



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM TO SUSTAINABLE RURAL
DEVELOPMENT IN SRI LANKA**

M.S.M. ASLAM

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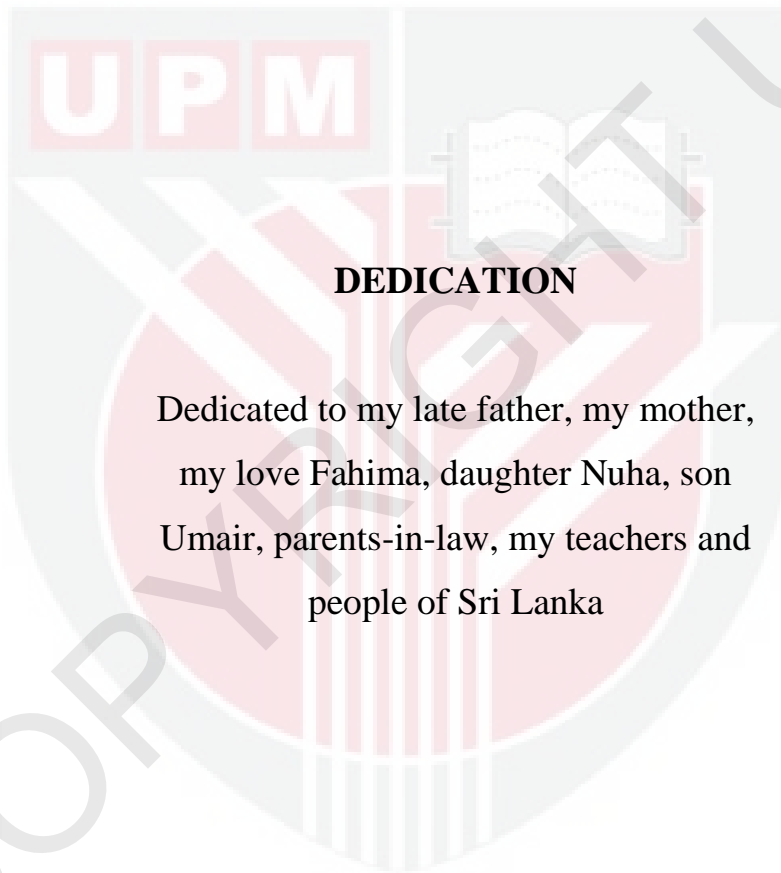
**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

August, 2014

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my late father, my mother,
my love Fahima, daughter Nuha, son
Umair, parents-in-law, my teachers and
people of Sri Lanka

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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M.S.M. ASLAM

August, 2014

Chair: Assoc. Prof. Khairil Wahiding Awang, PhD

Faculty: Economics and Management

Development is the critically analysed phenomenon in the contemporary world and disadvantaged development or dilemmas in rural development are vastly observed issues. Neo-liberalization and modernization theories pushed many countries to adopt tourism as a developmental tool to overcome the economic challenges. Today, tourism is one of the largest industries with reference to the volume of the business and employment generation globally. However, uncontrollable negative impacts surpass the positive impacts and cause rapid degradation on socio-cultural and environmental resources. At present, ensuring sustainability is a primary criterion for any tourism developmental interventions. Tourism also has been recognized as a driving force of sustainable development while the needs of sustainable tourism development have been well documented. Conceptualization of sustainability claims a shift from conventional mass tourism to alternative tourism. Inability of sustainable practices in urban environments pushes the alternative tourism into rural areas. Although alternative tourism envisages sustainability, rural areas encounter many issues and problems in ensuring authentic and consistent sustainable rural tourism development.

Critical review of wide array of published and unpublished documents either in the forms of printed or electronic versions persuades an empirical study in socially constructed world. This illuminates the multiple realities on unsuccessful sustainable rural tourism development. Review of overall tourism developmental phenomena generally and contemporary status of rural Sri Lanka particularly justify the appropriateness of the case selection. In depth interviews, focus group discussions, direct observations, documental reviews, artefacts and consistent field notes bring forth the naturalistic interpretations from the social world of rural Sri Lanka. Rigor reporting and understandable interpretation of the natural settings have been determined by appropriate designing, data collection, analysis, interpretation and verification of the methodology.

Empirical findings are categorised into two clusters. First cluster elucidates unfocused and incompatible rural tourism development in rural Sri Lanka. This is as a result of poor rural community capacity and participation, erratic intervention and

lack of coordination and collaboration in different levels of authorities and limited role of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Second cluster reveals insufficient and inappropriate application of strategic tools in sustainable rural tourism development of Sri Lanka. This encompasses inadequate capacity building and inconsistent role of authority and NGOs in it, noncompliance product designing and development, weak policy setting and implementation, instability and unavailability of investment and incentives, diluted marketing approach along with limited networking and accreditation.

The empirical findings are funnelled into six major themes related to participation and intervention of community, authority and NGOs and incorporation of strategic tools. The study surfaces a number of theoretical and managerial implications. And the comprehensive process of sustainable rural tourism development is reframed into a strategic window. This study envisages a number of recommendations for developers, policymakers and communities to visualize sustainable rural tourism development, while suggesting the future research agenda.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**SUMBANGAN PELANCONGAN TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN LESTARI
LUAR BANDAR DI SRI LANKA**

Oleh

M.S.M. ASLAM

Ogos, 2014

Pengerusi: Profesor Madya Khairil Wahidin Awang, Ph.D

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Pembangunan merupakan fenomena yang dianalisis secara kritikal dalam dunia kontemporari dan pembangunan ketakberuntungan atau dilema dalam pembangunan luar bandar merupakan isu yang sering bincangkan secara meluas. Neoliberalisasi dan teori modernisasi mendesak beberapa negara supaya mengadaptasi bidang pelancongan sebagai alat pembangunan bagi mengatasi cabaran ekonomi. Kini, bidang pelancongan merupakan salah satu industri yang sangat besar dari segi volum perniagaan dan tenaga kerja generasi global. Walau bagaimanapun, impak negatif yang tidak terkawal melampaui impak positif dan ini menyebabkan degradasi yang pantas terhadap sosiobudaya dan sumber alam sekitar. Kini, pengekalan kelestarian merupakan kriteria utama bagi sebarang intervensi pembangunan pelancongan. Bidang pelancongan juga telah diiktiraf sebagai kuasa pendorong bagi pembangunan lestari serta keperluan untuk pembangunan pelancongan lestari telah didokumenkan. Dari segi konsepnya, kelestarian menuntut perubahan daripada pelancongan konvensional massa kepada pelancongan alternatif. Ketidakupayaan amalan kelestarian di persekitaran bandar menyebabkan pelancongan alternatif ke kawasan luar bandar. Walaupun pelancongan alternatif memperlihatkan kelestarian, kawasan luar bandar menghadapi banyak isu dan masalah untuk memastikan pembangunan kelestarian pelancongan luar bandar autentik dan konsisten.

Kajian semula yang kritikal pada pelbagai dokumen yang telah diterbitkan atau yang belum, sama ada dari segi bentuk yang bercetak atau versi elektronik menyebabkan kajian empirikal dilaksanakan dalam dunia binaan sosial. Perkara ini memperlihatkan pelbagai realiti tentang ketidakberkesanan pembangunan lestari pelancongan luar bandar. Kajian semula terhadap keseluruhan fenomena pembangunan pelancongan secara umumnya dan status kontemporari luar bandar Sri Lanka khususnya, mewajarkan ketepatan pemilihan kajian ini. Temubual yang mendalam, perbincangan kumpulan yang berfokus, pemerhatian langsung, kajian semula dokumen artefak dan catatan lapangan yang konsisten membawa interpretasi semula jadi dari dunia sosial kawasan luar bandar di Sri Lanka. Laporan rigor dan interpretasi yang difahami terhadap latar semula jadi telah dikenal pasti melalui reka

bentuk yang sesuai, pengumpulan data, analisis, interpretasi dan verifikasi metodologi.

Hasil dapatan empirikal dapat dikategorikan kepada dua kluster. Pertama,kluster yang disebabkan oleh pembangunan pelancongan luar bandar yang tidak berfokus dan tidak sesuai di Sri Lanka.Perkara ini disebabkan oleh kapasiti dan penglibatan komuniti luar bandar yang lemah, intervensi yang eratik dan kurangnya koordinasi dan kolaborasi pada peringkat autoriti yang berbeza dan peranan Organisasi Bukan Kerajaan (NGOs) yang terhad. Kluster kedua memperlihatkan aplikasi alatan strategik yang tidak mencukupi dan tidak konsisten dalam kelestarian pembangunan pelancongan luar bandar di Sri Lanka. Ini termasuk kapasiti bangunan yang tidak mencukupi dan peranan pihak berkuasa dan NGO yang tidak konsisten,ketidakakuran reka bentuk produk dan pembangunan, latar polisi dan implementasi yang lemah, ketidakstabilan dan tidak terdapatnya pelaburan dan insentif, pendekatan pasaran yang cair di samping jaringan dan akreditasi yang terhad .

Hasil dapatan empirikal ini dapat disalurkan kepada enam tema major yang berkaitan dengan penglibatan dan intervensi komuniti, pihak berkuasa dan NGO dan penggabungan peralatan strategik. Kajian ini memperlihatkan beberapa implikasi theoritikal dan managerial. Proses yang komprehensif terhadap kelestarian pembangunan pelancongan luar bandar telah dirangka semula kepada bentuk dasar strategik. Kajian ini juga menyarankan beberapa rekomendasi bagi pemaju, pembuat dasar dan komuniti untuk menggerakkan kelestarian pembangunan pelancongan luar bandar, dan mencadangkan agenda penyelidikan pada masa hadapan.

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