

Sustainable Regional Development through the Promotion of Tourism Industry in Uva Province, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The hospitality and tourism industry has been one of the booming industries in Sri Lanka as well as across the globe for decades. However, the tourism industry in Uva Province is not at a satisfactory level, given the higher tourism potential of the province. Hence, the aim of this paper is to analyze the possibility of using community-based tourism (CBT) as a way of sustainable development of the province. The authors visited to Monaragala district of Sri Lanka and the Takayama area of Japan for two case studies and collected data for the study. The overarching theoretical framework of this study is the density, distance, and division of the economic geography. The paper concludes that CBT will increase the economic density in the rural areas, reduce the economic and physical distance between the lagging and the leading areas, and reduce the divisions in the local areas.

Keywords: Sustainable regional development, community-based tourism, indigenous resources, culture in tourism, nature in tourism

1. Introduction

The hospitality and tourism industry (hereafter referred as the tourism industry) is one of the booming industries across the world for decades despite the natural, political and economic chaos encountered at global level (WTTC, 2017a). The tourism industry contributes 10.2 percent of the World Gross Domestic Product and more than 109 million jobs worldwide (WTTC, 2017a), and it provides a better way of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (UNWTO, 2015). Sri Lanka is no exception. With the end of the 30 years civil war in 2009, Sri Lanka is also experiencing a huge influx of inbound tourists. The number of inbound tourist arrivals has increased from 0.5 million in 2008 to 2.1 million by 2017 which contributes 11.4 percent (direct and indirect) to the GDP of the country (WTTC, 2017b). Foreign earnings from the tourism industry is now the third most important foreign earning source of the country (MTCA, 2017). The tourism industry also contributes 10.7 percent of the total employment of the country, which amounts to 894,800 direct and indirect employees (WTTC, 2017b). Uva Province has also received the attention of the increased inbound tourists, though it is not up to the levels of many other regions of the country. Recently, Ella, Bandarawela, and Haputale areas of Uva Province are becoming popular among inbound tourists. Uva Province is gradually recovering from the harsh poverty conditions continued up to the beginning of this decade. The province is predominantly an agricultural region where tea, rice paddy, vegetables and spices are the major crops cultivated. The province possesses a salubrious environment that includes green hilly tea estates, a misty cool climate throughout the year, beautiful flora and fauna with several wild parks, mountainous ranges that are perfect for adventurous activities, several historical and cultural attractions and many other geographical touristic sites, including beautiful waterfalls.

A number of researchers argue that there is a huge potential for development of tourism activities in Uva Province due to the geographical, natural, cultural and man-made endowments of the province (Wimalaratana & Silva, 2009). Therefore, the promotion of tourism can be a better option for the development and reduction of poverty there. CBT that developed as an alternative tourism to mass tourism can be used in developing the province. CBT could be practiced as rural tourism, agro tourism, farm tourism, eco-tourism or any

other method that engages the people in the community directly. The advantage of CBT in economic development is that, unlike the most other trading activities, CBT requires the customer to get to the poor region and directly engage in the transaction with the people concerned. Hence, the poor people directly benefit and the generated income is mostly retained in the particular area.

However, be it regional or national development, it should be sustainable such that the social, economic and cultural impact of development should not limit the opportunities and the benefits of the future generations and should ensure the continuity of the industry. As tourism activities mostly depend on as well as makes much impact on the environment, – both natural and human – the responsible development of the industry is important. However, researchers argue that the environmental impact of tourism industry is significantly less in comparison to many other industries (Wattanakuljarus & Coxhead, 2008). Hence, this paper is aimed at analyzing the possibilities of developing sustainable tourism in Uva Province and thereby it will contribute to sustainable development there. The study mainly employees secondary data generated from various official data sources, as well as supplementing that data with two case studies conducted by authors during their field visits (one in Monaragala, Sri Lanka and one in Takayama, Japan). The case study in Sri Lanka will give insights into the possibility of introducing CBT in Uva Province and the case study in Japan provides lessons from one of the success stories in Japan. The study will provide a brief discussion on Uva Province and will analyze the two cases and propose the recommendations for promoting sustainable tourism in Uva Province using the two case studies conducted.

2. Literature Review

Tourism and Economic Growth

It is currently a well-established fact that the development of the tourism sector contributes to the economic growth of an economy as well as the development of export led industries of a country (Armstrong, et al., 1998; Balaguer & Cantavella-Jordá, 2002; Brau, et al., 2011; Kreishan, 2010; Wattanakuljarus & Coxhead, 2008). Researchers argue that the

development of the tourism sector can augment the growth of an economy through the generation of foreign income, employment and equalizing the domestic prices of non-tradable goods with the international market (Balaguer & Cantavella-Jordá, 2002).

According to the literature, there are three major effects that the tourism industry has on the economy: direct, indirect and dynamic effects (Mitchell & Ashley, 2009). The direct effect of tourism is due to the enhanced wages and earnings of those who are directly involved in the industry or those who are entrepreneurs. Tourism is considered as a labor intensive industry compared to other non-agricultural industries. Moreover, a higher proportion of labor requirement of the tourism industry depend on unskilled or semi-skilled labor (Ashley, et al., 2007). Therefore, unemployed or underemployed labor in the rural agricultural areas such as Uva Province can get direct employment in the tourism industry. Hence, it will be a solution to the declining agricultural sectors in these regions. Therefore, the direct impact of the tourism industry on rural economy is expected to be higher. The indirect impact of tourism comes through the engagement of local people in the value chain of the tourism industry. The tourism industry gets input from food and beverage, construction, transportation, furniture and several other sectors where local people can get involved. Furthermore, promotion of tourism will increase the prices of locally available, low-priced products and can create a higher priced market for their products, which will increase the income of the rural people. Finally, tourism can have a dynamic effect on the lives of the poor people in the rural sector through the improved business climate for the small industries, infrastructure development in the region, empowerment of women and distribution of newer technologies. Therefore, promotion of tourism in the rural areas will undoubtedly bring benefits to rural areas. Ekanayake and Long (2012) posit that even though there is no evidence that tourism leads to economic growth, the foreign earning generated through the tourism will contribute to economic growth. Therefore, they recommend the development of the tourism industry as a means for the economic development of the region, using their detailed cross-country studies.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the tourism industry also generates negative effects on the regional economy. The increased price of non-tradable goods and services will

be harmful for the consumers not benefitting from the tourism industry; also, it can drag away local resources such as water and forests from the use of local people. Scarce resources such as water, food and land can be further degraded with the increased demand from tourists (Ashley, et al., 2007). These negative impacts mostly affects the lives of the poor people in the local areas creating negative feelings towards tourism among them, which can eventually lead to them opposing the development of tourism in local areas¹. If the economic benefit of the tourism industry can be shared with the poor people around the region, this will attract the support of the local people for the development of the tourism industry in their regions (Hanafiah, et al., 2013; Muganda, et al., 2013). Hence, promotion of CBT, which is a method of sustainable tourism, can be a one of the solutions for this (Huong & Le, 2017; Wimalaratana & Silva, 2009).

Sustainability and Tourism

Even though the link between the environment and tourism has been discussed for a long time, mostly by the geographers, sustainable tourism has begun to receive a significant attention due to the report *Our Common Future* by the Brundtland Commission (Butler, 1999). The report highlighted the importance of the environment in sustainable development while stressing that it is not only the natural environment, but also the human environment that needs to be taken into consideration. The report itself mentions that, "... an assurance that those poor get their fair share of the resources required to sustain that growth" (WCED, 1987, p. 6). Therefore, sustainable tourism development concerns the continuity of both natural and human environment in the development of tourism. Finding a unique definition for sustainable tourism is difficult. It is not because of the lack of definitions, but there are many definitions for sustainable tourism (Butler, 1999). Sustainable tourism is defined as "tourism which is in a form which can maintain its viability in an area for an indefinite period of time" (Butler, 1993, p. 29), which suggests that maintaining the natural and human environment and the tourism industry itself are important aspects of sustainable tourism. However, focusing on one industry and developing it will not lead to sustainable development; it needs the coordination of all sectors simultaneously (Wall, 1997). Hence, sustainable tourism development is an important concept in sustainable regional development.

There are few studies that consider tourism industry as an environmentally friendly industry compared to many other industries. Therefore, the development of the tourism industry will lead to greener economic development (Han, et al., 2010; Wattanakuljarus & Coxhead, 2008). Schubert, et al. (2010) shows that present customers in the tourism industry would like to pay more for greener products in developed countries. This trend can be seen even in the hotel sector of the developed countries (Bohdanowicz, et al., 2005; Bohdanowicz, et al., 2011). Nevertheless, greener practices and demand for them in developing countries show mixed results. Manaktola & Jauhari (2007) showed that there is a higher demand and people are willing to pay more for greener practices even in developing countries. Nevertheless, Kasim & Ismail (2012) note that this trend has not been observed in Malaysia, especially in the restaurant sector.

Community Based Tourism

Community Based Tourism emerged during the 1970s as a response to the negative impact of the international mass tourism development model (Murphy, 1985) and there are several definitions for it. CBT can be defined as a type of tourism that depends on negotiation and participation with key stakeholders in the destination (Saarinen, 2006). CBT is also defined as a type of tourism that is owned and/or managed by communities and that is intended to deliver wider community benefits (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). In CBT, a significant number of local people has control over and gets involved in its development and/or management and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the local economy (Häusler & Strasdas, 2003). In conclusion, CBT can be defined as activities of a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint action in a geographical location or settings (Lalayan, 2014). Häusler & Strasdas (2003) categorize CBT into ecotourism, agro tourism, rural tourism, village-based tourism, ethnic or indigenous tourism and cultural tourism in their manual.

All these types of tourism are called alternative tourism, which are sustainable in comparison to mass tourism and make less impact on environment (Smith & Eadington, 1992). Hence, CBT is more sustainable than mass tourism. However, Butler (1999) argues that mass tourism can be more sustainable than CBT as CBT could be based in more

environmentally sensitive areas. Nevertheless, community involvement in tourism has been receiving increasing attention because the success and sustainability of the development depends on active support of the local population. In addition, tourism leads to a higher level of integration in society, delivering better socio-economic benefits to the community (Mitchell & Eagles, 2001). For communities with the absence of significant economic alternatives, CBT appeared as a straightforward solution that has the potential to alleviate poverty while having little stress on the environment (Gupta & Bhatt, 2009). Community development, which is defined as building active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect (Gilchrist, 2003) can be successfully achieved by the promotion of CBT.

Hampton (2005) asserts that there are various ways of increasing the benefits to the local economy by developing tourist destinations. New development should ensure the access to local community to the tourism market or region. It should reduce financial outflows in the economy by bridging the gaps between tourism and local economy. It also should create and enhance the existing livelihood strategies by developing small enterprises and products, not only for revenue generation, but also for contribution towards economic development of the country or the region. However, new challenges will arise when implementing CBT. Lalayan (2014) identifies constraints to community participation, the need for a regulatory and institutional framework, development of community skills and capacity, issues regarding ownership and control over resources, and benefits distribution as the major challenges that are faced when CBT is implemented.

Development of Sri Lanka and Tourism Industry

Sri Lanka has also tried to implement a tourism development led strategy of development at deferent regimes but these attempts have results in mixed results (Brau, et al., 2011). The tourism industry is also considered an untapped opportunity that has yet to reach its full capacity, according to the Tourism Strategic Plan 2017-2020 of Sri Lanka (MTCA, 2017). At present, earnings from tourism industry is the third largest foreign income earning source of the country, only lagging behind the much debated foreign remittance of migrant workers and the low Sri Lankan value-added garment and textiles industry (MTCA, 2017).

However, Fernando (2017) iterates that Sri Lanka has lost many opportunities to become one of the best tourism led developed countries due to the failures of selected economic policies and decades continued war.

According to Aslam (2011), there are several successful CBT projects in Sri Lanka. For example, Rekawa Community-based Tourism Development through the Rekawa Development Foundation; the Padavigampola Homestay Tourism Village in Rambukkana; Kudawa Community-based Tourism at Sinharaja, and Walawe Nadee Community-based Tourism in Ambalanthota are few of them. These projects have helped the community to find alternative income sources, to generate new employment opportunities, to manage natural resources, and to refrain from destruction of natural resources such as forests, mangroves, corals, habitats of turtles and etc. Active participation of communities, integration of tourism with human, physical and geographical resources and a bottom-up approach to the development process have supported sustainable development at rural level. According to previous research findings, rural areas of Sri Lanka have potential to gain sustainable development through proper planning, implementing and regular monitoring of alternative forms of tourism (Wimalaratana & Silva, 2009).

Coordinated Development

Higher densities, shorter distances and fewer divisions are the three major policy initiatives proposed by the World Bank's flagship publication *World Development Report 2009* for developing countries to catch up to the developed world. The United States and Japan applied these principals successfully while China and some parts of India are currently practicing them (World Bank, 2009). A similar framework can be applied in the development of poor regions in a country like Sri Lanka, even though the density is the most important factor. Since many of the industries, including tourism, is in the initial stages of development in rural areas, development of the tourism sector is reliant upon the development of many of the other sectors. This warrants government intervention, such as a big push type of investment scheme for the region. Murphy, et al. (1989) illustrated that simultaneous investments in all the sectors will lead to industrialization of all the sectors, taking the region's economic growth forward. Further, they indicated that the intervention of the

government (in the absence of foreign access) is a key factor in developing the region while investment in infrastructure like railroads, ports and airports would be an ideal investment from the public sector.

This suggests that developing tourism industry in a rural location only with promotions for tourism or only by developing the tourism infrastructure will not be enough for the sustainable development of rural areas. It requires a coordinated simultaneous effort by all the industries of the region, which will lead to sustainable development of those industries and the sustainable development of the region.

3. Method

Economic geography, or how the location of production factors are important in explaining the growth process (industrialization and deindustrialization) of an economy and its potential for future development, is the overarching framework of this study. Krugman (1991) argues that economic geography is important in explaining the development of the economies of the developing world, while many of theories of development economics have missed it. More than the industrial spillover, the pecuniary externalities matters in agglomeration of economic activities of a region. This is due to the fact that demand of one firm is affected by an activity of another firm, and so on. This finally benefits all the firms in the region. Based on the concept of economic geography, the World Bank (2009) shows that density, distance and division are important in the industrialization, growth and reduction of poverty in the developing world.

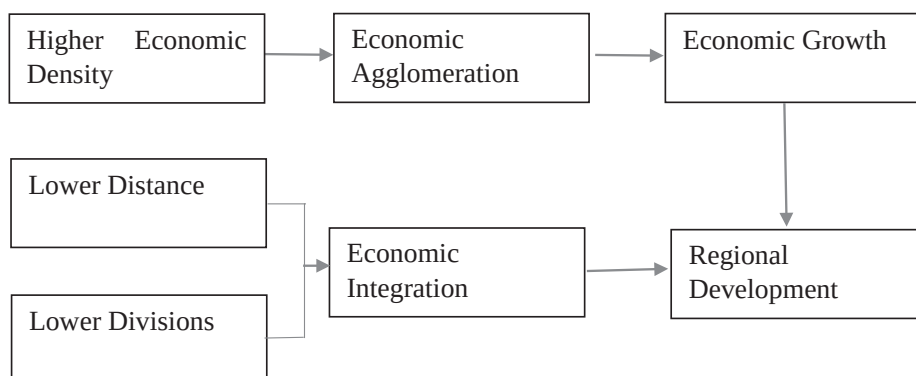


Figure 1: Density, Distance, and Divisions in Regional Development

Source: World Bank (2009)

Density, which means the concentration of the economic activities within a geographical area, is a result of development as well as it is a means of development. Economic concentration means the GDP output per land unit. Thus, it is simply the income per land unit. However, income per land unit is directly link with the population and employment and resource availability, which technically explains the capital and labor per land unit in the region. The higher the labor and capital per land unit (concentration of economic activities), the speedier the growth process, development of the area and narrowing of urban rural differences, thus poverty. This is proven by larger cities in developed countries like London, New York, and Tokyo as well as the recently progressing Beijing, Seoul, and Singapore (World Bank, 2009). **Distance** refers to the economic distance, which is similar to physical distance, highlights that even though some segments of the population are living quite far from economically dense areas, they will not be neglected by the dividend of the development, given that connectivity between the lagging regions and leading regions are ensured. According to the World Bank (2009), living standards of the leading areas will be better than the lagging areas in the early stages of the development of the economies. This is due to the concentration of economic activities in the leading areas. Because of this, labor from lagging areas will flow rapidly to the leading areas to get the benefits of the leading areas who are making the areas economically dense. However, with the development of transport and communication facilities, physical distance between lagging and leading areas

is minimized. With the progress of development, there can be economic distance between the leading and lagging areas, but there will not be much deference in living standards between the two regions. This has been proved by the economic development of the developed countries. Economic activities of the developed world is also mostly concentrated to their cities, yet the living standards between these cities and the rural areas are almost the same (World Bank, 2009). Furthermore, the spatial concentration of the people and economic activities will be more compact in the beginning and, over time, it will be dispersed and distribution of economic activities will become stabilized. The disparities in living standards, such as inequality, will have an inverted U-shaped distribution in general. In the beginning of development, disparities will be rising and then plateau for a certain time, and eventually will start decreasing and converge with leading and lagging areas. **Division** is different from separation due to borders. Borders may generate economic gains and people within a border may feel sense of belonging, which could lead to an increase of the welfare of the people. Nevertheless, divisions may restrict the flow of goods, capital, ideas and people, even within the same border, and can lead to conflicts, civil wars and territorial disputes, even among countries (World Bank, 2009). Divisions hinder economic growth and contribute to generating lower level welfare. The developed world reached its targets by having fewer divisions within their borders and even negotiating for fewer divisions among several borders, e.g. the European Union. However, many of the developing nations today have many divisions in their societies. Therefore, it is essential that a region has a small number of divisions to enable steady progress.

After learning about density, distance and division, one may wonder where the tourism industry will fit in this concept. The tourism industry can be located at the center of the above framework. If the economic density is the problem in the region, developing tourism will bring people to the place making the population density higher. It also increases the market size increasing the demand and supports production that could lead to economic agglomeration of the region. Promoting tourism will minimize the distance. Market for most of the production of the poorer regions is far and there is no market for non-tradable goods and services. But tourism bring customers closer to rural areas minimizing the distance in

rural areas. Finally, tourism will lower the divisions in the region. It will open up the minds of local people and they will get an opportunity to feel and accept diversity. Hence, tourism can be considered an ideal candidate for regional development under the above framework.

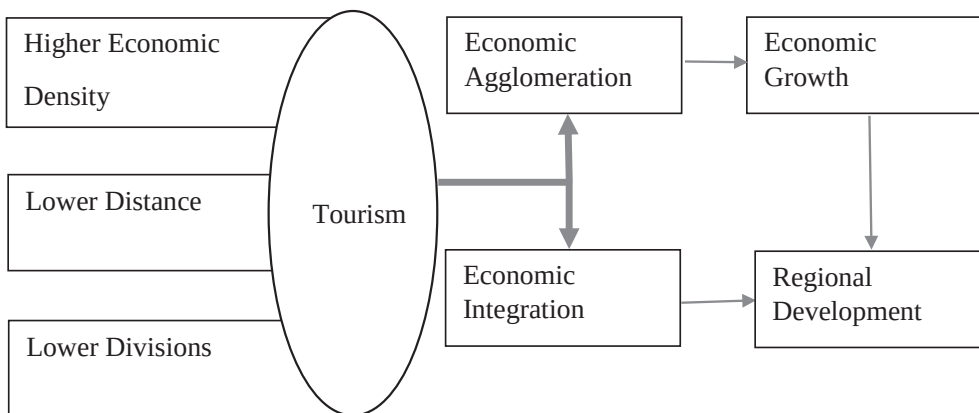
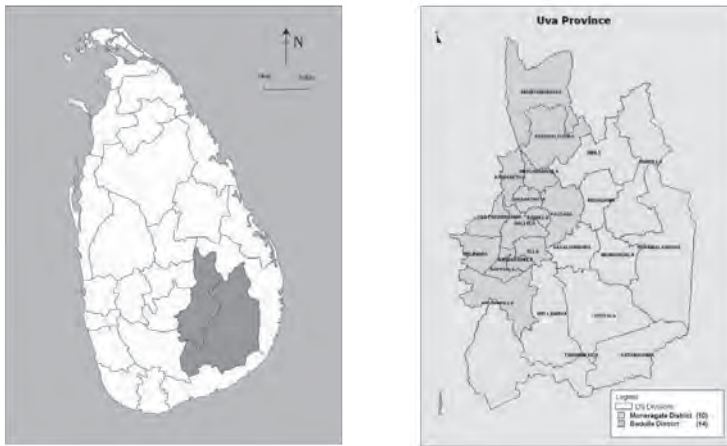


Figure 02: Density, Distance, Division and Tourism

Since tourism is one of the best candidates for regional development with the above framework, it is important to examine the status of Uva Province under the framework of density, distance and division. **Density;** Even though Uva Province is endowed with more than 12 per cent (8, 500 km²) of the total land area of the country, only 6.2 percent (1,266,463) of the population lives in the province. There are two administrative divisions in the province, namely Badulla and Monaragala. However, only Badulla has an urban population, which is around 8.6 percent of the total population of the district. The Monaragala district does not have an urban area. Economic contribution of the province to the national output has always been less than five percent of the GDP of the country, and much of the contribution is derived from the agriculture sector. There is hardly any industrial establishment in the province. Nevertheless, the tourism industry is developing in several places in the province, though they are still in the initial stages. These suggests that economic agglomeration in Uva Province is not at an acceptable level for igniting growth. Hence, lower economic density and a lower level of welfare is the present situation of the province.



Map No 01: Uva Province

Distance; Badulla is located approximately 220 km away from the capital Colombo, while Monaragala is around 270 km away from Colombo. There are many villages that are more than 100 km away from the provincial capital Badulla. The landscape of the province is very diverse. The altitude of the province varies from about 50 meters to 2,000 meters with several mountainous peaks, the highest of them being Namunukula at 2,036 meters. The main road connectivity of the region is presently improving, however the hilly terrain still has an effect on travel time. Badulla has railway connectivity with the capital Colombo. However, travelling time by train is more than double the time it may take by road transportation. Nevertheless, the railroad between Kandy and Badulla is known as the most beautiful railroad in Sri Lanka that travels through the misty, mountainous tea gardens, which has great potential for the tourism industry. But there is no railway connectivity to the Monaragala district. All these factors highlight how difficult it is for those in the province to be mobile or to get closer to the capital where most of the economic activities are concentrated. This significant distance from Badulla to the capital is also the same distance between any other locations in the province and other cities, as well as within the province.

Division; Uva province is divided into two administrative districts, Badulla and Monaragala. The two districts are distinct in a number of ways. Badulla is a district mostly

with hilly areas, with 20 percent of it belonging to the estate sector where mostly tea is grown in its cooler climatic conditions. Monaragala mainly consists of flat land areas, where mostly rice paddy and vegetable cultivation dominates with relatively harsh climatic conditions. Uva Province is a multi-cultural province where 80.8 percent of the people are Sinhalese, 14.7 percent are Tamils (of which 12.3 percent are Indian Tamils), and 4.3 percent are Muslims. Among them, 80.43, 13.39, 4.50, 1.67 percent are Buddhist Hindus, Islamists, and Catholics, respectively. Sinhalese speak the Sinhala language while most of the Tamils and Muslims speak the Tamil language. Indian Tamils (Estate Tamils) are the later generations of workers who immigrated through Britain for their tea plantations around 150 years ago, and are still working and living mostly in the tea estates. Even though these people speak the Tamil language, their culture is significantly different from Sri Lankan Tamils. The province is also the home for the country's major indigenous community called the *Vedda* community, which is around 2,000 people. These statistics suggest how much division is present in Uva Province, and thus any development project of the province need to consider the density, distance and the division of the province.

The paper, within the above framework, will analyze the two case studies, one in Monaragala, Sri Lanka and another in Takayama, Japan, to consider the possibility of implementing CBT as a way of sustainable development of the province. The case with Monaragala will study the possibility and effect of using CBT as a means of development, while the case in Takayama is expected to reveal some experiences of successful implementation of CBT as a means of sustainable regional development.

4. Case Studies

Case 01: Monaragala, Sri Lanka

The Monaragala district is considered a district with huge potential for CBT (Wimalaratana & Silva, 2009), but this opportunity has to date not been fully taken advantage of for the development of the area. According to Wimalaratana and Silva (2009), there are 92 religious places, 27 natural attractions, and 28 cultural sites even just within the district of

Monaragala. Nevertheless, the concept of CBT is practiced only in a few places in the district, and these are also only in the initial stages of their operation. The two places that CBT operates and are considered in this study, are the areas surrounding Hotel Jetwing Kaduruketha, and the area surrounding Dematamal Viharaya. The area around Jetwing Kaduruketha was selected as a CBT site as an example of modern implementation and the Dematamal Viharaya was selected as a CBT site as an example of traditional implementation.

Jetwing Kaduruketha is a luxury agro resort hotel situated in Wellawaya, Monaragala area, owned by a famous luxury hotel chain, Jetwing Hotels, and targets mostly foreign visitors. The hotel is built on the concept of sustainable tourism where natural and human environment of the site is very much taken under consideration and incorporated into the structure and the operation of the hotel. The hotel is built with the aim of providing the customer with an experience of a traditional rural agricultural home, hence it is located in the middle of lush green rice paddy fields surrounded by green hills. The hotel is situated approximately 230 km away from Colombo in a rural semi-arid area which is popular mainly for rice paddy cultivation and historical monuments. The hotel has tried to conserve the natural environment of the area by structuring the hotel as villas that resemble traditional rural homes. The hotel owns an agricultural plot which is used for organic cultivation of rice paddies and fruit and vegetable cultivation which contributes to the day-to-day menus of the hotel. The hotel intends to keep its carbon footprint at a minimum level in a number of different ways. No air conditioners are provided for the rooms as traditional know-how is incorporated into the room cooling system. The water heating system of the hotel totally depends on solar power. No vehicles are used to take supplies between the villas. Instead, bicycles are used for the purpose of achieving zero carbon emissions. Cooking fuel of the hotel is mainly from bio gas and bio mass. Solid waste of the hotel is either transformed into bio gas or it is turned into bio fertilizer for their farm, and waste water is treated and directed into a sediment pit before discharging. These features suggest that the hotel is well-aligned to protect the natural environment of the area.

The operation of the hotel has also considered the human environment of the area. Hence, the hotel has a good rapport with people of the village and coexists with the people.

The hotel contributes to the traditional farming system of the surrounded area by providing the seed money for the farmers for cultivation, and it also shares the profit of the harvest with the traditional farmers of the area. The hotel also buys the production of the farmers and uses them in the hotel and distributes them to the other hotels of the chain. Much of the supplies to the hotel are taken from surrounding area providing an opportunity for the farmers to sell their product at a higher price. A larger share of the hotel employees are recruited from the area. Many of them are unskilled youth of the area. The hotel also makes opportunities for the visitors to experience the local traditions and hospitality by providing village walks for the tourists in the village areas and rice paddy farming and harvesting opportunities for the tourists. This suggests that the hotel is very much concerned with the natural and human environment of the area and practices sustainable tourism in the area providing opportunities for the villages to get involved and benefit from the tourism.

The other area of the interest in the first case is the area surrounded by the Dematamal Viharaya, which is a historic Buddhist temple, located around 280 km away from the capital Colombo, and which mainly attracts local tourists. The temple is situated in the middle of rice paddy fields adjoining to a rural village. Many tourists and locals visit this temple as the history of the temple dates back to the 3rd century BC. The area is crowded especially during the weekends and holidays. The people around the area have developed many businesses around the temple, including selling local production, providing foods and snacks, running logging facilities and providing guidance. The community feels they share in the ownership of the place and they feel that they need to conserve the place if they want to continue their businesses. Therefore, the site shows the basic characteristics of a CBT site and hence, the interviews and data collection were conducted in this site as an implementation of traditional village-type CBT. The case in Monaragala shows that community participation with tourism is significantly high in the surrounding areas and they feel like they are participating in ownership of the place, irrespective of whether the participation method is traditional or modern. The case suggests that CBT can be sustainably utilized for uplifting the living standards of rural people, and thus for regional development.

Cronbach's Alpha value, which measures the reliability (internal consistency) of a questionnaire with Likert scales, was 0.85, suggesting that the questionnaire we employed is valid for building indexes. Hence, the collected dataset from 120 respondents, out of which there was 60 CBT participants and 60 non-participants from the above mentioned two places, was used as the main data for this case. Among the participants, 78 percent of them had direct participation in the industry, such as through employment at a hotel in a variety of departments or as an entrepreneur in the industry, while others had indirect employment, such as providing supplies or handy crafts. It is important to note that around 40 percent of the households with CBT engagement had some other income sources to the family with many of them are doing some agricultural activities (28 percent). The major income source of the households without a CBT engaged member was agricultural activities that exceeded 46 percent of the sample, while only around 12 percent of them had a secondary income source.

The data showed that more than 76 percent of the CBT participants are male participants, which is aligned with the national female labor force participation rate. However, as not much training is needed for CBT engagement in a village, the lower rate of female participation in tourism activities raises concerns over the popularity of this industry among female workers. This can be due to the social taboo attached to the industry in the country. More than 60 percent of the CBT participants were less than 40 years old, while 35 percent workers were less than 30 years. This suggests that tourism engagement with younger workers is relatively high, suggesting that CBT promotion can be a viable option in curbing the higher youth unemployment of the country. More than 75 percent of the CBT participants had completed an ordinary level of education or less. Importantly there were no graduates engaged in the CBT in this sample. Either this could be due to less education level prevailing in the area or due to less availability of employment for graduates in CBT. It is important to note here that around 20 percent of CBT participants had less than six years of schooling despite the fact that 11 years of schooling is mandatory in Sri Lanka. Many of these less educated people belong to the older generation. However, this suggests that employment opportunities of CBT are more geared toward less educated people. The data suggested that

many of the households had one-member engaged in CBT (55 percent) while around 38 percent households had two members, and few households had three or more members engaged. Thirty-one percent of the households with a CBT participant earned between 10,000 and 30,000 SLRs² per month while none of them had earned less than 10,000 SLRs per month. Importantly, the monthly income of the some households with CBT engagement (11 percent) had even earned more than 100,000 SLRs. On average, a household with a CBT participant earned 56,000 SLRs, which is higher than the average income for a household in the district of 48,842 SLRs (HIES, 2018). Furthermore, data showed that a household with a CBT engaged member earns 20,000 SLRs more than a household a without a CBT engaged member in the same area. This suggest that engagement in CBT significantly affects the earning capacity of households in the area, and thus the welfare of the region.

When questioning the participants on the awareness and experience with CBT, many of them reported that lack of knowledge, training and experience with CBT made them less involved in the industry. Moreover, it was found that less ability of foreign languages and IT skills, and the lack of seed money affected their participation. Internal challenges in getting involved in the industry and external challenges such as lack of infrastructure and skilled labor are both issues that are barriers to CBT.

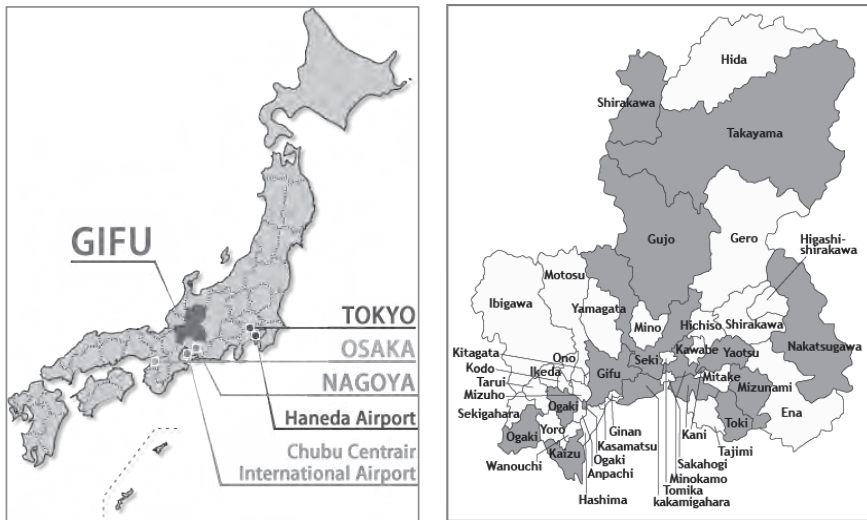
Therefore, the major findings of this case study suggest that income level of CBT engaged households are significantly higher than other households in the region, hence the welfare level of these households are better than other households. Moreover, households engaged in CBT in the area become engaged in other activities of income generating as well, which suggest that these households become economically empowered and achieve sustainability in comparison to the other households who are engaged only in agricultural work. Furthermore, the case revealed that the level of education required for CBT activities is around Ordinary Level, which is the compulsory education of the country. Moreover, employment in CBT shows that many of them belong to the younger generation, suggesting a better solution for dealing with the high youth unemployment of the country. These suggests that introduction of CBT in the study area has integrated well locally and has incorporated local considerations into their operation without altering the existing systems.

Therefore, the case of the Monaragala area suggests that for successful operation of CBT, it is essential to build it with consideration for the local community.

However, as the methodological framework of this paper suggested, just by only developing CBT activities in the region will not generate the expected results as the study found that infrastructure, education (especially foreign languages), training, and availability of financial services are important in developing CBT in the region. Furthermore, the study found that if well planned and properly operated, CBT could preserve and even promote the natural and human environment of the region. These findings suggest that CBT is a viable and a better option for the sustainable development of Uva Province of Sri Lanka.

Case 02: Takayama, Japan

The authors visited the Takayama area of Gifu Prefecture of Japan to understand how tourism is utilized as a way of sustainable regional development. Even though Takayama, one the most populous castle cities of Gifu Prefecture, is located in a well-developed industrial country, Takayama's economy was mostly based on agricultural activities and timber. The low demand for timber (forests covered more than 98 percent of the land in Gifu Prefecture) due to the use of concrete and crude oil as the main source of fuel significantly affected the economy of the region, which led to many of the prefecture's youth moving to urban areas in search of better job opportunities.



Map 02: Gifu Prefecture

The industrial development and better quality of life in the cities also led to many people of this area migrating to other cities. Hence, decreasing population due to internal migration had further decreased the market size of traditional agriculture and timber cultivation in the area³. Consequently, the city has found tourism as one of the viable solutions for revitalizing the region, which has the potential to bring people back to the region, increase market size and further economic prosperity of the region. Hence, Takayama City has effected a coordinated effort for developing tourism in the region where many success cases can be found. Within those success stories, ‘Satoyama Experience’, which is a rural tourism business entity in the Hida-Furukawa village of the Takayama area, is important as they have used tourism to revitalize business activities of the old rural village of Hida-Furukawa which was left out of the industrial development of the country.

Satoyama Experience is a branded guided tour by the Chura-boshi Company⁴ located in the Hida-Furukawa area. The word *Satoyama* literally mean the ‘Village (life) Mountain’, or the area between the mountain and the arable land area of the village, which was used traditionally by the villagers for collecting wood and leaves and for grazing animals. Hence, the functional meaning of the word is the co-existence of human beings with nature by taking

benefits while also protecting it (probably closer to the meaning of sustainable development). As its name suggests, the Satoyama Experience is a tourism brand the company developed to show traditional Japanese rural life and their historical artifacts to the modern world without harming or altering them. Most importantly, the Satoyama Experience has used tourism to revitalize the Hida-Furukawa village that was highly affected by rural urban migration. They had used the existing environment, facilities and unique rural culture for attracting visitors. The case of Satoyama Experience shows that how tourism can be utilized successfully for sustainable regional development.

The story of Satoyama Experience starts with a young couple who had some Western experience and were tired of modern Japanese city life who settled in the Hida-Furukawa area in 2008. When they settled there, Hida-Furukawa was less populated than it is now and not popular as a tourism destination. Once they settled there, they were amazed by the natural and cultural richness of the region and thought of popularizing the area as a tourism destination without harming the nature and culture. They started with a guided cycling tour to the village for visitors and they were able to attract five visitors in 2009 for their business. However, they saw a remarkable increase in visitors from the following years. In 2016, they had more than 3,750 visitors, out of which more than 80 percent were foreign. The award winning animated film “Your Name” (*Kimi No Na Wa*), which is based in the Furukawa area has also triggered domestic visitors’ arrival to the area. Their small company expanded the business beyond the guided cycling tour to include food and a culture walk in Takayama city, snowshoe tours through mountainous forest in the winter and some other private customized tours in the Takayama area. The objective of the company was to show the Satoyama culture (co-existence with nature) and give people a chance to experience and practice it in the field. Thereby they had created a successful business venture and had revitalized the area once again without harming the natural and human environment of the region. This case shows how tourism can be utilized for the sustainable development of a region.

The point that needs to be stressed here is that the Satoyama Experience has not generated anything new for the development of the tourism in the area. What they have utilized is what is already available on the ground. The Satoyama Culture, which embodies

the Hida-Furukawa people, is new to most of the younger generation who live in Japanese cities, as well as to the many people around the world. Hence, the company has utilized this culture as the selling point in their business which has become a win-win situation for all. The second point needed to highlight here is the operation mechanism of the business. They have put people, environment and the business at the center of their business model. Hence, they consider both visitors and the villagers as the most important participants in this model. Hence, the satisfaction of the customer is paramount for them and they do their best to ensure that a visitor is enjoying themselves and that they take something home from the activities they do in the village. At the same time, they take the villagers very seriously and make sure that nothing happen negatively to the villagers. Most importantly, the Satoyama experience does not bring any negative impact on the surrounding environment as their model ensure the sustainability of the system that Satoyama culture highlights. Their business model is also based on market economic principles where they have set a price for a market based rate of incorporating the price for their services and price with consideration for the natural environment.

Another point in their model is the well-trained and capable service of guides. These guides are the link between the visitors and the locals, not only by language, but also by sharing the culture, history, technology and values. Their tours are well-planned and they provide clear and in depth explanations of important points. Whenever the guides meet some villagers, they try to make some communication between the locals and the visitors, thereby benefitting both parties. When they have a village tour, the visitors are taken to the rice paddy fields to allow them to help the local people. If they are in the city tour, the visitors are taken to a traditional cottage industry where a connection can be made between the visitors and the locals. As the theoretical framework elaborated, the coordinated investment has helped the development of tourism in the Hida-Furukawa region. It is not only the Chura-boshi Company that is working hard for the development of the region, but they have also incorporated government institutions at local, regional and even the national level as well as non-government institutions. For example, the railway station at Takayama has been renovated and expanded, and the frequency of the trains has increased. A museum with local

traditions has opened with modern facilities within the Hida-Furukawa village. Functions of the local temples are also incorporated into the model. Furthermore, the basing of the animated film *Your Name (Kimi No Na Wa)* in the area has helped very much for the recent popularity of the region among Japanese customers. Furthermore, several television programs have featured the Satoyama Experience as well having features about the region in general. This has also helped to make the region popular among visitors. Academics of Japan also have begun to research Hida-Furukawa as one of their fields of study. Hence, the coordinated investment for the development of the region is a very clear characteristic of the development of the Hida-Furukawa tourism development.

5. Discussion

The two case studies discussed above indicate that CBT can be utilized as a successful tool for the sustainable development of Uva Province. The present tourism development of Sri Lanka mainly depends on exhibiting the historical sites of the cultural triangle of sea, sand tourism in the coastal belt, and some natural attractions of the country in the central hilly areas or in the wild parks. However, the Satoyama experience suggests that even culture that is unique to a place can be a strong attraction for a destination. Moreover, the Monaragala case suggests how successfully CBT can be operated in the Province. Hence, Uva Province needs to make an in depth analysis on what is already available and what can be offered to a different segment of customers than the existing ones.

In this scenario, Uva Province has many other alternative tourism activities that can be applied in the development of the province. For example, Uva tea is well-known in the world as a unique product. Hence, Uva tea can be utilized for tourism development of the province. Many of the areas of the Badulla district is covered by tea plantations, hence tea tourism which not only allows seeing the beauty of the tea gardens, but also the tea making process, the life of the tea workers and their culture and also some activities and events for the visitors to become involved with tea industry can be promoted. Food and beverages that are unique to Uva Province, such as a typical lunch with rice, *kollu* (horse gram), and manioc

leaves can be offered as regional dishes. *Kithul* (*caryota urens*) treacle and *Kithul* jiggery, quite famous locally-produced traditional products, can be focused on for sale to tourists.

Moreover, Uva Province is the home for most of the indigenous people of the country (known as *Wedda* people) with traditions and customs more than 2,000 years old, which can be a very good attraction for the province. Furthermore, the province is also gifted with several natural attractions like mountainous areas, waterfalls and wildlife parks. In addition, traditional cultivation practices like ploughing with buffaloes is still widely seen in the mountainous areas of the province, which can be attractions for modern visitors. Also, the province is blessed with many historical monuments which are considered very sacred and more than 1,000 years old. These points show that Uva Province has a wide array of things to offer to visitors. Satoyama Experience highlights the possibility of capitalizing on these kinds of opportunities. However, it was found that value addition in CBT in the Sri Lankan context is limited to a few products (mainly by providing a room or selling some local products) which has increased competition between suppliers, and many inappropriate strategies are employed by them to secure the market share and to survive in the market. As there are many other avenues for the development of the industry, new initiatives need be taken to develop new products for the healthy development of the industry.

Both case studies indicated that the benefit of CBT should be shared with the public in the area for the successful operation and continuation of business. Local support for CBT is mandatory; hence, sharing benefits will ensure the support of the local people. The benefit could be financial or non-financial, depending on the situation. In the Satoyama Experience, the benefit to society is mainly non-financial. The low population due to migration made the Hida-Furukawa area isolated from modern Japanese society, but with the start of the Satoyama Experience and the influx of inbound tourists, now the city is getting more populated and lively. This made older people who were left alone in the village happier. They have found a new way of spending their life by interacting with the visitors. On the other hand, some activities that these elderly people found difficult to do by themselves are now done with the assistance of foreign visitors on a volunteer basis.

Moreover, Satoyama culture, which was practiced and preserved in these villages for more than 1,000 years, was disappearing since there were no one to learn, practice and follow it. However, with the promotion of tourism, now they have found many people to learn and practice it. Even some young Japanese people from the urban cities have moved back to these villages to get involved in these older traditions. Local activities such as light festivals and float festivals are now attracting many local and foreign visitors. Furthermore, some local industries like traditional candle makers, and food and beverage vendors of the city can even get financial benefits by selling their products. This explains why the Satoyama Experience has received the cooperation from local people, making it sustainable in the end. In the Sri Lankan case, the hotel has also made sure that the local people get the benefit from the industry. They are getting mostly financial benefits such as direct employment in the hotel, selling their products to the hotel, or receiving seed money from the hotel, etc. Therefore, the hotel has been able to successfully operate in a very traditional rice paddy land area. Hence, this suggests that sharing benefits with local people is key to the success of CBT development programs.

It is mandatory to preserve the natural and human environment around CBT-operated areas. The Satoyama Experience has not made changes to the environment that built on Satoyama culture. Instead of changing the environment, the Satoyama Experience has built on the values and norms of Satoyama culture, so the continuation of the culture is mandatory for the continuation of the business. This has ensured the continuation of both the industry and the environment, which we technically define as *sustainable development*. The same practice could be identified in the Sri Lankan case. Even though the hotel at Monaragala is a star-class hotel, the hotel is built in a very traditional and historical farmland area. How they have done it? This hotel has also incorporated the traditions and values of the surrounding area into their hotel, from the structure to the operation. The hotel is built as a traditional rural agricultural house and the whole operation of the hotel is like a rural agricultural household. This is highly accepted and demanded by tourists⁵ and the sustainability of the natural and human environment is also ensured. This suggests that CBT can be employed as

a way of sustainable development of a region, given that the benefit of the industry is shared with the local communities.

A very important finding of the tourism development in the Hida-Furukawa area with the Satoyama Experience is that the development of tourism or any other industry needs the coordinated effort of many other industries and institutions. Infrastructure needs to be built, legal and other regulatory framework must be made available and be in operation, promotional activities need to be taken, and consideration for the supply and demand for the industry in the area are all essential factors. All this suggests that development of an individual business entity cannot make an area developed; it needs the central government, local government, other public institutions, non-government institutions, business communities, local communities and all the people in the area to get together and sit, plan and operate together for the development of the region.

All the stakeholders should feel the ownership of the industry and all the people in the area should get benefits from the industry. This will lead to the sustainable development of the industry and the region. This brings customers to the area and helps to enlarge the market size, which will increase the economic density in the area. As tourists visit the area itself, increased economic activities in the area will reduce the economic distance between the center and periphery.

Furthermore, for the development of the industry, transportation and communication facilities of the area will be improved, decreasing the physical distance between the center and the periphery. This is clearly seen in the Hida-Furukawa case. Once tourism starts, divisions among the locals will be reduced. For example, it is very rare for a foreigner to receive a general greeting (good morning, or evening) from an unknown Japanese person in public, which is very common in the Hida-Furukawa area. The people in the Hida-Furukawa area are very friendly and ready to speak with any foreigner irrespective of their age or language. Tourism has made them accept foreigners as a part of the community. Therefore, tourism can be a very good mechanism for reducing the divisions in society, which is very important for a multicultural, multiethnic society like Sri Lanka. Hence, increased density,

reduced distance and divisions will improve the regional economic activities and integrate the rural areas with the urban areas, finally enabling the area to be developed.

6. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

With the above analysis, it can be concluded that CBT will increase the economic density in the rural areas, reduce the economic and physical distance between the lagging and the leading areas, and reduce the divisions in the local areas. Increased density and reduced distance and divisions will increase the economic agglomeration of the rural area and integrate the lagging areas with the leading areas. Since there is a very high possibility of operating CBT in a sustainable way as the above cases suggested, the area development through CBT will lead to *sustainable development* of the area. Therefore, the final conclusion of this paper is that tourism (especially CBT) can be used as one of the sustainable development strategies of Uva Province of Sri Lanka. Based on the above conclusion, the following recommendations are made;

- Central and Local governments of Sri Lanka should consider CBT as a viable option of Sustainable Regional Development.
- CBT projects should be built on the natural and human environment of the area such that protection of the environment is integrated into the CBT model
- Community engagement and sharing the benefit of tourism with them are necessary for the sustainability of the industry as well as the natural and human environment.
- Coordinated efforts by national/local government and all the other stakeholders in the area are necessary for the sustainable regional development.
- As Sri Lanka is in the exploration stage of its tourism lifecycle as a whole, Uva Province can be identified as a new destination with a new theme “Feel Traditional Sri Lanka” which can be used for the *sustainable development* of Uva Province.

¹ Other aspects, such as culture, and disturbances due to tourism activities can also lead to opposition.

² SLRs. 1.00 = US\$ 0.0064 or US\$ 1.00 = SLRs. 156.04 as of March 17, 2018.

³ The agricultural practices of Hida-Furukawa region is well developed compared to an area like Monaragala. Therefore, a direct comparison of the agricultural setting between the two places is not appropriate.

⁴ <https://satoyama-experience.com/about/company-info/>.

⁵ Average price of the hotel is higher than the other hotels in the area

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