (Fennel 2003).

Defining ecotourism and comparing it with adventure tourism represents a sort of overlapping concept. Some may infer ecotourism to have passive nature whereas adventure tourism involves more action oriented activities.Also, adventure tourism must be a case of creating surprise and an element of uncertainty for the participant.

Fennel (2003) has laid emphasis on the risk element in the adventure tourism. Moreover, it is not the setting but the gist of the activity itself that adds to the fun part and is the major pursuit of revitalisation in such activities. On one hand when adventure tourism uses nature to add the exciting view and enthralling experiences for thrill, on the other, it is the educative part of the nature that ecotourism deals with. Therefore, encouraging people to understand the importance of conserving the natural beauty and also it is a way of spreading awareness by creating a learning environment while touring.

VI. Risks - Adventure Tourism

The major risks involving adventure tourism is to establish accommodation, infrastructure, visitor centres and many other services which directly impact the nature in terms of vegetation removal, deteriorating the green cover, disturbing the wildlife habitats, impact on drainage etc. Wildlife is at greater threat due to adventure tourism. Such activities are creating havoc in their environment by significantly altering their habitats. Examples of hunting are nothing new to us where man has been brutally killing wild animals for his selfish motives let it be for tusks, skin or other kinds. As Coltman (1989: 236) states that whenever there is a mass influx of tourists at a particular place it tends to disturb the natural environment of that region. This can also lead to extravagant deforestation which would in turn lead to soil erosion thus, ruining the natural beauty of that region. This would disturb the entire vegetation of that place. The influx of population in any region brings along a lot of demands such as demand for drinking water, accommodation and so on. The result is sewage litter, release of waste from fuel engines, polluting lakes and rivers which would directly impact the flora and fauna of this typical region. Fuel engines in water crafts will adversely affect the population of sea creatures and fishing and hunting will drastically disturb the ecological balance of that place. Disturbance can be of various forms let it be visual, noise or immoral behaviour (Chitrakar 2009). Human communities developing in the wilderness can cause animals attacking the humans. (Eagles, McCool and Haynes 2002)

VII. Sustainable Tourism – Summary

Hall (2008), the state of tourism or sustainable development varies from place to place. Sustainable tourism requires major participation of political leaders and consensus to ensure greater influx of tourists. It requires a lot of capital to be input to attract as many tourists as possible. A number organisations and agencies coming together and working in coordination are essential to build and maintain the riches and bounties of that specific region. It is required for the industries to take care of pollution check and the type of raw material they are using in order to be environment-friendly. This would help in keeping these resources for the future generations (Söderbaum 2008, Steven, Elizabeth & Laura 2000.). It requires taking effective measures and involving industries with the local communities and putting stress on building friendly ties between the two mutually (Söderbaum 2008). Sustainable tourism must ensure that the trip must be meaningful and should be worthy experience and must spread awareness about sustainability (WTO, 2001).

A number of research projects have come into existence ever since the concept of ecotourism was established and called for the need of the hour (Fons et. al. 2010). Community benefit tourism Simpson (2008), community tourism planning (Reid et al, 2004), risks in adventure tourism activities (Page et. al. 2005), ethnic tourism application (Wall & Yang, 2009), adventure tourism in the future (Swartbrooke et. al., 2003), profiles of the adventure tourism market (Van Olsen 2010),literary facilities being developed as an alternative for tourism (Wearing & Neil, 2009), community based tourism ventures (Seble, 2010) and so on. A lot of literature is also developed which suggests adventure tourism as an alternative form of tourism.

David Aabo, in 2006, represented his thesis on sustainable tourism entitled as 'A case study for adventure service tourism'. This however, emphasized mainly on providing service in the form of adventures only. "Sustainability indicators for managing community tourism" was presented by Choi &Sirkaya (2006) that dealt with suggesting indicators that would measure the growth of tourism within a sustainable framework. The indicators included the scale of economy, society, technology, culture and ecology. The interrelationship

between natural and cultural stakeholders was derived from this case study only which also stated that the above mentioned indicators show a lot different results from that of traditional indicators (Andereck et al, 2005).

Harris et al. (2002) devised five major principles that must be the guidelines for developing any sustainable tourism namely: It must be a form of sustainable tourism that must not compromise with the basic foundation of the attraction of that spot but with keeping conservation as its objective; It must encourage participation of the local community to maintain its touch of ancient heritage; It should be awareness based tourism trip which should also take care of the services provided to the tourists as appropriate; The policy and planning should not be so strict that it avoids the experimental nature of the trip; The interest of the local private industries should be entertained only to a level that they don't tend to monopolise the entire region.

Overall, Harris et al. (2002), Hall (2008), concluded that the development plan for nay tourist spot must occur in various stages, governance scales, temporal scales, spatial scales, structures and other forms of measurement. It was concluded by Turingan (2006) that several issues of strategy development must be considered in order to devise tourism as rendering it more competitive.

Although, the tourism industry will never be hundred per cent sustainable but still the guideline builders must make it in accordance with the norms of sustainability. The impact on environment can be classified into three categories namely: natural, man-made and cultural. The influx of population in a serene region destroys its flora and fauna and disturbs the environment. India has a number of spots and sights for attraction of tourism such as hunting spots, national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and many more. But now due to huge amount of visitations, the wild animals tend to evacuate from these places as well (Bista 2006, 27.)

Therefore, keeping in view all these adversities, a lot of new measures and indicators are in the process of development and implementation to manage the deteriorating environment and maintain sustainability.World Tourism Organisation has assessed and developed certain criteria and set some rules for tourism to be conducted(Collins, 1998; Schianetz, Kavanagh &Lockington, 2007; Twinning-Ward & Butler, 2002; WTO, 2004). Many researches were develop with their ideologies of developing a par defined manner of tourism which include Environmental Audit and Logical Footprint (Ding &Pigram, 1995; Hunter & Shaw, 2005,Schianetz et al., 2007).The Environmental Impact Assessment (Ding &Pigram, 1995), Visitor Impact Management and Tourism Impact Management (McCool & Lime, 2001; Moore et al., 2003; Newsome et al., 2002), survey based methods such as Delphi techniques (Green, Hunter and Moore, 1990), and finally, Multi Criteria Analysis regarding the effects of tourism on environment (Schianetz et al., 2007).

Another idea to overcome the deteriorating environment is to build protected areas. Protected areas are tourist spots which are rich in biodiversity, have an extravagant green cover of the ecosystem and fulfil the growing demands of outdoor activities (Chitrakar 2009). The one basic thing that is needed to be kept in mind is to endow the visitor with the awareness of not just take part in their desired activities but should also monitor the ethical values for maintaining the sustainability of that region (Eagles, McCool and Haynes 2002). Constructing protection areas and conserving the natural environment to attract maximum tourists is a challenging task. As the business of nature conservation is expensive, large amount of capital in the form of revenue is needed to be generated.

Thus, at the bottom line describes that it is the ecotourism that builds the consciousness of environment in the minds of the tourists. The progress in the concept of eco-tourism can be well realised by considering the increasing number of eco-tourists. With its roots of development from USA, Canada and Australia, it has largely influenced countries like India, Indonesia and many others. With the development of affordable yet feasible travel expenses, with ecotourism people are reaching at even the remotest of the areas of this world. This seems to be a great opportunity for the developing nations as ecotourism can bring a great amount of economic boost. Ecotourism has also shown a way to countries to focus on their tourism industry and thus, on sustainable development with a wider prospective rather than investing in the industrial production.

The gist of the entire research comes out to be very clear. A nation's development is majorly defined by its resources. Also, the concept of sustainable development is greatly rational and feasible in order to protect our heritage and riches bestowed to us by the nature so that our future generations must also extract benefit out of it and experience the wonderful bounties we are endowed with. Therefore, tourism proves to be a fine proposition and developing the tourism industry of a nation would not only help in the growth of the economic, cultural and social aspects of that nation but will also conserve the natural environment which is the need of the hour. Adding to it, the concept of ecotourism is a well-established form of tourism which does not only provide an experience of wonders of nature but it is depicted in an educative manner with the aim of learning something new about the nature and thus, a great mean of spreading awareness.

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