

PEACE THROUGH TOURISM: A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION

Mokhlesur Rahman*

***Abstract:** As fundamental human activity, tourism engages social, cultural, economic, educational, environmental, and political values and responsibilities. That is why it is a great contributor or a beneficiary of peace along with a symbiotic relationship in which can make benefit each other. The theoretical framework of the research explores peace as the presence of some elements like prosperity, harmony, justice and equality. Highlighting the significance of such elements it makes connection between tourism and peace in its second phase. The fact that there is vast relationship between tourism and peace will be the center of focus. Tourism, in such critical circumstances sparks a gleams of light, addressing issues such as poverty, education, opportunity and equality, which form the base of peace. The findings of the research, that could possibly help escalate the catalytic nature of tourism for peace. The research strikingly demonstrates how tourism can be a vital tool in the process of creating peace. Practically, it presents how tourism contributions significantly to the process of peace making. Furthermore, in order to establish a link between tourism and peace and make it the clearest possibilities that will be bound within certain limitations.*

***Keywords:** Values; symbiotic; justice; poverty.*

INTRODUCTION

The preservation, conservation and wise use of the physical and cultural resources are essential and ancient wisdom of peoples too. Tourism leads all. Human difference is respected and cultural diversity celebrated, as a precious human asset and that peaceful relationship among all people be promoted and nurtured through sustainable tourism. So, it is implied that tourism leads to sustainability and contribute to the peace. (Anonymous, 2000).

Being the first peace industry in the globe tourism has the significant role of creating a harmonious ground to the community exchanging cultures, understand each other and co-operate. Tourism can bring people together, reduce prejudice and can aware on crucial conflicts. It also can contribute to social justice, equality and human rights and ultimately society reach on peaceful state against structural violence.

* Researcher, Dept. of Tourism & Hospitality Management, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh, E-mail: gtldhaka@yahoo.com

Tourism, if based on the principles and good practices, could be a powerful tool that would reduce the traditional dependence of the country. This type of culturally, socially and environmentally responsible tourism could also reduce instability by helping to create wealth, bridge cultural differences, foster peace and develop rural communities. Probably, a peaceful society needs strong economy, equal opportunities and sustainability, definitely tourism has that kind of strong power.

Tourism and Peace has broad in scope and deals with many factors relating to peace, such as appropriate planning, international cooperation, peace through tourism, tourism for peace, tourism in conflict-ridden areas, tourism and human rights, peace museums, tourism and attitude change, etc. Tourism and peace has become an emerging field of action and research since the 1980s; that is little more than a quarter of a century since this topic has gained increased attention. It is a young, still underexplored and not even established field of research that will require continued efforts, which become even more relevant when we understand that tourism is a continuously growing sector with enormous economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts (Wohlmuther, C., and Wintersteiner, W., 2014).

On the other hand, Lusaca Declaration in 2011 concludes that the global challenges facing humanity call for global solutions and cooperation at all levels – and by all sectors, public and private, and civil society as a whole – on an unprecedented scale. Peace will be an essential prerequisite to achieve this level of cooperation and will also generate the additional economic wealth to fund these solutions. The travel and tourism industry has a central role to play in the creation of jobs with dignity, foreign exchange earnings, the development of disadvantaged areas, poverty reduction and the promotion of understanding, peace, love, unity and progress among all peoples, communities throughout the world.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Tourism is connected with peace and poverty, environmental protection, and heritage conservation. That's why it is a big contributor through a symbiotic relationship among people and nature, culture and society. But in Bangladesh context, it has neither been treated as prime industry nor a social phenomenon. It is extremely needed to explore peace in the tourism as the presence of some elements like prosperity, harmony, justice, equality and equal opportunities. Highlighting the significance of such elements it will make a connection between tourism and peace in its second phase. There is a cute relationship between tourism and peace in the center of focus. Along with economic benefits, other equally positive impacts of tourism that is the preconditions for building and stabilizing peace.

Still in many societies like Bangladesh, tourism is in critical circumstances that fail to address issues such as poverty, education, opportunity and equality, which are the prerequisite forms of peace. Therefore, research must be done analyzing tourism contributions for peace.

Considering the above discussion, it was felt to undertake the present research. The aim of this research is to explore the components of peace in tourism and their functional phenomenon for creating a sustainable and peaceful community.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To prove the fact that tourism is dedicated to promote peace and positive impacts on physical and cultural resources in the society, following objectives have been chosen.

- To study the influence and role of tourism on cultural and structural changes.
- To utilize the peace components of tourism for socio-cultural sustainability.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to understand the crucial distinction between these types of violence, pioneering professor of peace and conflict research, Johan Galtung constructs a typology of violence composed of three categories: structural, cultural and direct (Galtung, J., 1990). *Structural violence* exists when some groups, classes, genders, nationalities, etc are assumed to have, and in fact do have, more access to goods, resources, and opportunities than other groups, classes, genders, nationalities, etc, and this unequal advantage is built into the very social, political and economic systems that govern societies, states and the world (Galtung, J. 1996). By '*cultural violence*' we mean those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics) -that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence. *Direct violence* involves the use of physical force, like killing or torture, rape and sexual assault, and beatings. Verbal violence, such as humiliation or put downs, is also becoming more widely recognized as violence. Peace and conflict studies scholar Johan Galtung describes direct violence as the 'avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs or life which makes it impossible or difficult for people to meet their needs or achieve their full potential. Threat to use force is also recognized as violence.' (Galtung, J., 1990)

So, need positive peace that requires global justice. The major areas of concern to education for positive peace are: a) problems of economic deprivation and development; b) environment and resources; c) universal human rights and social justice. (Anonymous, 2007).

Galtung (1996) argues that to understand peace we have to understand violence. He distinguishes cultural violence (whereby the use or abuse of power is justified) and its expression in indirect or structural violence (repression and exploitation) and direct violence (war and warlike actions). However, he recognizes that peace is not merely the absence of violence - cultural, structural or direct. He compares peace to a state of health which incorporates not only the absence of illness but also a physical and mental condition conducive to the avoidance of illness. A state of peace exists where conflict is unlikely to occur, or where conflict can be resolved without recourse to violence.

The notion of peace used in this conception is 'positive peace'. Positive peace refers not only to the absence of violence (negative peace) but includes equity, social justice, harmony, cooperation among humans from different cultural patterns, and absence of cultural and structural violence (Sandy & Perkins, 2002). Special attention is necessary for doing research on cultural heritage conservation and its relation to peace (Jimenez, C., and Kloeze, J. 2014). In addition, it is necessary to identify and investigate the mechanisms through which understanding actually leads to peace thoroughly, supporting this research with theories of conflict resolution, psychology, and human behavior. Tourism is genuinely acknowledged as a peace industry (Crotts 2003). History has largely supported this view, such as terrorist attacks and war hampering tourism flows in before well-off destinations. Experiences such as the 1991 Gulf War show us that when confronted with safety concerns about their destination, tourists either choose safer destinations or simply avoid traveling (Sonmez, Apostopolus & Tarlow, 1999). Tourism was greatly affected by violence and terrorism in Northern Ireland. Conflict remained somehow constant with several failed attempts of establishing peace until 1994, when finally, a political negotiation managed to cease fire (Anson, 1999 and Darby, 1995).

There exists research for instance on tourism and sustainable community development (Hall & Richards, 2006), on local community and culture (Fagence, 2003) on development issues and destination communities (Tefler, 2002; 2003) and on cultural tourism, participation and representation (Smith & Robinson, 2006).

Tourism can develop a sustainable community by contributing to equity and social justice. This happens as tourists learn about marginal groups through educational tourism, undertake pilgrimages that bring greater meaning and cohesiveness to an ethnic identity, or encounter stories that transform their view of social injustice and spur further action to reduce inequities (A. W. Barton & S. J. Leonard, 2010).

Evidence shows that tourism is not likely to act as peacekeeping guaranty, but could it genuinely contribute to foster peace. Litvin criticizes this notion: Does tourism create peace or is tourism, along with many other industries, a fortunate beneficiary of peace? ...as tourism is never successful in the absence of peace, it

cannot, therefore, be a generator of peace (Litvin, 1998). For dissolving bad stereotypes and giving people the chance to familiarize themselves with culturally different persons can help prevent conflicts and foster peace. It is with this reasoning that several authors suggest that tourism is a means to promote intercultural understanding (Kim & Crompton, 1990; Jafari, 1989; Kelly, 2006 and Higgins-Desbiolles, 2003).

METHODOLOGY

Primarily peace components in tourism will be explored to mitigate structural violence and to look for the livelihood diversification of community people. In addition, conservation role of tourism on socio-cultural phenomenon and the relationship between host community, tourists and the tourism attributes of the destination will also be investigated for developing a sustainable development. That's why, this is an explorative study that generates qualitative information.

Population of this study is hidden, so no sampling frame exists. Assessing such population is difficult because standard probability sampling methods produce low response rate. Therefore, Focused Group Discussion (FGD) method (Zikmund, W.G., 2009) has been applied in this study.

FGD begins with a set of participants, purposively selected 40 people from the target population. Total 4 groups and each was composed of 10 people belong to 2 numbers of tourism educators, 4 numbers of industry players, 2 numbers of students and 2 numbers of civil society members. One moderator, one reporter and rest were discussants. Discussion was run for 2 hours for each group. However, identifying the initial set of participants was a challenge. Social visibility is considered as one of the major solutions in locating the initial reference points (Biernacki and Waldorfe, 1981). Simultaneously, to enable the identification of initial reference points, researcher will apply the social visibility concept along with an in-depth review of case-relevant literature.

PROCEDURE OF GROUP DISCUSSION

Each Moderator conducted the group discussion for 2 hours long. He took the floor first and appointed a note taker for making documentation based on the discussion of other 8 people. Every discussant expressed their experiences and opinions in the first round. In the second round, Moderator asked following questions and invited them in the cross discussion program.

- (a) What kind of benefits tourism can achieve for benefit communities?
- (b) What kind of peace building factors remains in tourism that can transform the society?
- (c) What kind psychological phenomena exists in peoples' perception?

In this stage, many kinds of different and valuable opinions as well as disagreements came out. Moderators tried to create a positive conflict and came to negotiate again. It was done with the highest consideration of necessity. After second round, this process was repeated for few more rounds until it was stopped to come the new information. The process was stopped when the Moderator started hearing the same information over and over again.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Focused Group Discussion (FGD) started by mentioning tourism is an experience industry that has different characteristics from the natural resource-based economies of many communities. It is important to recognize these differences in order to help community obtain optimal benefits from this unique industry.

Group 1 mentioned that tourism is understood as a changing factor of the society and now it is the fast growing globalization factor. Many host communities are in transition and look to tourism as an industry that can play a significant role in economic diversification. That's why tourism is being considered as an opportunity for economic diversification, in particular because host communities are home to an outstanding variety of unique and spectacular natural, cultural, and heritage attributes. In this sense, tourism provides an instinctive, natural diversification opportunity.

This group also discussed that community has a big peace building capacity that can even resolve the critical conflicts. Strong links between social capital and peace building was specially mentioned. This phenomenon can be introduced with a comprehensive tourism approach especially in Bangladesh. A conscious initiative to increase social capital is a strategic approach in today's context, but one that requires a long-term investment. A national plan must reflect voices of the local people. Individual's opinion in FGD identified the peace building identified ideas, concerns and hopes related to a root cause of the conflict. Marginalized populations like the poor, ethnic minorities, women make involved themselves with conflicts for financial and social causes. Respondents expressed their experience and belief that the existing hierarchical structure.

Group 2 discussed on how tourism can face the threats and terrorism and transform the society. They mentioned that numerous natural and human-caused disasters can significantly impact the flow of tourism, the threat of danger that accompanies terrorism or political turmoil tends to intimidate potential tourists more severely. It is furthermore believed that terrorist goals may help untangle the relationship between terrorism and tourism. It was explained from experience that targeting tourists or the industry is quite deliberate and helps terrorists achieve several goals as for example publicity, economic disruption, ideological opposition to tourism. Discussants suggested that tourists are targeted because they are viewed

as ambassadors for peace and development. Intensified result of terrorism and political turmoil makes tourism threaten. On the other hand, participation with host community and local government many types of terrorism and political turmoil situation can possible to address. A parallel steps can be done between the escalation of volatile political situations that threaten tourists and the proliferation. Decision making process with the people of tourism industry may be a good initiative. For that political instability, dissatisfaction, and political risks will be lower.

Group 3 discussed on tourism opportunities. Tourism for communities are wide activities that generate cooperative funding. This kind of program can be designed to support communities that are in a position to implement their own tourism initiatives. Increased tourism can allow local residents to benefit from the same services and facilities to support tourism. In addition, local businesses typically benefit from enhanced revenue, which in turn, leads to growth in the number and size of businesses and service options for residents. The local museum may provide better displays and longer hours to accommodate visitors and locals alike. Special events like music festivals, fairs and sporting events are enjoyed by residents while also potentially attracting large numbers of visitors. Tourist attractions that have a strong recreation and/or outdoor focus also create new facilities and opportunities for host community.

They also criticized carefully that if not well managed, tourism can have negative impacts. Increased numbers of unexpected visitors can create additional pressure on infrastructure like roads, water, and other properties. It can create situations where local residents have to compete with visitors for regular resources. Tourism can also cause local housing shortages that eventually push out local residents. Overuse of resources can have negative impacts on the environment, the very thing that visitors come to see can be damaged or destroyed.

Group 4 discussed on the present status of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is moving on. WTTC published a report on Bangladesh in 2015. They told here that in 2014, total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was 627.9 billion taka (4.1% of GDP), total contribution to employment was 3.6% of total employment (1,984,000 jobs), visitor exports generated 10.2 billion taka (0.3% of total exports) and total investment was 60.9 billion taka that was equivalent to 1.4% of total investment. Macroeconomic conditions have improved, and microeconomic reform is underway across the region.

Due to not getting effective tourism policy, growth can't shows satisfactory result. Unsustainable use of natural, cultural, and social asset base increased crime, income inequality, and the mistreatment of women and children increased reliance on imported goods and services. On the other hand, Bangladeshi people are naturally cordial and hospitable. They have high level of creativity and huge potentials in discovery.

(a) Limitations

Due to the shortage of resources, the study method and period may limit. The number of FGD and the quality of participants were lower than expected.

CONCLUSIONS

Tourism is such an multifaceted industry that can shape developing countries in many ways. The tourism sector can transform the socio-economic and political translations and mitigate the challenges even the terrorism. All developing nations are trying to change their economic opportunities using peace through tourism concept. Many countries have developed lucrative tourism attractions along with local communities that is the real socio-economic transformation. Bangladesh also can attempts to build a sustainable tourism sector by sensitive attitudes. Structural weaknesses, insecurity, and poor leadership lock the destination. Some knowledgeable demonstrate can be a force for alleviating poverty and helping to cement the peace. Tourism can only achieve the life oriented goals if it respects the environment and places host communities.

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