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A Modernism-Based Interpretation of Sustainable Tourism

To promote knowledge creation and transfer, this study adopts a modernism-based interpretation to reduce the conceptual vagueness and the terminological confusion of sustainable tourism. On basis of the intensional definition techniques, namely etymology and genus-and-differentia, the precisising and theoretical definition of sustainable tourism was constructed. Specifically, sustainable tourism was identified as a resource-concerned tourism development ethic with human needs for growth, ideology for continuity and global context as main constructs. This conceptual framework levels up sustainable tourism as a tourism development concern rather than a specific tourism form, thereby contributing to consistent communication in both academia and practices.

Keywords: Sustainable development; Definition theory; Modernism; Growth; Continuity

Introduction

The past 30 years have witnessed an exponential increase in research on sustainable tourism (Sánchez-Cañizares, Castillo-Canalejo, & Cabeza-Ramírez, 2018). In 2012, Buckley (2012) estimated that approximately 5,000 studies had been published on this topic. In 2018, a similar search yielded 8,500 results in Web of Science (Sánchez-Cañizares et al., 2018). Regardless of the sheer volume of research, the conceptual vagueness and hereby implicit practical implications of sustainable tourism make it a controversial subject (Bramwell, Higham, Lane, & Miller, 2017; Ruhanen, Moyle, & Moyle, 2019).

Butler (1999) addressed the ambiguity of sustainable tourism, which had resulted in a certain label or rhetoric being associated with the concept worldwide (Hardy, Beeton, & Pearson, 2002) and in circular discussions in academia, not because it lacked a definition, but because it had too many (Butler, 1999). However, it seems that the conceptual discussion of sustainable tourism almost stopped during that period (Butler, 1999; Hall & Lew, 1998b; Milne, 1998). As Ruhanen, Weiler, Moyle, and McLennan (2015) noted, the proportion of definitional and conceptual articles decreased from 15% between 1988 and 1997 to 2%

between 2008 and 2012, whereas the related empirical research increased from 3% between 1988 and 1997 to 25% between 2008 and 2012. Xiao and Smith (2006a) claimed a natural path of knowledge growth for a younger field, with earlier work focusing on the conceptualisation of the core phenomenon. However, the decrease in conceptual research does not necessarily mean that the definitional and theoretical construct of sustainable tourism is well-recognised. Although this decrease in definitional debates and shift to empirical research have been regarded as indicative of the maturation of this field (Bramwell et al., 2017; Lu & Nepal, 2009), the conceptual issue of sustainable tourism has never come to light. Related reviews and articles from the last two decades have bypassed the definitional issue (Qian, Shen, & Law, 2018). Some have adopted the definition of the UNEP and UNWTO (2005, pp. 11-12), 'Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, and the environment and host communities', which is still criticised as vague and biased (Stumpf, Sandstrom, & Swanger, 2016). As such, some policymakers and other stakeholders remain doubtful regarding the actual effectiveness of its implementation (Bramwell & Lane, 2014; Jafari, 2001; Ryan, 2005)

Conceptual development is vital for scientific progress, particularly regarding the subjectivist epistemology (Bramwell, 2015), as subjectivists such as Kant believe that 'human knowledge is ultimately based on understanding, an intellectual state that is more than just a consequence of experience' (Hamilton, 1994, p. 63). Even for objectivists, who focus on empiricism, conceptualisation is regarded as an important tool intertwined with empirical research for the creation of knowledge (Leuzinger-Bohleber & Fischmann, 2006). In the advancement of science, academia should never cease efforts to achieve conceptual clarification (Dreher, 2000; Xin, Tribe, & Chambers, 2013). Hence, based on definition theory, this study aims to address the conceptual issue of sustainable tourism from a

modernism-based perspective (will be discussed later). Notably, sustainable development, as a parental concept of sustainable tourism, is also discussed. Thus, this study has two research objectives: (1) to conduct a modernism-based interpretation of sustainable development and (2) to solicit a modernism-based understanding or conceptual framework of sustainable tourism. This study is expected to decrease confusion with the concept, thereby enhancing the knowledge about sustainable tourism, one of the most prominent areas in tourism field (Qian et al., 2018; Sánchez-Cañizares et al., 2018). Advanced conceptual understanding and a theoretical framework with summarised thinking may facilitate consistent transformation and thus reduce miscommunication in both academic discussions and practical policymaking (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005). Moreover, as Lai and Li (2015) argued, the important but less noticed definitional approach is particularly necessary to tourism, which has recorded many ambiguous concepts. Decreasing the vagueness of concepts in tourism may expedite the transition of tourism out of its pre-science stage (Kuhn, 1970; Xiao & Smith, 2006b).

Literature Review

Conceptual arguments on sustainable tourism

Two main factors underlie the definitional vagueness of sustainable tourism, namely the vagueness of its parental concept and the complexity of the tourism context. Sustainable development, as the parental concept of sustainable tourism (Sharpley, 2000; Swarbrooke, 1998), has been debated since its first appearance in the *Brundtland Report* in 1987. By 1993, approximately 70 different definitions had been used to define the concept (Steer & Wade-Gery, 1993). The concept has thus been criticised as being fluid and of lacking semantic and conceptual clarity (Lélé, 1991; Sharpley, 2000). Moreover, it is considered an oxymoron due to the inherent contradiction (Worster, 1994) regarding resource conservation and economic development. Although tourism was not initially targeted in the *Brundtland Report* when discussing sustainable principles in numerous areas (Butler, 1998; Sharpley, 2009), this

resource-based field soon became one of the dominant areas promoting sustainability (Hardy et al., 2002). The *Resource Management Act*, enacted in 1991 by New Zealand as one of the world's first pieces of legislation to explicitly enshrine the concept of sustainability in planning law, was directly applied in the tourism industry (Page & Thorn, 1998). Sustainable tourism was then defined as 'tourism which meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future' (Bramwell & Lane, 1993, p. 2), in accordance with the original definition of its parental concept (Brundtland, 1987). Despite enjoying the promising label of sustainability, the concept of sustainable tourism also inherited its fluid nature (Payne, 1993; van der Straaten, Bramwell, Henry, & Jackson, 1996).

Meanwhile, tourism, an industry encompassing intangible and human-environment interaction (Hunter, 1997), is characterised by multi-level complexities (Jafari, 2001; Ryan, 2005). Geographically, tourism is a system across destination regions and source regions linked by transit regions (Leiper, 1979). The global-local nexus inevitably perplexes sustainable tourism. Besides, the recognition of different stakeholders and balance of competing interests have always been the key characteristics differentiating sustainable tourism owing to the various sectors involved in tourism (Hunter, 1997). In addition, as an interaction between humans and the environment, tourism embraces natural and social systems, which are both complex (Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2004; Hunter, 2012). These geographical, sectoral and systematic complexities of tourism increase the difficulty of defining sustainable tourism. Many scholars have made efforts to clarify it. In 1993, conceptual discussions were present in over 45% of the papers in the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* (Lu & Nepal, 2009), resulting in a variety of definitions (Stabler & Goodall, 1996). However, the large amount of works witnessed incremental (or circular at best) advancement regarding the conceptual clarity of sustainable tourism. Conceptual discussion on sustainable tourism was still warranted (Butler, 1999).

Although it is out of the scope of this study to review all definitions of sustainable tourism, the well-recognised ones as listed in Table 1 illustrated the lack of modernism-based interpretation to be an underlying reason for its conceptual vagueness. Ontologically, three main views on conceptual problems exist: modernism, which prefers clear meanings with the essences of concepts; postmodernism, which claims that the meanings of concepts vary with context; and nihilism, which indicates no sense of concept (Lai & Li, 2015). The current definitions mainly uphold the postmodernism view. For instance, in the original definition proposed by the WTO, the needs, present tourists, host regions and the future all change according to context (Cole, 2004), resulting in the overall vagueness of this concept. Some even take a nihilist stance (Heinen, 1994). Farrell and Twining-Ward (2005) presented the latest understanding of sustainable tourism, arguing that it is a form of adaptive management and denying its very sense, thereby increasing policymaker debates regarding what it is. The need to determine the very essence of the concept for effective knowledge transfer and implementation (Gössling, Hall, & Weaver, 2009; Hall & Lew, 1998b) drives this study to adopt a modernism-based stance in clarifying the conceptual constructs of sustainable tourism.

Table 1 Definitions of sustainable tourism (Updated from Butler, 1999)

(Insert here)

Regarding the cyclical definitional debates, scholars in past decades have sought other solutions and turned to the practical implications of this proposition, thus leading to a significant decrease in definitional discussions and an increase in empirical studies, which constituted 85% of the studies in the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* in 2007 (Lu & Nepal, 2009). As Garrod and Fyall (1998, p. 200) argued, ‘Unless translated into something that is meaningful in practice, definitions remain at best academic curios, at worst a threat to the achievement of genuinely sustainable tourism’. Henceforth, the early ‘small is best’ philosophy suggests that sustainable tourism is scale-related (Hall & Lew, 1998b). Varieties

of alternative tourism have been promoted to alleviate the tension between tourism activities and environmental degradation (Bramwell & Lane, 1993). However, such attempts have been rather counterproductive. Although alternative tourism meets high capacity control standards, the negative impacts of tourism in general continue (Wight, 1993). Clarke (1997) finally suggested the convergence of mass tourism and sustainable tourism, indicating that all tourism should strive for sustainability, regardless of the scale (Hardy & Beeton, 2001).

Furthermore, governments are regarded as the parties responsible for initiating sustainable tourism. In 1996, the World Tourism Organization, the Earth Council and the World Travel and Tourism Council joined together to launch an action plan entitled, 'Agenda 21 for the Travel & Tourism Industry: Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development' (UNWTO, 2001). The recommendations of Agenda 21 were almost supply oriented, emphasising the responsibility of public sectors and industries to lead more sustainable forms of tourism (Bramwell & Lane, 2005; Liu, 2003). Nonetheless, the failure in practice was evident, with governments only paying lip service to gain funding and poor policy diffusion and knowledge transfer (Bramwell, 2004; Mowforth & Munt, 1998). As such, stakeholder collaboration involving the demand side has been proposed as a prerequisite for tourism growth and the long-term sustainability (Liburd & Edwards, 2010; Weaver, 2006).

Finally, measurements and indicators have been developed to visualise sustainable tourism. For instance, Butler's (1980) life cycle model described the destination development process and introduced the concept of 'carrying capacity', evolving into a wide range of other tools, such as Limits of Acceptable Change, Visitor Preference and Experience, Destination Lifecycle, Comfort Indicators and Visitor Impact Management, for comprehensive sustainability assessments (Lu & Nepal, 2009). However, they are not only limited to the local level or certain aspects (Schianetz, Kavanagh, & Lockington, 2007), but also contextually used by planners and governments. According to Hunter's (1997) four-type

sustainable development spectrum from very weak sustainability to very strong sustainability, these tools inevitably vary in application according to the aims or environmental awareness of authorities. Ultimately, these solutions are limited, despite making efforts to clarify sustainable tourism in practice, due to partial concern about tourism complexities. This study intends to advance the definitional discussion of sustainable tourism from the perspective of modernism. Holding an essential stance on definition, this view is expected to help explore the constructs of the concept while addressing its geographical, sectoral and systematic complexities to generate both theoretical and practical implications for this influential area.

Definition theory

According to Copi, Cohen and McMahon (2011), good definitions are simply very helpful in eliminating verbal disputes and ambiguity in discourse. The issue of determining and structuring definitions has been widely discussed in various disciplines, particularly in logic and philosophy, resulting in a systematic body of knowledge on the typology, functions and techniques of definitions, namely definition theory (Copi et al., 2011). Derived mainly from logic, definition theory captures the nature of definitions and provides useful guidelines for knowledge creation and the scientific usage of concepts (Pap, 1964). Despite some limitations, such as circularity and the lack of direct empirical support, definition theory has been widely applied and proven to be useful in clarifying vague terms (e.g. Gratton, 1994; Lai & Li, 2015). A definition consists of a 'definiendum' (a word or a symbol) to be defined and 'definiens' (words or symbols) to explain the meaning of the definiendum. This means that to define is to assign definiens with identical but clearer meaning to the definiendum (Hurley, 2000; Morris & Ernest, 1934).

Epistemologically, definitions are classified into five main types: stipulative, lexical, precisising, theoretical and persuasive (Copi et al., 2011; Hurley, 2000). A stipulative definition assigns a meaning to a word associated with some new phenomenon or

development for the first time. Hence, it is a kind of arbitrary assignment that is neither true nor false (Lai & Li, 2015). A lexical definition reports the meaning that a word already has, such as a dictionary definition. A precisising definition reduces the ambiguity or vagueness of a word, particularly in law, commerce and science (Hurley, 2000). A theoretical definition encapsulates a comprehensive understanding of the theory that has the term as a key element. It prevails in science and philosophy, as such a definition suggests deductive consequences and further experimental investigation surrounding a term (Copi, Cohen, & Flage, 2016). A persuasive definition engenders attitudes with emotional language. Different from the other four types, which convey information, persuasive definitions are mainly concerned with the expression of feelings and are thus commonly used in political arguments and editorial columns (Copi et al., 2011; Hurley, 2000).

Regarding the popular definitions of sustainable tourism listed in Table 1, the earlier ones appear more stipulative (i.e., Eber, 1992), lexical (i.e., World Tourism Organization, 1993) and persuasive (i.e., Butler, 1993) in nature, whereas the later ones seem to be theoretical for practical implications. For instance, the WTO's 2003 definition (Liu, 2003, p. 460) points to the outcomes of sustainable tourism as effective management that addresses specified needs and different aspects of sustainability, suggesting further investigation and evaluation. Consequently, a large number of principles and indicators for measuring sustainable tourism have been developed. This outcome-oriented definition undoubtedly proceeds the operation of sustainable tourism in practice. Notwithstanding, it focuses mainly on categorising needs and sustainability, thus leading to a variety of similar, yet subtly different versions (e.g., Liu, 2003; UNWTO, 2005). This is a common limitation of defining by providing subclasses, a denotative definition technique.

Denotative and connotative techniques are the two main methods of producing definitions. The denotative technique entails defining a term by indicating the members of the

class that the definiendum denotes (Hurley, 2000). Based on the different methods of indicating the members of a class, the denotative technique can be categorised into three main types: ostensive (pointing to members), enumerative (naming members individually) and subclass (naming members in groups) (Copi et al., 2016; Pap, 1964). As relatively primitive options, definitions by these techniques seem to be more direct and easier to understand and are limited to expressing extensional meaning only (Copi et al., 2011; Morris & Ernest, 1934). All three techniques have their own merits and deficiencies in application (Table 2). For instance, an ostensive definition may be ‘tourist attraction means this’ combined with pointing at a theme park. It can facilitate quick understanding between the speakers and listeners, particularly for those with language barriers. However, listeners may still be unclear about what tourist attraction refers to and thus may be unable to name other attractions due to the principle that ‘intension determines extension, whereas the converse is not true’ (Hurley, 2000, p. 89).

In contrast, the connotative technique focuses on intensional meanings and defines a term by illustrating the qualities or attributes of the object(s) that the term connotes (Hurley, 2000). Connotative technique has four main strategies: synonymous, etymological, operational and genus-and-differentia (Staal, 1961). The conditions and deficiencies of different strategies are listed in Table 2. Striving for the essence of concepts, the connotative technique is generally considered more important and effective than its denotative counterpart. Nevertheless, it is not easy to have a complete intensional meaning of a term (Gratton, 1994). For instance, tourism means more than what is expressed in its operational definition, ‘Traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure and not less than 24 hours, business and other purposes’ (UNWTO, 1995, p. 1).

Table 2 Definition techniques

(Insert here)

Given the different functions in Table 2, the denotative technique is chiefly applied in producing stipulative and lexical definitions rather than theoretical, precisising or persuasive definitions because the latter definitions should be constructed based on the intensional meanings of terms (Wacker, 1998). The genus-and-differentia technique, as presented, is applied in producing all five kinds definitions and is usually accompanied by the etymological technique because the genes and specie differences are always highly related to the term origins (Hurley, 2000). The operational technique can be used to construct stipulative, lexical, precisising and persuasive definitions. Finally, the synonymous technique, which requires an existing word, can only be used in lexical definitions. Notably, neither the definition types nor the techniques are mutually exclusive (Hurley, 2000; Lai & Li, 2015). The next section discusses the selection of definition types and the corresponding techniques in this study.

Study Method

This study intends to reduce the conceptual vagueness surrounding the concept of sustainable tourism by adopting definition theory to facilitate knowledge creation and transfer in both the academic and practical spheres. As argued above, a modernism-based ontology is taken to interpret the essence of the sustainable tourism concept. In this regard, a precisising definition and theoretical definition may both be applicable on an epistemological basis. First, a more rigorous and responsive theoretical framework is required to better understand the ability of tourism to generate sustainable development (Hall & Lew, 1998b), which may be incorporated by a theoretical definition. Second, a precisising definition that aims to reduce the vagueness of a word by assigning an explicit meaning within a specific context (Pap, 1964) may be helpful in positioning the theoretical interpretation of sustainable development into the tourism context by addressing its multi-level complexities.

The connotative technique is preferred in this case for its superiority in determining the intensional meanings of concepts and structuring theoretical and precisising definitions. Defining a term using the genus-and-differentia technique is the most effective way to produce rigorous definitions and may achieve more well-rounded interpretations than any other intensional technique (Copi et al., 2011; Hurley, 2000). The two steps to generate a genus-and-differentia definition are (1) to figure out a larger class as the genus and (2) to specify a relatively smaller class as the specie and its attributes ('specie difference') that distinguish it within the genus (Beck, 1956; Lai & Li, 2015). This means that the key and prerequisite is the concise identification of genus, specie and specie difference. In this case, the etymological technique is applicable and is important for identifying the genus and specie difference for at least three reasons. The first is that sustainable tourism is a term derived from previous tourism practices and thus major improvements can only be achieved by tackling the longstanding problems of earlier developments – in other words, by looking backwards (Butler, 1999). The second reason is that the etymological technique can trace a word's root meaning or seminal meaning, based on which all other associated meanings can be derived (Hurley, 2000). The third reason is that an entire constellation of related words can be distinguished to reduce vague discussions if the etymology of one word is achieved (Gratton, 1994). In addition, synonymous and operational techniques are excluded because sustainable tourism has no exact existing synonym and may involve more than operations.

To conclude, this study adopted a genus-and-differentia approach on basis of the etymological interpretation of the terms to achieve a theoretical and precise definition of sustainable tourism. Starting from sustainable development, which is highly related to sustainable tourism in academic discussion, the analytical process includes three main steps: (1) make an etymological interpretation of sustainable development to identify its genus and specie; (2) make an etymological interpretation of sustainable tourism to identify its genus

and specie; (3) generate a comprehensive understanding of the tourism context to specify specie differences and construct a theoretical and precising definition of sustainable tourism.

Etymological Interpretation of Sustainable Development

Etymology is the study of the history of words, their linguistic origins and how their forms and meanings have changed over time (Rothwell, 1991). Thus, both semantic and contextual history should be traced to conduct an etymological analysis of concepts.

Semantic sources: continuity and economic focus

According to the Online Etymology Dictionary (2018), 'sustainable' originated in the 1610s from 'sustain' + '-able' as 'bearable'. In 1845, it was attested in the sense of 'defensible' and from 1965 took the meaning of 'capable of being continued at a certain level', henceforth used in the Cambridge Dictionary (2017). Further tracing the word 'sustain' shows that it stems from the Old French verb 'sostenir' and the Latin verb 'sustinere' meaning to 'hold up, bear, suffer, endure' in the 14th century. In the 15th century, its meaning changed to 'continue, keep up' as an action. Notably, both 'sustainable' and its etymon 'sustain' finally evolved to address 'continuity'.

In 1756, 'development' appeared, defined as 'a gradual unfolding, a full working out or disclosure of the details of something'. Its meaning changed to 'the internal process of expanding and growing' by 1796, to 'advancement through progressive stages' by 1836 and finally to emphasise the 'state of economic advancement' by 1902. The latest meaning of 'development' is narrower and more concerned with economic aspects than its ancestors, which were broader and more concerned with growth. Therefore, from a linguistic view, sustainable development, as 'sustainable + development', should connote the continuity of growth over a period of time and particularly concern economic increase since the 20th century. Although the linguistically etymological view is rarely adopted from the large body

of knowledge on sustainable development, the definitions in the Oxford Dictionary (2017), which defines it as a noun referring to ‘economic development that is conducted without depletion of natural resources’, and at Dictionary.com (2017), which defines it as a phrase meaning ‘development balancing near-term interests with the protection of the interests of future generations’, present similar aspects, but also different elements from its linguistically original senses. The evolution of its meaning is rooted in its corresponding contextual history.

Context sources: economic capitalism to ecological capitalism

The concept of sustainable development actually resulted from two historical human trends. One is the attitude towards natural resources and the other is the developmental view (Sharpley, 2000). In other words, the social value system and the capitalist system interplayed and facilitated the appearance of this concept.

Historically, humans respected and appreciated nature long before the encroachment of modernisation (Butler, 1991). Figure 1 shows that corresponding with the development of civilization, humans’ attitudes towards nature have changed accordingly. From exchanging materialism for livelihood (Pepper, 1996), romantic appreciation for spiritual appreciation to progressive preservation for economic growth, human now primarily adopt the conservation view in recognition of its multiple values, including recreation, spiritual renewal, health and ecology (Hall, 1998; Hardy et al., 2002). This process shows the return of humans’ respect for and appreciation of nature, although with different motivations. Driven by concern for the finiteness of natural resources, people have learned more about nature and have practised utilitarian-driven conservation since the late 1920s. This has resulted in official eco-development propositions calling for the wise use of nature to maintain its continuity.

View	Materialist view	Romantic view	Preservation view	Conservation view
Attitude to nature	Nature is wilderness to be conquered and cultivated to acquire their values (Hall, 1998)	Nature is of spiritual values and moral supremacy (Swarbrooke, 1998)	'Wise use' of natural resources for economic sake rather than aesthetic motives (Marsh, 1965; Worster, 1994)	Recognition of multiple values of nature, such as recreation, spiritual renewal, health and ecology (Hall, 1992)
Period	Agricultural society	Late 18C-Early 19C	Middle 19C-Late 19C	Late 1920s-
Relation to sustainable development	A fever for rural idylls (Jefferson, 1861, cited from Hall & Lew, 1998b)	Led to the growing concern for environment (Briassoulis & Straaten, 1992)	The finiteness of natural resources was recognised (Clark & Munn, 1986)	Eco-development was officially illustrated (Van den Bergh, 1996)

Figure 1 Evolution of humans' attitudes towards nature (Source: authors)

As shown in Figure 2, eco-development is also the end-point of the development view continuum that evolved from anthropocentric and economic growth-based modernisation theories into more eco-centric and nature-based alternative development views (Chancellor, Norman, Farmer, & Coe, 2011; Hall & Lew, 1998b). In other words, from economic capitalism to ecological capitalism (Meadows, Meadows, Randers, & Behrens, 1972). Despite involving an increasing concern for environmental degradation, capitalism and human growth is always the 'main melody' of these development views (Chancellor et al., 2011). After all, 'political reality [or growth reality], rather than ecological reality, has been the order of the day' (Hall, 1998, p. 23). However, development in terms of more balanced growth rather than economic growth only was expected after the late 1960s.

Relation to sustainable development	Economic capitalism (Bramwell & Lane, 2014)	Ecological degradation and limits of growth were realised (Meadows et al., 1972)	Balanced development (Guyette, 1996)	Ecological capitalism and eco-development (Bramwell & Lane, 2013)
Period	Late 18C-Late 19C	Late 1960s-1970s	1980s	Late 1980s-
Main content	Highlighted economic growth and its potential for all societies to advance to modern mass consumption (Scott, 1995)	Economic models in colonised developing countries to alleviate poverty (Scott, 1995)	Promoted liberal international trade and reduced state intervention (Toye, 1993)	Eco-centric and nature-based development view (van den Bergh, 1996)
Development view	Modernisation theory	Dependency theory	Neo-classic economic model	Alternative development

Figure 2 Evolution of the development view (Source: authors)

As the two figures show, although from different directions, the appreciation of nature and the pursuit of human development finally converged into 'eco-development' at the

Stockholm Conference on Humans and the Environment in 1972 (Gössling et al., 2009; Liburd & Edwards, 2010; Mowforth, 2009). The only possible difference lay in the expectation for human growth. Eco-development from a nature view appreciates multiple forms of human growth (e.g., health and aesthetic appreciation) based on nature (Moutinho, 1987), whereas the development view proposes this concept to address more balanced growth. Nonetheless, the term 'eco-development' is well recognised as the latest antecedent of 'sustainable development' (Joppe, 1996; Wall, 1997). By 1987, the *Brundtland Report* titled 'Our Common Future' (1987, p. 12) had brought the concept of 'sustainable development' into the political arena: 'Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

The popularisation of the concept of sustainable development was inevitable, as it met the needs of both of the historical trends to simultaneously incorporate continuity and growth. According to the linguistic etymology discussion, 'sustainable' was defined as 'capable of being continued at a certain level' in 1965 and 'development' was originally recorded as representing a broader sense of growth. However, it has emphasised economic growth more since 1902, thus embracing the changeable pursuit of growth. The nature view approaches sustainable development by recognising different values of nature for human growth and its finiteness and the development view approaches sustainable development by realising human growth to be more than economic and its dependence on the continuity of nature (Colby & Sagasti, 1992). It seems that the genus of 'sustainable development' may either be the nature view along the spectrum or the development view within the continuum. However, for both evolution trends, to enjoy continued human growth based on the continuity of nature is the very essence of this concept. Thus, sustainable development is inherently anthropocentric. The genus should be a development view. Featured as the convergence of a conservative

nature view and the alternative development view, it may be referred to as a 'resource-concerned development view' that addresses the continuity of resources for more well-rounded growth of humankind.

Etymological Interpretation of Sustainable Tourism

Parallel with the emergence and popularisation of sustainable development in the late 20th century was rapid tourism development and, soon after in the 1990s, the emergence of sustainable tourism concept (Swarbrooke, 1998). In contrast to sustainable development, sustainable tourism is always criticised as a lip service and seems to involve more complexities (Belk & Costa, 1995; Milne, 1998). This means that sustainable tourism is not a simple ramification of sustainable development, but has its own nature (Sharpley, 2000; Swarbrooke, 1998). Tourism actually experienced two different stages before evolving into sustainable tourism.

Tourism as a practice for sustainable development

Although tourism became recognised by the public around the 1950s, recreation and leisure, as partial antecedents of tourism, have enjoyed a long history in public sphere (Smith & Godbey, 1991). Interestingly, well before the mid-19th century, the romantic view of nature in recognition of the aesthetic potential of wilderness was not sufficient for the creation of national parks and reserves for public recreation (Hall & Lew, 1998a). Rather, the increasing need for recreation among the working class after the mid-19th century brought about public park constructions (Hall, 1998). For instance, the state park Yosemite was established 'for public use, resort, and recreation' on 30 June 1864 (Nash, 1963, p. 7). Thereafter, recreation and leisure were used to justify reserving natural areas in responding to the preservation view, instead of pursuing other forms of economic value, such as agriculture, mining and commercial forestry (Hall, 1998). Parks served to provide public open spaces for the spiritual

search of individuals. Furthermore, recreation and leisure activities created value for some areas that were useless for economic production, such as Mariposa Big Trees and Yosemite Valley (Ekins, 1993).

The 'Rational Recreation Movement' after the 1950s led to the increased use of public lands for recreation employment and consumption (Buckley, 2003). Consequently, tourism – the seeming 'green' and 'smokeless industry' – based on the increasing recreation needs arose and was largely promoted because it entailed the potential for economic recovery after World War II (Tribe, 2015). While sharing a common desire for leisure activities outside of work time, recreationists regarded tourism as a different sphere, as it was profit-driven. By contrast, recreation was a welfare-oriented movement (Mill, 2008). Nonetheless, surveys from the 1990s found that many studies on recreation overlapped with tourism and that tourism was the third most dominant topic among researchers in the recreation and leisure field (Jackson & Burton, 1989). Tourism was regarded as the industrial response to the conservation view of nature and the alternative development view, meaning that tourism initially started as a practice for sustainable development that embraced both continuity and growth (Pobocik & Butalla, 1998).

Sustainable tourism as an alternative to mass tourism

During the last half century, tourism has increased exponentially and has caused a great amount of corresponding negative economic and socio-cultural impacts. Public attitudes towards mass tourism have been ambivalent since the 1970s. Jafari's (1989) platform theory concludes this complex process. The substantial economic benefits for host communities make tourism an optimal development approach (Farrell, 1977; Gray, 1981; Hogan & Mcpheters, 1983), referring to the early 'Advocacy Platform' stage of tourism (Esman, 1984; Graburn, 1984; Smith, 1981). Recognising the various potential impacts of tourism on the environment, culture, lifestyle and identity of communities (Doxey, 1975), a number of key

books paved the way for tourism as a 'Cautionary Platform' (Bramwell, 1995; Maccannell, 1984; Smith, 1989; Teye, 1993; Vandenberghe, 1992). Subsequently, in the 1980s, the 'Adaptive Platform' appeared to suggest small-scale, alternative forms of tourism opposed to mass tourism. Nature-based tourism and eco-tourism were largely promoted by the government and related organisations as sustainable tourism (Yang & Wall, 2009).

Nevertheless, with the 'Knowledge-based Platform' arising in the 1990s, a comprehensive understanding of tourism impacts was claimed (Horn & Simmons, 2002; Young, Thyne, & Lawson, 1999). The fact that small-scale tourism would ultimately evolve into mass tourism (Cohen, 1987, 1989) and induce negative impacts was recognised. Scale-concerned tourism was not the key for sustainability. Rather, scholars found mass tourism was not excluded by the principles of sustainability, but was the most visible and sensible candidate for sustainability reform (Clarke, 1997; Honey, 2008). As Krippendorf (1982, p. 111) urged, 'Only if we succeed in living with tourism as a mass phenomenon...can we claim to have made a decisive step forward'. Sustainable tourism then became a common goal that all tourism should strive for, producing tourism benefits in the meantime to minimise the negative impacts (Cole, 2004; Lu & Nepal, 2009).

Two important implications can be derived from this historical line. First, the recognition of negative tourism impacts ended the myth of tourism as sustainable. Before the proposition of sustainable development, tourism as an industrial practice had responded to and met the needs of both the conservation view and the alternative development view. On basis of the recreation experience, tourism in pristine nature was widely appreciated for improving the life quality of citizens without resource depletion. Meanwhile, large profits were generated from the related production and consumption. This emerging third industry at its early stage was greatly promoted as an alternative to the heavy industrial production and as an actual practice of the later sustainable development proposition. However, with the

increased impacts of tourism, the lifecycles of destinations denied the nature of tourism to maintain continuity of growth (Butler, 1993). In other words, tourism deviated from the ideal sustainable development view.

Sustainable tourism was then proposed in an attempt to return to the mainstream ideology. Hence, the second important implication is that sustainable development should be the ideological genus for sustainable tourism. The aim of proposition of sustainable tourism was to bridge the gap between the tourism practices and the prevailing nature and development views. This means that sustainable tourism, different from tourism, is the ideal vision which tourism practices should pursue to uphold the sustainable development view. However, scholars initially tended to interpret sustainable tourism similarly to traditional tourism in practice. It has been comprehended as different forms of tourism, from alternative tourism, nature-based tourism and eco-tourism to responsible tourism. Inevitably, critics of these forms in sustainability followed because tourism, particularly in long distance, always involve environmental and resource impacts that limit future needs (Briassoulis, 2002). Even though the fact that no exact form of tourism could be sustainable was ultimately recognised (Velikova, 2001), later definitions still started as, ‘Sustainable tourism is tourism that...’ (see in Table 1). Given the genus as one form of tourism, the interpretation of sustainable tourism is limited and deviates from its well-recognised nature of being the common goal for all tourism (Clarke, 1997). Some have promoted it as a form of tourism management (e.g., Farrell and Twining-Ward, 2005; Liu, 2003), which may be applicable to all tourism. However, the definitions neither elaborate how management should be nor step out of the practice-oriented tradition.

Before academia figured out exactly what sustainable tourism should be, the industry passionately adopted it as a promotional label to gain public acceptance and achieve economic success, thus resulting in a further practical deviation from the intended sustainable

tourism concept (Butler, 1998; Wight, 1993). As such, the term 'sustainable tourism' may be used to refer to a 'different and better' form of tourism to attract tourists, regardless of whether it meets the principles of sustainable development and minimises tourism impacts. These two-layer deviations led to the critics of sustainable tourism calling it a lip service or an ambiguous term (Hall & Lew, 1998b). Of the different uses of this concept in both academia and in practice, the original proposition of sustainable tourism as the overarching vision for and ethical principles of tourism practices to minimise negative impacts and conform to the sustainable development view is what this study aims to interpret (Hinch, 1998). Referring to the aforementioned discussion, sustainable development is a resource-concerned development view concerned with maintaining both continuity and growth, which can serve as the genus of sustainable tourism. Correspondingly, the specie of sustainable tourism can be a 'resource-concerned tourism development ethic' concerned with maintaining resource continuity (minimum negative impacts) and tourism growth. This ethical proposition could be partially supported by yet still differentiated from the seminal works of some scholars who defined sustainable tourism as ethical tourism (Fennell, 2019). Sustainable tourism was posited here as an ethic (ideological concept), rather than a form of tourism with sustainable ethics (practical concept), which may be further questioned by 'what is ethical tourism'.

Precising and Theoretical Definition of Sustainable Tourism

After identifying the genus and specie, the specie difference should be classified. The ambiguity of specie difference always rooted in the contextual complexities (Gratton, 1994). Precising definition requires interpretations of the specific context to reduce the vagueness of concepts (Hurley, 2000). As argued before, sustainable development is a resource-concerned development view. The difference between it and previous development views or nature views is the incorporation of continuity and growth. However, both continuity and growth

have faced arguments regarding contextual uncertainty of three factors. The first is the uncertainty of time frame. Continuity is defined as ‘capable to be continued over a period of time’, where ‘period’ is not explicitly assumed. Different countries at different stages may hold distinct ideologies towards the scope of ‘period’. Hence, some definitions, such as that in the *Brundtland Report*, address both the present and future generations, leaving ‘future’ open to debate (Hall & Lew, 1998b).

The second is the changeability of growth needs. According to Maslow’s (1969) hierarchy of needs, human needs move to higher levels as lower level needs are met, just as the focus of development views moved from economic growth in the 19th century to well-rounded growth in the present day (Butler, 1998). For instance, Part I of the *Brundtland Report* addressed less materialism and more equitable growth for the 21st century. It indicated that to alleviate poverty, maintain ecological capital, improve income justice, enhance the resilience of economic systems, ensure jobs, food, energy, sanitation, water and quality of life with sustainable population growth were the main needs for human therein (Brundtland, 1987). Moreover, developing countries demonstrated their own emphases on growth at that time, such as China’s prioritisation of economic growth in eastern coastal areas since the open reform in 1978, thus resulting in the geographical contextual gap in interpreting and implementing sustainable development (Sharpley, 2000; Sofield & Li, 2011).

The last is the exact ‘balanced’ or ‘wise’ point between nature conservation and human growth (Purvis & Grainger, 2004). Sustainable development, as the convergence of the nature view and the development view, should be concerned with both resources and human needs. It is not a single best point, but an ethic to uphold human growth and environmental stability together. Different societies in different development stages could lie at different points on the resource-growth continuum due to the different ideologies of nature and needs for growth (Lu & Nepal, 2009). The final position varies on the temporary and

geographical contexts used to interpret sustainable development (Butler, 1998). Part II of the *Brundtland Report* addressed population growth and resource limits, food security, species and ecosystems, energy, industry and urban areas (Brundtland, 1987). This means that in the 1990s at least, sustainable development referred to equitable growth, which included jobs, food, energy, sanitation, water, population, and quality of life while saving resources and energy, maintaining the resilience of ecological systems and improving food security, industrial efficiency and the urban environment. In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly introduced its updated set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved from 2016 to 2030, which emphasized more on continuity in relation to human growth (Lane, 2018).

To sum up, apart from growth and continuity, context is an irreplaceable conceptual construct in sustainable development. The concept can thus be interpreted as a resource-concerned development view that incorporates both growth and continuity ethics in specific contexts (depicted as Figure 3). It is concern oriented rather than outcome oriented (Wight, 1998). It concerns growth, namely human needs (Brundtland, 1987). Furthermore, it concerns continuity, namely the ideology for the future (Sharpley, 2000). The needs, the ideology and the practical balance point varying according to the specific context (Goulet, 1992; Lélé, 1991). Obtaining practical implications for implementation should start with the interpretation of growth needs and ideology for continuity in the corresponding context.

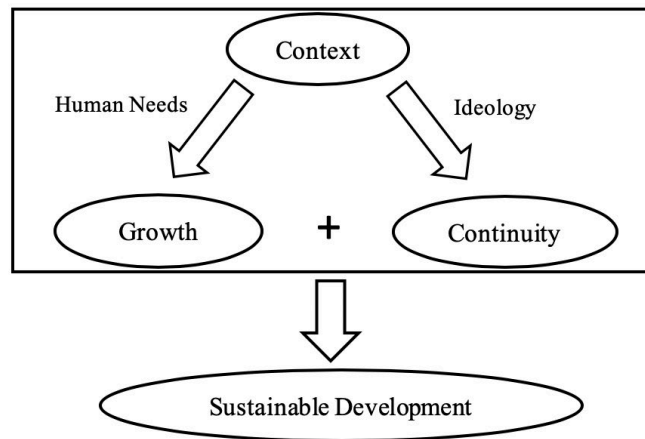


Figure 3 Interpretation of sustainable development (Source: authors)

Likewise, sustainable tourism, as the resource-concerned tourism ethic that concerns maintaining resource continuity (minimum negative impacts) and tourism growth, should also be defined upon context. It is the contextual complexities that resulted in various definitions. Not only does the contextual uncertainty in sustainable development remain, but the multi-level complexities of tourism add differences (Butler, 1999; Ruhanen, 2008).

First and foremost, the sectoral complexity complicates human needs for tourism growth. The essence of this third service industry is no longer material production, but rather experience production co-created by ‘food, accommodation, transportation, entertainment, tour, and commodities’, thus involving different sectors (Wall, 1997). Recognition of different growth needs for all tourism stakeholders is a key factor differentiating sustainable tourism practices (Hardy & Beeton, 2001). Among many others, six main actor groups and their major needs have been identified (Gössling et al., 2009; Swarbrooke, 1998; Weaver, 2006), as shown in Figure 4. They can be divided into the macro-control side and the micro-action side. The macro-control side includes the public sector, voluntary organisations and the media and tends to pursue the macro growth of society. The micro-action side refers to tourists, host communities and the tourism industry, which are the real actors producing and consuming tourism products (Albrecht, 2013; Dedeker, 2017; Poudel, Nyaupane, & Budruk, 2014). The actors on the micro-action side are more concerned with individual experiences

and the economic effects of tourism. Furthermore, to involve those different sectors, trade-offs between competing stakeholders' interests to achieve balance are inevitably another feature of sustainable tourism (Hunter, 1997).

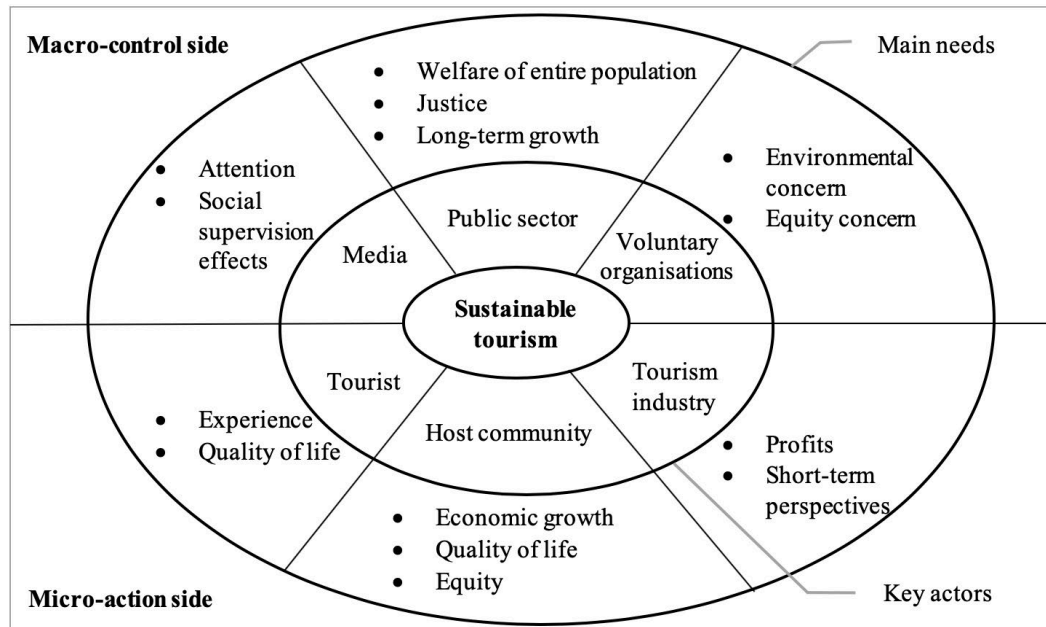


Figure 4 Stakeholders and their needs in sustainable tourism (concluded from Gössling et al., 2009; Swarbrooke, 1998; Weaver, 2006)

Multiple sectors involved also complicates continuity maintenance in tourism. Both the macro-control side and the micro-control side are critical in constructing the ethic. Resource continuity in sustainable tourism depends on societal ideologies and values (van der Straaten et al., 1996). Specifically, social ideology decides the degree of effort that macro-control actors exert to maintain natural continuity over market economics, although tension between the two is ever present (Hinch, 1998). Societal values are related to the responsibility that micro-action individuals intend to take in pro-environmental behaviours. In general, the higher the environmental awareness of the actor communities, the more credible the promotion of sustainable tourism may be (Saarinen, 2006).

Furthermore, the systematic complexity has expanded continuity in tourism from physical environmental sustainability to many other dimensions (Shen, Hughey, & Simmons, 2008; Spangenberg, 2002), because tourism as an exotic experience is not merely the

interaction between humans and natural resources, but the interaction between guests and entire host communities (Smith, 1989). At the very beginning, the minimisation of negative tourism impacts on physical environment has been the main focus (Hunter, 1995). Climate change and the resilience of the global ecosystem (Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2004; Gössling et al., 2009) were vital issues in sustainable tourism. During recent decades, the integrity of local culture, economic system and positive social interaction in tourist experiences have become part of the main concern of sustainable tourism (Holling & Gunderson, 2002). Overall, sustainable tourism not only depends on the continuity of natural systems, but also on the continuity of entire social systems. Among many others, four main aspects are commonly identified, namely economic sustainability, physical sustainability, social sustainability and cultural sustainability (Bansaal, 2005; Bramwell, 2015).

In addition, the geographical complexity in tourism eliminated the geographically contextual difference in terms of ideology for continuity, human needs for growth and their balanced point. Tourism is an activity based on geographical movements between host regions and source regions worldwide, connecting different countries and regions as a whole (Pomering, Noble, & Johnson, 2011; Weaver, 2006). This means that sustainable tourism resides in the earth-based context to a greater extent than sustainable development (Stumpf et al., 2016). The interaction of local communities and global tourists requires and may in turn facilitate a more worldwide common ideology of continuity and need for tourism growth. Hence, sustainable tourism may be interpreted as a resource-concerned tourism development ethic that considers all stakeholders' needs, such as those of the public sector, voluntary organisations, the media, the tourism industry, host communities and tourists, and that simultaneously concerns environmental continuity to support growth, particularly in the economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects, up to a local-global context (Figure 5).

It is also a concern-oriented concept. The needs of different stakeholders and the specific scopes of different aspects of continuity should be derived from the present global context.

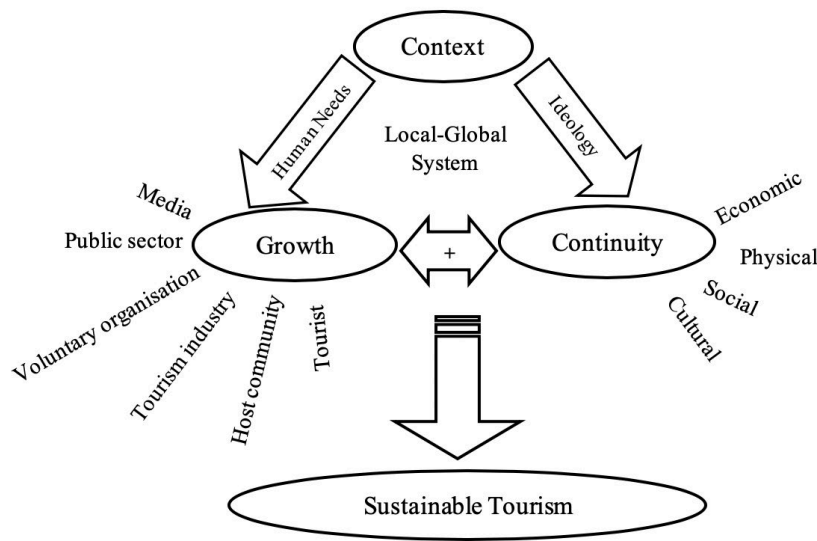


Figure 5 Skeleton of sustainable tourism (Source: authors)

In the present day, needs of stakeholders are presented in Figure 4. As for the different aspects of continuity, UNEP and UNWTO (2005, p. 11) defined physical sustainability as, ‘To make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity’. They also defined economic sustainability as, ‘To ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation’ (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005, p. 11). Social sustainability was defined as the enhancement of the quality of life in communities and the provision of tourism experiences to all visitors (Buckley, 2012). Lastly, cultural sustainability was defined as the maintenance and strengthening of the cultural richness of host communities, including their built and living cultural heritages and traditional values, and the contribution to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance (Gössling, 2016; UNEP & UNWTO, 2005). In short, resource efficiency and ecological integrity, economic viability and equity, social well-being and

cultural integrity are essential for maintaining the continuity of tourism (Benckendorff, Sheldon, & Fesenmaier, 2014).

Discussion

This study makes an attempt to reduce the long-term conceptual vagueness of sustainable tourism through a modernism-based interpretation of the concept based on definition theory. Specifically, it highlights the genus-and-differentia technique and the etymology technique in obtaining a precisising and theoretical definition. On basis of the identified genus, species and specie differences (Table 3), sustainable development is interpreted as a resource-concerned development view that incorporates both growth and continuity ethics in specific contexts (Figure 3). Sustainable tourism is depicted as a resource-concerned tourism development ethic that considers all stakeholders' needs and that simultaneously concerns environmental continuity to support growth up to a local-global context (Figure 5). This modernism-based precisising and theoretical definition identifies growth concern, continuity concern and corresponding context as the main conceptual constructs of sustainable tourism, thereby levelling it up from a specific form of tourism practice to a tourism development ethic that all tourism should concern.

Table 3 Genus and specie differences between the sustainable development and sustainable tourism concepts (Source: authors)
(Insert here)

This conceptual framework at ideological level accommodates and re-positions various usages of this terminology to reduce confusion and contribute to effective communication and knowledge transfer in both academia and practice. As Butler (1999) addressed, the vagueness of sustainable tourism concept is not because of lacking a definition, but too many. Previous definitions varied because they interpreted sustainable tourism as certain forms of tourism or management practices that failed to capture the whole thing. No form of tourism could be free of impacts on environment to be sustainable (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005).

Moreover, usages in marketing never strictly incorporate the ethic, thus being criticized as labels or rhetoric only. The dual deviations resulted in the confusion in terminology uses. According to the precisising and theoretical definition of sustainable tourism proposed in the present study, previous definitions could be clarified as practical attempts of sustainable tourism. For instance, the nature-based tourism should be labelled as a practical attempt for sustainable tourism, rather than sustainable tourism itself. 'Sustainable tourism destination' in marketing should be named as destination in consideration of sustainable tourism ethic, thereby achieving consistent transformation and reducing confusion in communication.

Meanwhile, the theoretical framework implicates the contextual importance in interpreting both sustainable development and sustainable tourism. Both human need for growth and ideology of nature conservation vary on geographical and temporary contexts, thus resulting in gaps in practical guidelines and in implementation of sustainable development across regions and periods. Different countries at different development stages should develop different sustainable development strategies. By contrast, sustainable tourism shows differences owing to its distinct contextual complexities. The geographical complexity of tourism connects host communities and worldwide tourists into a single overall system, which means that sustainable tourism enjoys a more global sphere. Sustainable tourism does not vary over geographical scale but on temporal context only. In any given period, the entire world shares the same mission for tourism growth needs and tourism continuity (Hall & Lew, 1998a). Besides, the systematic complexity of tourism expands the continuity concern from physical environment to multi-dimensions. As Jafari's (1982) concept of background tourism elements indicates, natural resources and socio-cultural and man-made assets are all elements that create a 'tourism-magnetic atmosphere'. In addition, the sectoral complexity of the tourism industry (Bramwell & Lane, 2008) emphasizes the importance of identifying and balancing various needs of different sectors to meet the sustainable tourism ethic.

The meaning of sustainable tourism is grounded in implementation (Sofield, 2003). This theoretical definition implicates subsequent operations. Referring to the conceptual framework, sustainable tourism has three main elements: the human need for tourism growth, the continuity ideology and their present context. Practical guidelines for implementations should be made follow a four-step process: (1) Recognise specific context for practice, here exactly as the global context at current stage. Developing countries should refer to the global vision rather than the specific space in pursuing an earth-based sustainable tourism. (2) Clarify the different tourism needs of each stakeholder within the given context, which calls for stakeholder collaboration to achieve the balance in tourism growth (Blackstock, White, McCrum, Scott, & Hunter, 2008; Hardy & Beeton, 2001). (3) Identify the corresponding social ideology for continuity in the context, where the interdisciplinary work is essential for a comprehensive evaluation of different aspects of continuity (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005). (4) Seek for the current balanced point between growth needs and continuity concerns. As such, the practical deviation and reactionary rhetoric criticism associated with sustainable tourism (Steer & Wade-Gery, 1993) may be avoided in policymaking or practices. Notably, although sustainable tourism is identified as a global ethic, in reality, gaps may exist in the continuity ideology and growth needs among individuals at different areas owing to space specific tourism performance and impacts. Hence, the key for promoting sustainable tourism is to work on individuals' ideology to bridge the gaps.

The definitional discussion and attempt made in this present study still implicate the effectiveness of the definition theory in clarifying concepts. The approach from logic and philosophy, is undervalued in tourism area which is perplexed with abundant ambiguous concepts. The genus-and-differentia technique shows its merits in constructing a modernism-based definition. The etymology technique is also of great importance in tracing the genus and species and specifying the very essence of concepts among various definitions. For

instance, on basis of the semantic and historical evolutions, sustainable development was found to be the convergence of the conservative nature view and the alternative development view, while sustainable tourism was derived from the recognition of tourism impacts. This identification of deviation of tourism from sustainable development view enlightens sustainable tourism as an ideological ethic. It is also the etymological interpretation that reveals the theoretical and practical deviations of various existed definitions and explains the confusion in terminology usages.

Conclusion

Admittedly, it is a great challenge to conduct a conceptual discussion against the overwhelming research on sustainable tourism. This study does not attempt to propose a superior definition of sustainable tourism by reviewing all existing discussions, but rather attempts to clarify it and reduce the confusion in this terminology. By adopting definition theory, it is revealed that previous definitions interpreted sustainable tourism as a specific form of tourism or management practice (Holling, 2001), thus resulting in the theoretical deviation of this concept. With the practical deviation that the industry uses for marketing, the conceptual vagueness and circular debates became more complex. The theoretical and precisising definition based on the etymological and genus-and-differentia techniques improves it from a particular practice to an ethic that aims to bridge the gap between tourism practices and the sustainable development view. Given its genus and specie at an ideological level, sustainable tourism is concern oriented rather than outcome oriented, which means that all practices should contain this ethic. It is not an exact practice or an end point, but a concern in practice. Correspondingly, the previous definitions of sustainable tourism may represent approaches to or particular practices of sustainable tourism. Furthermore, those deviant concepts, such as sustainable tourism plans, sustainable products, sustainable behaviours or

responsible behaviours, may be clarified and understood in a more practical way underpinning the theoretical framework.

Some arguments in the present study seems to be arbitrary due to selective review of relevant issues. Not every previous definition was listed and discussed since this study adopts an etymological approach in tracing the genus and species of concepts. Future research to conclude the genus and species from a full-scope of definitions may contribute to interpretation of the concept from another angle. Meanwhile, the conceptual framework implicates future research directions in this area. The first is to explore the explicit growth needs of stakeholders in the current stage, in which consumption and provision are widely affected by technological change (e.g., high-speed rail) and cultural change (e.g., lifestyles) (Giddens, 2009; Williams, 2013). The second is to develop a well-rounded continuity indicator system based on the global scale regarding the entire tourism system. The last refers to the importance of investigating individuals' values in needs and continuity, as social ideology is socially constructed by individual values (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010).

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Table 1 Definitions of sustainable tourism (Updated from Butler, 1999)

<p>‘Sustainable tourism is tourism and associated infrastructures that: both now and in the future operate within natural capacities for the regeneration and future productivity of natural resources; recognize the contribution that people and communities, customs and lifestyles, make to the tourism experience; accept that these people must have an equitable share in the economic benefits of local people and communities in the host areas.’ (Eber, 1992, p. 3, quoted in Butler, 1999)</p>
<p>‘Sustainable tourism is tourism which meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future’. (World Tourism Organization, 1993, p. 7)</p>
<p>Sustainable tourism is ‘tourism which is in a form which can maintain its viability in an area for an indefinite period of time’. (Butler, 1993, p. 26)</p>
<p>Sustainable tourism ‘is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems’. (Liu, 2003, p. 460)</p>
<p>Sustainable tourism is ‘tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities’. (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005, pp. 11-12)</p>
<p>With a world full of uncertainties, sustainable tourism should be managed to enhance its resilience to disturbance rather than focus on achieving stability. It is a form of adaptive management. (Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2005)</p>

Table 2 Definition techniques

Definition technique	Explanation	Applicability	Deficiency
Ostensive	To define a term by pointing at the object(s) it connotes	Communication between different languages	Requires an object at which to point to be available
Enumerative	To define a term by naming its members individually as completely as possible	Terms denote classes that can be completely enumerated	Inappropriate for terms that denote classes with uncountable members or a majority of members without names
Subclass	To define a term by listing the subclasses it denotes	Terms denote classes that have fewer subclasses	Difficult to have complete lists of subclasses for some classes
Synonymous	To define a term by providing a synonym of the definiendum	Terms with a single word that has the same intensional meaning	Many words have subtle meanings that are not connoted by any other single word
Etymological	To define a term by disclosing its ancestry	Terms with different interpretations or many derived words in its own language or other languages	Difficult to trace the entire history and figure out the root meanings and changes over time
Operational	To define a term by prescribing an operation to be performed that demonstrates the intension of the word	Tying down relatively abstract concepts to the solid ground of empirical reality	Conveys only part of the intensional meaning of a term; some terms consist exclusively of operations
Genus-and-differentia	To define a term by identifying a genus term and one or more different words that when combined convey the meaning of the term being defined	Easy to construct and most effective for producing all five kinds of definitions	A relatively larger class as the 'genus' and a relatively smaller class as the 'specie' should be identified concisely

Concluded based on Copi et al. (2011), Hurley (2000) and Morris and Ernest (1934).

Table 3 Genus and specie differences between the sustainable development and sustainable tourism concepts (Source: authors)

	Sustainable development	Sustainable tourism
Genus	A nature view or a development view	A resource-concerned development view
Specie	A resource-concerned development view	A resource-concerned tourism ethic
Specie difference	Incorporates both growth and continuity ethics regarding the specific context	Concerns the needs of all stakeholders', such as the public sector, voluntary organisations, the media, the tourism industry, host communities and tourists, and simultaneously maintains the continuity of the environment to support growth, especially the economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects, in a local-global context
Example of contextual meaning	Growth in the 1990s referred less to materialism and more to equitable growth for the alleviation of poverty in developed countries, whereas China prioritised economic growth in eastern coastal areas (Xu, Ding, & Packer, 2008).	Currently, tourists' need for growth may involve better tourism experiences and improved quality of life. Continuity includes resource efficiency and ecological integrity, economic viability and equity, social well-being and cultural integrity (Gössling et al., 2009).