



***FACTORS INFLUENCING SUSTAINABLE HERITAGE TOURISM AMONG
LOCAL COMMUNITY OF TAIPING, MALAYSIA***

MOHD MUSTAFA ABDUL AZIZ

FH 2019 3



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LOCAL COMMUNITY OF TAIPING, MALAYSIA**

By

MOHD MUSTAFA ABDUL AZIZ

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

January 2019

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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January 2019

Chair : Shazali bin Johari, PhD
Faculty : Forestry

The main purpose of this study is to holistically understand the role of community participation and tourism resources in influencing the sustainable heritage tourism practice of the Taiping local community. Quantitative approach use in this study to gather data. Most of the respondents claimed that there was a strong indication of community participation in the village and this is evident from the turnout and response by the villagers when meetings are called for discussions on matters regarding the local administration and tourism development. The influence of the community resources and community development dimensions on attainment of sustainable heritage tourism was determined. Multiple regression analysis using stepwise method was employed to identify the predictors. Six independent variables were found to contribute significantly in clarifying the variations in tourism sustainability. The results showed that cultural resource and infrastructure resource variables were better determinants for economic sustainability dimension while human resource, infrastructure resource, nature resource, and capacity building variables were better determinants for sociocultural sustainability dimension. Apart from this, infrastructure resource and capacity building variables were better determinants for environmental sustainability dimension. Overall, cultural resource, financial resource, infrastructure resource, and capacity building variables were better determinants for overall sustainability dimension. Surprisingly, participation and empowerment were not found to have significant relationships to any economic, socio-cultural, and environment sustainability dimensions. This is most likely because of majority of the respondents were not involved in tourism and they were not empowered in tourism planning. The infrastructure development in Perak is still in infancy stage. Since Taiping is the second largest city in Perak, it is suggested that a public transport hub should be developed in Taiping so that it is easily accessed by tourists. Therefore, tourism stakeholders should work closely to promote Taiping as a heritage tourism destination.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

FAKTOR-FAKTOR YANG MEMPENGARUHI PELANCONGAN WARISAN MAMPAN OLEH MASYARAKAT SETEMPAT TAIPING, MALAYSIA

Oleh

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Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk memahami peranan penyertaan dan sumber masyarakat dalam mempengaruhi amalan pelancongan warisan murni masyarakat tempatan Taiping secara holistik. Kaedah kuantitatif digunakan dalam kajian ini untuk mengumpul data. Kebanyakan responden mendakwa terdapat tanda-tanda penyertaan komuniti yang kuat di kawasan kajian dan ini dapat dilihat daripada pemilihan dan sambutan penduduk kampung semasa mesyuarat diadakan untuk perbincangan mengenai perkara mengenai pentadbiran tempatan dan pembangunan pelancongan. Pengaruh sumber komuniti masyarakat dan dimensi pembangunan masyarakat terhadap pencapaian pelancongan warisan yang mampan telah ditentukan. Analisis regresi berganda menggunakan kaedah stepwise digunakan untuk mengenal pasti peramal. Enam pembolehubah bebas didapati menyumbang dengan ketara dalam menjelaskan variasi dalam kemampuan pelancongan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa sumber budaya dan pembolehubah sumber infrastruktur adalah penentu yang lebih baik untuk dimensi kemampuan ekonomi manakala sumber manusia, sumber infrastruktur, sumber alam, dan pembolehubah pembangunan kapasiti adalah penentu yang lebih baik untuk dimensi kemampuan sosial. Selain daripada itu, sumber infrastruktur dan pembolehubah pembangunan kapasiti adalah penentu yang lebih baik untuk dimensi kemampuan alam sekitar. Secara keseluruhannya, sumber budaya, sumber kewangan, sumber infrastruktur, dan pembolehubah pembangunan kapasiti adalah penentu yang lebih baik untuk dimensi kemampuan secara keseluruhan. Sebaliknya, penyertaan dan pendayaupayaan didapati tidak mempunyai hubungan yang ketara dengan dimensi kemampuan ekonomi, sosio-budaya, dan alam sekitar. Ini kemungkinan besar kerana majoriti responden tidak terlibat dalam pelancongan secara langsung dan mereka tidak diberi kuasa dalam perancangan pelancongan. Pembangunan infrastruktur di Perak masih dalam peringkat awal. Memandangkan Taiping adalah bandar kedua terbesar di Perak, adalah dicadangkan agar pengangkutan awam perlu dibangunkan di Taiping supaya mudah diakses oleh pelancong. Oleh itu, pihak

berkepentingan pelancongan perlu bekerjasama untuk mempromosikan Taiping sebagai sebuah destinasi pelancongan warisan yang utama.



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Mohd Mustafa Abdul Aziz
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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

WTO	World Tourism Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation (2008), tourism 'is a phenomenon for which statistical representation has its particular challenges because of its special nature. Most tourism indicators have traditionally been physical (non-monetary) and have focused on the description and measurement of flows of visitors associated with inbound tourism'. Subsequently, many written sources such as articles, journals and books still have not reached an agreement on a single accredited meaning of tourism. However, according to Tribe (2009), the official definition of tourism set by the WTO is that *"It comprises the activities of persons travelling to or staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited."* Alternatively, the tourism industry may be defined as *"the cluster of production units in different industries that provide consumption goods and services demanded by visitors."* (World Tourism Organisation, 2017).

It is no doubt, tourism is one of the fastest growing industry in the world today which is mainly due to globalisation. This is evident where in the year 2016, the gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 3.1% due to the single contribution from the tourism sector and it is faster than the growth of the global economy which only increased by 2.5% (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017). This means that the growth of the tourism industry alone managed to outperform the overall growth of the global economy, which would have resulted in benefits to those involved in the tourism industry.

The tourism industry first became commercialised with the emergence of the first known travel agency in 1758 by Cox & Kings (Westcott, et al., 2012). In the 1960s, the development of the tourism industry became more intensive as the competition started to grow tremendously (Gyr, 2010) and in the 2000s, advancement in technology created online marketplaces for travel bookings, making the tourism industry much more competitive.

Since then, the global tourism industry has been growing rapidly and proved to be significant for the global economy. Oh (2003), quoted WTO statistics that *"expenditures by 693 million international tourists traveling in 2001 totalled US \$ 462 billion, roughly US \$ 1.3 billion per day worldwide"*. In addition, Lee and Chang (2007) stated that *"the number of international people movements around the world will surge to 1602 million by 2020, while tourism receipts will reach some US\$200 billion"*. This shows that the tourism industry has been and

will continue to play a significant role as a source of revenue and providing economic benefits for countries that are dependent on it and fostering the movement of large volumes of tourists from one country to another.

Furthermore, the tourism industry has become one of the single major employers globally and exporting services for many countries (Papatheodorou, 1999). According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (2007), the tourism industry is likely to create and sustain over 380 million jobs worldwide which is equivalent to 1 in 9 jobs globally which is expected to contribute towards another 23% of total global jobs created by 2027. This makes it imperative for many governments globally to set tourism industry growth as their primary goals. Hence, it is vital to thoroughly examine and evaluate the tourism industry growth, employment rate as a result of it and all other aspects of future economic development that will benefit these governments.

1.2 Tourism in Malaysia

Malaysia is located in the Southeast Asian region bordering 3 countries which are Thailand, Brunei, and Indonesia. Malaysia comprises of 13 states and 3 federal territories both in the Peninsular and East Malaysia. The population of the Malaysia was 31.62 million as of 2017 (Worldometers, 2017) with communities from various backgrounds, religious beliefs, languages and culture. Malaysia is mainly known for its various tourism attractions such as its diverse culture, recreation, flora and fauna, food and many more.

According to Ismail and Lai (2015), the tourism industry is the second highest foreign exchange earner followed by the prime contributor to the Malaysian economy with an expected contribution of RM103.6 billion to the Gross National Income (GNI) by 2020 (Pemandu, 2013). The tourism industry has been growing steadily since the 1960s (Hall & Page, 2016) and in Malaysia, it has been growing significantly since the government became actively involved in expanding the tourism industry in 1972 (Wells, 1982). In addition, the number of tourists has been growing proportionally since 2008 with exceptions to the dip in the year 2015 and 2017 as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 shows that a total of 25.94 million tourists visited Malaysia in the year 2017 compared to 26.76 million in the year 2016, which is a slight drop by 3% but the tourist receipts increased by 0.1%. Overall, it shows that the industry is recovering from the slowdown in 2015 due to the economic condition worldwide, introduction of GST, and the unstable political situation (Suganya, 2015). This deduces that there was a 4.0% increase in tourist arrivals in 2016 compared to 2015 (Tourism Malaysia, 2017).

Table 1.1: Tourist Arrivals and Receipts to Malaysia from 2008 – 2017

Year	Arrivals	Receipts (RM)
2017	25.94 million	82.2 billion
2016	26.76 million	82.1 billion
2015	25.72 million	69.1 billion
2014	27.44 million	72.0 billion
2013	25.72 million	65.4 billion
2012	25.03 million	60.6 billion
2011	24.71 million	58.3 billion
2010	24.58 million	56.5 billion
2009	23.65 million	53.4 billion
2008	22.05 million	49.6 billion

(Source: Tourism Malaysia, 2018)

Nevertheless, the tourism industry and the number of tourists coming to Malaysia has been developing resiliently despite the various challenges faced by the industry such as government policies and economic slowdown.

1.3 Heritage Tourism Studies and Practice in Malaysia

Malaysia has adopted many types of tourism over the years since the tourism industry started fleeing and one of the types of tourism that is doing well is cultural and heritage tourism. According to Butler et al. (2014), Malaysia and its joint identity has the potential to reach international markets with the right selection of heritage locations and the message it delivers to ensure that the overall domestic population understands the essence of their heritages. The country has a significant number of remarkable cultural sites, four (4) of which is included in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list (UNESCO, 2017).

Research done by Chai (2011), in Georgetown, Penang showed that heritage tourism development has a positive impact on Malaysia in terms of preserving the multicultural heritage, ancient buildings and traditions making it one of the few “*surviving complete historical city centre*” and most valued destination in Malaysia. Tourist arrivals in Georgetown have also been improving over the years.



Figure 1.1: The UNESCO World Heritage Sites list (Malaysia)

Some of the cultural experiences of Georgetown, Penang include the Baba-Nyonya heritage, the pre-independence shophouses, the local traditions and practices, and the Chinese clan-houses (Chai, 2011). However, Chai (2011) further explained that the heritage and culture of Georgetown must be preserved and made sustainable by the Malaysian people and government as the younger generation is fast evolving and quick to embrace a digitally advanced lifestyle and in their fast phased modern living may neglect these historical remains and cultural norms.

Malacca is another heritage tourism destination as an iconic historical state has contributed much of its heritage towards the creation of the Malaysian identity besides being a highly popular tourist destination. Malacca has been attracting tourists since the 1980s and it has also played a vital role in establishing the existence of Malay Sultans and kingdoms of the past (Worden, 2003). The core of the town's architecture is defined by the colonial buildings which were built during the colonial era of the Dutch, Portuguese and the British. However, Malacca has been undergoing modernisation and as Prime Minister Tun Mahathir stated, "*Melaka does not remain a mere historical curiosity ... its potential as a centre for economic growth and investment is tremendous*" (Malaysia Mining Corporation Berhad, 1992, cited in Worden, 2003, p.40). Worden (2003) further stated that the economy of Malacca recovered soon after the 1990 economic downturn, but as for the town of Malacca as a symbol of the Malaysian heritage has been constantly facing challenges due to the emphasis on modernisation. In a 1992 publication, Malacca was declared by the state government as the "*ancient capital*" whilst Kuala Lumpur is the "*modern capital*" of Malaysia (Malaysia Mining Corporation Berhad, 1992, cited in Worden, 2003, p.40).

Malaysia's heritage is the culmination of its people, history and identity. The younger generation's understanding of past history and its significance is threatened by modernisation and therefore, a meaningful platform for educating them would provide the basis for the country's future growth and development (Ismail, Masron, & Ahmad, 2014). However, if Malaysia strives to give meaning and sustain her heritage, it can continuously expect an increase in the number of tourists and hence industry growth.

Taiping or famously known as 'everlasting peace', is a town situated in Larut, Matang and Selama District, Perak, Malaysia. It is the second largest city after Ipoh in the state of Perak. During its early years, it was one of the tin mining capitals of the world (Federal Department of Town and Country Planning, 2005). The latest census reported that the population of Taiping is about 245,182. Tourism is important source of income for the state government as well as for the local people. It is a tourism destination with features of nature such as mountains, waterfall and wildlife. In addition, Taiping has many heritage buildings that can be developed as heritage tourism. Heritage buildings in Taiping are typically government buildings and shop houses where the architecture is English-influenced. There are 83 shop houses and 34 public buildings in Taiping (Taiping Municipal Council, 2019).

Taiping has been named as one of the 100 Sustainable Cities, the only Malaysian city which made it in this year's list by Green Destinations (Muhammad Apendy, 2018). It is a recognition by the authorities in tourism industry through sustainable environment. Locals believe that Taiping can be developed through other means as a heritage tourism destination. Taiping has been allocated development fund to boost the development. A number of efforts has been taken to aid the tourism development, this includes restore heritage buildings and protect the heritage sites.

1.4 Problem Statement

For the past few years, sustainable tourism development has been gaining attention in tourism literatures. However, there is a lack of in-depth research and analysis on the level of community participation. This is very much prominent in the study scenario whereby the issue of community participation in the sustainable heritage tourism of Taiping, Malaysia arose. The real problem was brought to light through personal communication and studying the local government's tourism strategy, which then does not allow room for biasness from the researcher and generates ideas from many points of views. Hence, the need to conduct this study is justified by stressing (1) the literature gap and (2) the current problems faced in the study area, which is Taiping.

The key to successful sustainable tourism development in a community is through the inclusion of the community itself. For a local community in Taiping, it is essential to undergo development and growth and participation of the

community in the process itself is vital to ensure that the benefits generated from tourism satisfies their needs. Besides that, the local community knows better when it comes to their tourism resources. Local community is suitable for tourism development as they know their resources better than external parties. However, in developing countries community participation in tourism planning and development is not commonly practiced (Marzuki et al., 2012). Similarly, community empowerment/participation and sustainable tourism development in Taiping is also lacking, thus it is worth explore.

Many researchers have further reasoned that in sustainable tourism development, the community plays an essential role and must be a part of the development process. An approach that focuses on the need for community control has been proposed Murphy (1985). However, until today the discussion on how to implement sustainable community planning is still unclear and ongoing. Besides that, many also fail to realise that tourism development is very different compared to other forms of economic development (Taylor & Davis, 1997). The views of certain groups and individuals are so different that makes it difficult to work towards a shared vision. The main problem highlighted by Taylor and Davis (1997) is that, only a small number of public bodies that encourage local community participation either in support or against the implementation of tourism development whilst the majority are silent advocates who are submissive and accept the development quietly.

In developing countries, any tourism development-related decision-making is made at the central level and implementation is done using the top-down approach, which fails to include the local community's requirements (Yuksel, Bramwell, & Yuksel, 2005). This causes a friction and creates a gap between the local community and authorities hence, a stumbling block in achieving sustainable heritage tourism development. According to Timothy (1999), local communities should be given the opportunity to be involved in decision making process so that they can be protected from any untoward consequences arising from tourism development.

Adding on, there is also a scenario whereby the local community's attitude towards sustainable heritage tourism is not receptive. This is due to several reasons. According to Isa et al. (2015), to ensure the heritage buildings in Taiping, Malaysia is well-maintained in its original state by conforming to the limiting development control guidelines, the owners must bear the cost that comes with it. Due to this, many of the heritage building owners are unhappy as the guidelines are hindering them from adding value to their assets (Ariffin & Hussin, 2011). Besides these, there are also other cost incurring issues for the owners such as "maintenance costs, safety and soundness of the old buildings and business competitiveness to the surrounding new economic growth areas" (Isa, et al., 2015). These guidelines have demotivated the heritage building owners and consequently, the condition of the buildings deteriorated and the owners turned to other economic activities that return higher profit margins instead.

In addition, the perceived benefit is also one of the factors that affects local community participation in heritage tourism development in Taiping, Malaysia. Thus, based on past studies, one of the biggest setback to sustainable heritage tourism development is that local communities might perceive community-based tourism incurs more social and cultural costs than the expected returns and therefore works against the concept of sustainable tourism development (Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997). According to Jurowski et al. (1997), some of the factors that contribute to local community dissatisfaction are “personal economic growth disruption and deterioration of quality of life, overuse of recreational resources, community being overcrowded and deterioration of quality environment”.

Lee (2013) categorised the increase in prices of goods and services as a form of social cost and poses a conflicting relationship between residents and visitors as it can possibly increase environmental pollution and contribute towards environmental cost. Therefore, it is evident that the sustainability of heritage tourism will not be achievable without the participation of the community and the use of their resources. In terms of community resources, past studies have revealed that sustainable tourism is impossible without substantial resources. However, the amount of studies done on community resources and sustainable tourism is limited. Majority of the studies also does not highlight the importance of the relationship between the resources and tourism.

Taiping has a lot to offer in terms of historical, natural and environmental resources that speaks of the local community's heritage, culture and identity. However, heritage tourism study in Taiping is often being neglected. This heritage should be further explored and developed as a tourism product to help the local community gain economic benefits and to provide tourists with the sense of appreciation for Taiping's historical past. Therefore, the interrelationship between local community participation, development, attitude and resources must be recognised to encourage sustainable heritage tourism.

1.5 Research Objectives

The general objective of this research is to affirm community participation and community empowerment as antecedents in sustainable heritage tourism in Taiping, Malaysia. Whereas the specific objectives of this research are listed below:

1. To determine the heritage tourism resources in Taiping, Perak
2. To measure the sustainability of heritage tourism in Taiping, Perak
3. To determine the factors influence sustainable heritage tourism

1.6 Research Questions

1. What are the heritage tourism resources in Taiping, Perak?
2. What are the sustainability of heritage tourism in Taiping, Perak?
3. What are the factors influence sustainable heritage tourism?

1.7 Research Framework

In order to understand the problem from the theoretical gaps and practical issues leads this research to the formation of objectives, three components of community sources (independent variable), community development (independent variable) and sustainable indigenous tourism (dependent variable) are adopted to understand how the local participation can influence the sustainable heritage tourism (see Figure 1.2).

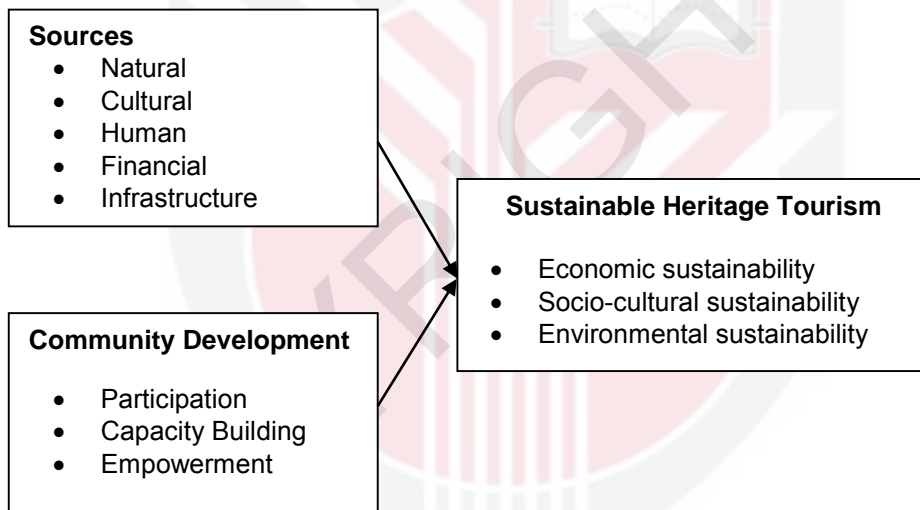


Figure 1.2: Research framework

The elements of natural, cultural, human, infrastructure and financial resources are treated as the tangible community input which the community owns as community assets. The other independent variable is community development domain consist of participation, empowerment, and capacity building. The community development will be measured in terms of the community in achieving community empowerment, participation and capacity building. Subsequently, economic, socio-cultural and environmental sustainability are viewed as the key indicators to quantify the sustainable tourism practice of a community. The sustainable heritage tourism is the dependent variable of this study.

Since sustainable tourism comprises three pillars namely, socio-cultural, environment, and economic dimensions. Economic sustainability is the main target motivates people involve in tourism. For example, tourism has created many job opportunities in many tourism destinations. Sustainable development is about attaining the improvement that can be maintained for a long period of time. Tourism is gradually seen as a main community development tool. It is mostly due to the recognition of its economic contribution in boosting economies and its ability to unify local community. Nevertheless, sustainable tourism improves communities' economic level. Sustainable tourism are inter-related and it can be achieved if economic, social cultural, and environment happen simultaneously or periodically.

1.8 Significance of Study

The results of this study will contribute significantly in allowing a reassessment of the contending theories of heritage tourism in Taiping, Malaysia through both theoretical and practical approaches. Following the reassessment, the study is expected to add new findings to the existing body of knowledge that could improve the heritage tourism sector to be more profitable and sustainable for the local community in Taiping. Since there are not many studies done to address heritage tourism specifically in Taiping, any findings on the local community participation from this study will be able to contribute to existing literature and used as a scale of measurement and comparison in future research.

As for the practical contribution, the community, government, NGO's, travel companies and tourists within the heritage tourism industry will gain from the enhancement of heritage tourism in the Taiping area. Hence, it is projected that this study will create a great deal of interest among students, academicians, industry experts, other heritage tourism communities in Malaysia, corporate sectors, policy makers and governmental planners as they make up the community that will use the findings of this study for various purposes.

1.9 Theoretical Perspectives and Theoretical Framework

To provide a conceptual understanding of this study, a combination of theories from the two main fields of this research; sustainable tourism development and community participation, will be discussed in this study. As for the theoretical perspective, the study will be looked at from both macro and micro perspectives whereby macro focuses on the bigger picture such as study patterns and trends while micro focuses more on the minute experiences and everyday life (Crossman, 2017) of the local community in Taiping, Malaysia.

Sustainable tourism development has been long evolving and is commonly used in much of the tourism-related research. Unfortunately, there is no standard theory applicable to this area of study as there have been consistent failures to create a specific *“theoretical link between the concept of sustainable tourism and its parental paradigm”* (Sharpley, 2000). Swarbrooke (1999) also agreed that it is difficult to define sustainable tourism development. Hence, a convergence of ideas and concepts of several studies will be used to enhance the understanding of this field as the focus on the description of various aspects of this field has been increasing (Mitlin, 1992; Murdoch, 1993). Since sustainable tourism development is still evolving, appreciating the wider role of sustainable development is more important than an exact definition, at this stage. Thus, Clarke (1997) proposed the converged framework as illustrated in Figure 1.3 which established the following:

“The large-scale interpretation of sustainable tourism has a dominantly physical/ecological perspective expressed as a business orientation. The small-scale interpretation of sustainable tourism offers a social slant from a local or destination platform”.

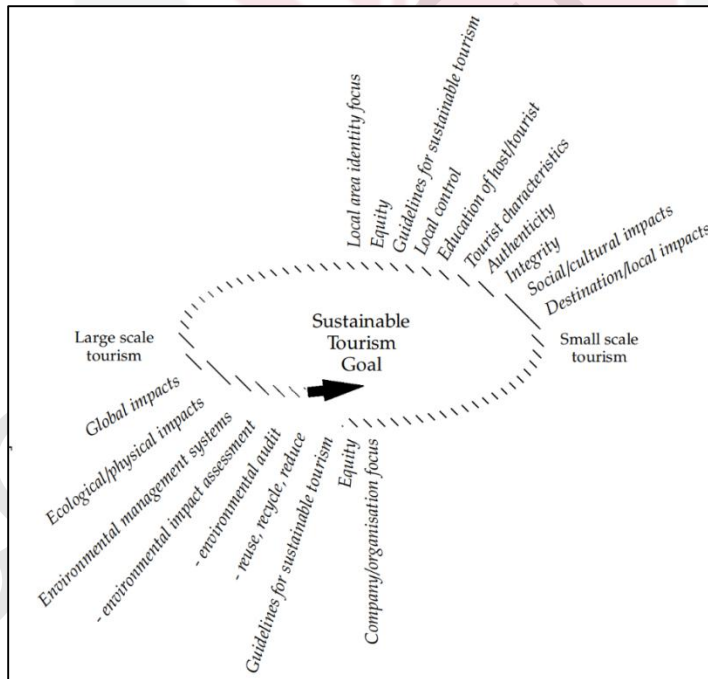


Figure 1.3: A convergence of sustainable tourism ideas and concepts

According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), thus far, the Brundtland Report has been the main point of reference for sustainable development research as the definition often used for sustainable

development is derived from this Report which states “*sustainable development is development that meets the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*”. The vision for sustainable development was built around the three pillars in the Brundtland Report which are economic sustainability, social sustainability and environmental sustainability.

The second framework is the Arnstein’s Ladder of Participation which was devised in the year 1969. This framework focuses on studying the current level of community participation and the stages required to understand the extent to which the local community, and in this case the community of Taiping, Malaysia can participate in tourism planning, development and decision-making process hence, encourage better community involvement in tourism developments (Okazaki, 2008).

1.10 Operational Definitions of Concepts

Although the researcher understands the existing concepts from past literature, there is a need for the researcher to define the related concepts in his own words. The concepts discussed in this study are heritage tourism, sustainable tourism, local community and participation.

Heritage Tourism: In this study, heritage tourism is referred to as a type of tourism that offers various economic and non-economic benefits to the Taiping local community by exposing their prominent and unique heritage and culture to tourists.

Sustainable tourism: Sustainable tourism is defined as a setting in which tourist arrivals to an area will not affect or harm the environment and culture of the local communities. In this study, sustainable tourism is referred as tourism that associates the heritage and the culture of the Taiping local community as a long-run progression of economic, socio-cultural and heritage accomplishment.

Local community: Local community is a group of people who interact and share the same living environment, resources, information, establishments and much more. In this study, the local community is defined as the people living in Taiping, Malaysia.

Participation: Participation refers to the act of getting involved and being a part of an initiative actively. In this study, the involvement level of the Taiping local community is a vital aspect to regulate heritage and sustainable tourism.

Community empowerment: Community empowerment refers to the process of enabling communities to increase control over their lives.

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