

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS A HUMAN PRINCIPLE - A SOCIAL MODEL IN TOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

*Sustainable development is a reality of our society, given the urgent need to use resources efficiently turning to their ability of alternative benefits. Whether it is a profitable activity or a personal action plan, man is faced with the situation of choosing just for him and for society.*

*The purpose of this paper is to present a social model based on the proposal of human principles as foundation for society and for sustainable development applicable in tourism. Using as a research tool the questionnaire, the study reveals how these human values contribute to the society and tourism sustainable development.*

### Keywords

Sustainable development, human development, sustainable tourism, social model in tourism.

### JEL Classification

O15, Q01, Z32.

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### Introduction

Sustainable development has seen an increased interest, the society realizing that our actions have direct effects on the environment we live in and where we carry out our work. In order to penetrate the meaning of sustainable development we need an insight on man as an individual but also on the organizations that make up human society from the perspective of human morality, sense of ethics, accountability, elements underlying human decisions and initiatives. Sustainable development has been the intrinsic value of the individual before the progress of science, technology, and general human emancipation that conquered nature and transformed it according to his needs. This value was gradually transferred to latency, the man being distracted by the growing power of building an anthropic environment adapted more and more to his lifestyle, which, in time, has separated him from the contact with nature and sense of protection was forgotten. Addressing this issue without making contact with human evolution is an incomplete attempt to analyze this aspect, being ignored that causes that led to the current situation. The literature provides many explanations and definitions on the concept of sustainable development, one of them explains that it is composed of three paradigms, and shows the conceptual stages completed in time up to this date (Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995):

- **Tehnocentric paradigm** is dominated by material achievements and addresses the economic development side, fragmenting social and environmental dimensions. It presents risks that threaten the whole human community, by the lack of ethics and crisis situations
- **Ecocentric paradigm** – is found in the idea of harmony with nature, the biosphere is more important than human factor, it does not stimulate man's cognitive and intellectual ability, but offers no realistic, practical solutions and does not really integrate culture and nature
- **Sustaincentric paradigm** – is the one that balances the two paradigms, complies with the economy, ecology and ethics triad (3E) and recognizes the importance of both values – instrumental and intrinsic.

The third paradigm is proposed by Gladwin et. al. as being the one touching the real principles of sustainable development.

A recent complement of concept understanding is shown by (Gheorghe, G et. al., 2013). A sustainable approach puts emphasis on the ethical and social aspects, the economical and the human activities that

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in the long term respect and protect the environment. The definition that comprises the essence of sustainable development is provided by the Brundtland Report, which states that the sustainable development is the development meeting the present needs without compromising the possibility of future generations to achieve their own requirements. (Notre avenir à tous -Our common future- within the United Nations, 1987). This report comprises two contradictory dimensions, on the one hand the essential needs of society, on the other hand limiting the environmental capacity to meet these needs both now and in the future, being proposed values for rational consumption patterns. The natural factor is the basis of sustainable development, being the one who declines due to excessive consumption and exploitation. Sustainable development is seeking to find an optimal interaction of four systems-economic, human, environmental and technological (Stanciulescu, G. C. & Bulin, D., 2012).

However it is noted that ecological sustainability takes in its center of attention human needs (health, education, social welfare) departing from the original idea of the concept. (Susan Baker et. al., 2002). On the other hand it is vital to see things this angle, focusing on the individual, through his repositioning towards these realities and relocation of his thinking and acting, O'Riordan claims in 1985 (quoted in Susan Baker et. al., 2002) that sustainable development seen as a catalyst to genuinely creative thinking and practice is important.

Human needs are, therefore, those related to development, which are founded on certain external needs, with impact in increasing human capital such as health, education and nutrition. It is useful to distinguish between general education and one that provides a real boost to society to raise its awareness level on the problems faced. The quality of education and health has brought the same results in time: increased demand and opportunities to benefit from them now or in the future in order to increase productivity and income. But these aspects do not guarantee the discovery of the moral sense nor awaken human consciousness, so, there is brought into question the relevance of a set of qualities such as health, knowledge, dignity, sense of justice, which underpin the forming of the living standard. There is noted that health is the only external factor present, its value being proved by the fact that poverty of the third world states or of the countries with development in progress affects the physical, mental and even spiritual health of people, which propagates on the lack of inclination to higher goals of existence, to values that include fairness and kindness, with predominant concern for their own welfare. (Anand, S. & Sen, A., 2000).

The above are complemented by the idea that reason is conquered by passion (Anand, S. & Sen, A., 2000) passion includes multiple meanings, among which the pleasure of eating, and given the current trend in the economy is a strong dimension that is worth analyzed, but passion, in the original meaning of human quality, is not related to them, but is connected to the discovery of the ultimate goal of human existence, a meaning of life being discussed less. Opulence is not the last destination of society's activities (Aristotle) and human choices do not resume just to consumption, environmental control should only be lack of control by limiting human influence and intervention on it. Man is free when nature is freed from the negative consequences of human life on it. Today, this idea cannot be implemented because the environmental degradation status does not allow a return to the initial relationship between man and nature (Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995). It is interesting that there are, among others, two separate concepts for development (sustainable development and human development), which are actually a whole; they complement each other and cannot operate independently. Real sustainable development is done only by using real human development representing its cause and motive. Is even worth carefully considering the term development that can easily distort perception of what is happening in reality and on individual behavior, making an apparent and superficial understanding of things. Development presented in this paper refers to human condition as degree of human development that balances the fragile structures, such as the environment, through conscious, responsible action having as a starting point a strong and clear inner motivation.

It brought to light another definition of sustainable development sustainable development has variously conceived in terms of vision expression (Lee, 1993, quoted in Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995), moral development (Rolston, 1994, quoted in Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995), social reorganization (Sore, 1992 quoted in Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995) transformational process (Viederman, 1994 quoted in Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995). The structures in which there are people and organizations and social groups that form a social entity endowed with certain characteristics, thus a sustainable society is one that can persist over

generations, one that is far seeing enough, flexible enough and wise enough not to undermine either its physical or its social systems of support (Meadows, Meadows & Randers, 1992 quoted in Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995). Also, in literature, there is a pattern of conduct, leave the world better than you found it, take no more than you need, try not to harm life or the environment, and make amends if you do (Howken, 1993, quoted in Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995). Moreover, sustainability is a factor which facilitates the development of culture (Constanza, Daly & Bartholomew, 1991 quoted in Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995). The center of these definitions is again the man with his concerns and necessities that are correlated with the environmental aspect. The need for culture can be considered a vital factor in human development, he needs to build and discover the landmarks based on which he will guide his existence. But in this case cultural values are covered by pseudo-values; therefore, their awareness is a challenge of modern society. Modernization of social values is also supported by Wilber, 1995 (quoted in Gladwin, T. N., Kennelly, J. J. & Krause, T. S., 1995), who finds its causation by separating the mind and body, subject and object, culture and nature, thought and things, values and facts, spirit and matter. This imbalance was created gradually, so that at any time of analysis or introspection, it seems a human element of normality and society being fully integrated into the system of principles, manifested as an automatism. Thus, the analytical ability and of challenging choices each time lead to knowledge of reality and thus of the correct values. This idea is present in Descartes' conception (Discourse on the Method, 1637, quoted in Stanculescu, G. C., Diaconescu G. N., 2014): "Dubito, ergo cogito, Cogito ergo sum". Doubting everything and all, Descartes notices the fact that he, the one who thinks that he doubts, insists on the intuitive and deductive character of knowledge.

Visionaries of an ideal and possible reality support the idea of a society of consciousness, (Mihai Drăgănescu, 2007 cited by Stanculescu, Diaconescu, 2014) explains: The society of awareness will be a spiritual society. It does not mean that it will be a purely meditative society, but a society where spirituality prevails, being at the same time an active society from the informational, scientific, technological, industrial, agricultural and sustainable point of views and with a protected environment. In terms of tourism, which can be defined as the art of providing to a foreigner the feeling to feel welcomed in a destination outside the area where he lives, sustainability is a sine qua non condition for such activities which use even natural resources, them forming the foundation that supports tourism and elements that best sensitize the man in his touring experience, more than any other field of activity, tourism is dependent on the environment, the latter representing its "raw material", the object and area of activity and manifestation of tourism, its framework and the bearer of its resources (Linca, A. C., Stanculescu, G. C. J. & Bulin, D., 2013)

Tourism has a unique opportunity in the branches of the economy to be the link between economic development, on one hand and social, environmental and cultural development, even by the definition of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism can be an activity that combines easily all these components of sustainable development, economic interests meeting welfare and environmental quality with which the tourist comes in contact, which he is looking for and which offer some of his income.

### **Tourist and local community both parts of humanity in sustainable tourism**

The tourist is a person that, on its turn, is part of a local community, and reciprocally, the local community can be represented by tourists leaving the country or city where they live to travel. It therefore outlines an entity that actually is only one, man who wants to know other geographical locations, other landscapes, other cultures and human traditions, having as impulse the desire to enrich his life experience and to open horizons. A fact well known to researchers in the field is that the travel experience is volatile and subjective dimension, depending to a large extent of the tourist profile and characteristics of the destination as a whole. Who is the tourist? A man who travels before understanding life and discover himself, he is the one that has received little travel experience; the more an individual is more responsive and better suited to certain qualities or principles of life the more he seeks to make connections between what he is and the outside, and therefore he will respect the specific values of community being against his nature or intervening in a sacred structure by uniqueness, beauty and novelty that he is offered. Thus, we can say that sustainable tourism corresponds to the value of human development which is, essentially, sustainable and it represents a first condition for sustainable tourism. This type of tourist is one who prefers some offers in exotic destinations that do not require a high luxury, but gives the connection with the environment; the local population is a direct contact with

history. In other words, he is seeking authenticity, active experience and direct contact with the environment he reaches, being open to learn and to be taught what it means to be an inhabitant of that respective destination. Openness to learning is an important quality of the tourist; the flexibility with which he lives the experience helps him to provide, on his turn, information about culture, achieving a fair exchange between different people with characters and distinct principles but who meet the humanly primordial human relationship with the Environment.

Less favorable aspects in this relationship are played by globalization; the local interests but also the global trend to exploit both tourists and those who receive large gains; legislation which often follows natural environment, but also provides a difficult living to local communities that are forced to break the law and thus harm the environment to survive; and other. In order to restore the balance between community and tourism sphere, solutions are proposed to encourage the local community to develop through traditional methods designed by locals, by listening to what they want and how they want to live the residents. Conflicts come from the fact that tourism is an opportunity for foreign investors lacking a sense of destination reality and what it represents, they come to alter the natural habitat and thus destroy the people living in that area.

There are some phenomena that mark the life of local communities (Seyfang, G. & Smith, A., 2007):

- **detraditionalisation** – process of modernity and Western influences
- **community and locality** –community established in ex China Town locality
- **neotribalism** – resistance to concentrate and not dilute the cultural identity, leading to the development of tourism
- **awareness** of the link between local and global environment – local communities preserve their own environment but also make alliances to preserve the global environment

The theme is open to research; human side is always a controversy for several professional areas (teachers, psychologists, entrepreneurs) but also for scientists. We can conclude that we need to understand more about the social and cultural influences which shape our consumption choices habits and impacts (Seyfang, G. & Smith, A., 2007).

### **Research Methodology**

Sustainable development is and will be an act of humanity and intelligence for present and future activities in which it is present.

Human development is needed to achieve truly sustainable activities, so that it becomes more a matter of morality and inner value than one that involves material benefits.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the individual in terms of knowledge of implications and connections between social, economic events as effects of visions and ways of human application and the concepts and principles about what should be the reality in terms of human and sustainable development. It also aims, among respondents, the degree of awareness of the link between the level of human development and sustainable development based on the answers given.

Objectives:

- The level of population awareness regarding the big issues the society is facing today;
- Gravity given to the existing negative events in terms of sustainable development;
- Determination of the highest personal goals to the highest ones to which they relate or that support;
- Awareness degree regarding the implications of globalization;
- The degree of people's insight on the great existential questions;
- Discovery of personal vision of desired reality;
- The perception of oneself on awareness.

Assumptions:

- Over 50% of respondents consider themselves aware at high-level about the self-link and external events;
- More than 60% do not confer importance to the aspect of human evolution as a premise and researched solution to the problem;
- About 70% do not think that understanding of the causes of the social, political and economic situations at global level are of importance;

- Over 70% think that globalization is not mostly associated with the exploitation of the resources in the economically underdeveloped countries and with alteration of cultural values;
- Over 30% believe that the physical, mental and spiritual balance of the society currently is disturbed;
- More than 50% believe that the media, education and consumer trend economic growth need are not obstacles to the evolution of society;
- An estimated 60% believe that education and enlightenment contribute to the formation of values among young people;
- Less than 50% believe that in business, the discovery of vocation, education of population preferences, and involvement in CSR projects are important;
- Less than 50% believe that in terms of tourism, emotional and spiritual work experience and balance achieved by reconnecting with the natural environment can contribute to human development.

Variables:

- Location
  - Conceptual definition: The city or town where the subject resides
  - Operational definition: classification on rural or urban areas
- Income
  - conceptual definition: individual net salary
  - operational definition: the salary may be included in the ranges: under 800 ron, between 800-2000, between 2000 - 4000 ron or 4000 ron
- Considerations on the connection between the tourist experience and human development:
  - conceptual definition: perceptions of individuals about how tourism can affect human development
  - operational definition: expression of opinion by considering the reality on how tourism currently affects human development
- Opinion on the relationship between business and human development
  - conceptual definition: subjects concept of the ideal or desired reality
  - operational definition: subjects' subjective opinion using personal experience
- Opinion on the connection between introspection, self-awareness, personal decisions and human development
  - conceptual definition: opinion on the way the subject developed or how it should be developed by him and others
  - operational definition: choosing the answer depending on today's reality
- Considerations on how education, culture, media shape the behavior of young people, and not only based on the choices he makes consciously or not.
  - conceptual definition: conception about desired reality on the 3 elements involved in the formation of the individual
  - operational definition: opinion expressed having as base current situation.

The community studied is represented by the resident population in the city of Pitesti, Bascov village, making a research in urban and rural areas. The observation unit is the individual and the research unit is established as the person over 18 years old, regardless of gender or socio-professional category. Collecting of information will be done by survey method. The technique used will be that of the structured interview, all subjects being given the same questionnaire. The questionnaire will be filled-in standing in front of the interviewee. Thus can be seen best person's reaction and can be discovered most of information. The geographical area of the research is the city of Pitesti and Bascov town and the investigation will be done in two educational institutions in companies and NGOs. The sample size is 1178 persons; for lack of funds and time, the research will have an exploratory character, questionnaires being applied to 60 people. Chosen sampling method is sampling in steps – because we do not have a list of people aged over 18 in the region chosen for research, otherwise it would have been done a systematic random sampling.

## Results and Discussion

Field-research results:

- Over 50% of respondents consider themselves aware of the link between themselves and external events
- More than 60% do not confer importance to the aspect of human evolution as a premise and solution to the problem investigated.
- About 70% do not think that understanding the causes of the social, political and economic situations at global level is of importance
- Over 30% believe that the physical, mental and spiritual balance of the society currently is disturbed;
- More than 50% believe that the media, education and consumer trend economic growth need are not obstacles to the evolution of society;
- Less than 50% believe that in business, the discovery of vocation, education of population preferences, and involvement in CSR projects are important.

The research results revealed that the interviewees do not consider that the answer to sustainable development issues is in the actions of each individual, which is revealed by the contradiction of first two results: 50% consider themselves self and of external events aware, but 60% do not think that human evolution is important as a solution to the present problems. Moreover, this proves the lack of introspection and self-criticism on the moral perspective about choices, a claim which leads easily to the idea that individuals who have a very good impression about them and what they do, will not evolve from currently human stage in any field we report. If we analyze the first result with the third - ~ 70% do not think that understanding the causes of the social, political and economic situations at global level is of importance – we notice that it supports the previous notion which is reinforced by not being aware of the causes that leads to social, political and economic reality; understanding these is very important in the formation of a man who is acting right and moral in his field. However, more than 30% believe that physical, mental and spiritual balance of the society is currently disturbed, which is proving that there is a society problem that must be solved. But more than 50% believe that the media, education and consumer trend economic growth are not obstacles to the evolution of society, which reveals a lack of information selection, of what is moral and beneficial for human evolution in all existing systems. All these interpretations is demonstrated by the fact that less than 50% believe that in business, the discovery of vocation, education of population preferences, and involvement in CSR projects are important; vocation, consumer education and CSR actions are pillars which are the base for an individual professional development in the economic field and beyond.

### Social Model in Tourism

*In designing the model of sustainable development in terms of human development we focused on describing the natural unfolding stages of development characterized in mirror, named Spiritual Intelligence (Human Development) and Sustainable Development, starting always from within, from the nature of the individual where there is real motivation to change himself and consequently his environment as a result of this change (Stanciulescu, G. C., & Diaconescu G. N., 2014).*

The five levels show the spiritual evolution of man in parallel with that of the society by creating a set of attributes that determine specific relevant actions (Table no. 1, Appendix 1– Left Hemisphere Qualities and Right Hemisphere Actions).

The dynamic process of human development begins at the base or with the step called Incipient Awareness, it continues upward to the point named Spiritual Intelligence descending from Sustainable Development to the base, this time represented by the Basic Education; throughout the rotations the horizontal level correspondence being kept. Looking at the first level, we conclude that it refers to the need to take care of one's physical and mental health, to achieve a satisfactory level of quality of life by knowing the connections between systems and understanding the inside nature – the ego and the exterior nature – natural environment. All this forms are the basics for a person to be actively involved in the society in the sustainable development field. Levels 2 and 3 refers to the creative processes that have their predominant source in inspiration and intuition, balanced mental and emotional development to

build ideas, concepts, products, fair professional relationships, and legal and institutional framework for action. Level 4 is the greater detachment from material success of a project or business.

Level 5 is the provision of professional support by performing consulting services, but also personally, it makes the transition from ego dominated only by personal welfare to the integration of the altruism and winning a strong spiritually and professionally posture, as following the steps taken.

### Conclusions






The research results clearly bring to light the individual unconscious need to know himself, to ask himself and to understand the reality that surrounds him. Education, media, lack of role models or of people to train individuals, to inspire with their vision and their results had the effect of society disorientation in morality and equity recognition and of the inability to select values according to these criteria. The fact that over 50% of those surveyed are convinced that they have self and exterior awareness, although the study showed the opposite, emphasizes the idea that when society does not realize and identify its problems, they will not be solved, this being the first step. The importance of this study is essential to educate people who will receive the research results; to formulate appropriate solutions to the existing problem, to inspire to more research in this field, because human evolution underlies sustainable development and it is good to start to restore the balance to the cause of things.

According to Stanculescu, G. C. & Diaconescu G. N. (2014) *both aspects of the development completed each other and I believe that human development is the only one that can provide a real and authentic model of a sustainable society. Society needs to change from within, from each individual in order to achieve sustainable development. All five stages of development are personal, professional and at the global society level, and culminates with a raise of human consciousness through ancient wisdom recall, and this will naturally lead to positive effects on sustainable development of each economic sector, especially in tourism where natural environment is needed and the better understand of the mechanisms of life.*

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**Appendix 1. Left Hemisphere Qualities and Right Hemisphere Actions****Table 1 The sustainable development seen as human development**

<b>Left Hemisphere Qualities (Human Development)</b>	<b>Levels</b>	<b>Right Hemisphere Actions (Sustainable Development)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner strength</li> <li>• Synchronicity in action The commitment to contribute to the spiritual development of the individual and society</li> <li>• Altruism</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 5</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application of the concept of lifelong self learning and enlightenment</li> <li>• Initiating groups/associations for quality and sustainable development of society</li> <li>• Restoration and constant remodeling of economic models for sustainable progress</li> </ul>
<p>Attitude guided by love for nature, beauty and truth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of what is authentic and valuable</li> <li>• Knowledge of latent potential and creating opportunities for its manifestation</li> <li>• High level of global awareness</li> <li>• Personal example of good practice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 4</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping a culture of good offered, of moral support and information for society</li> <li>• Leadership and influence of the masses</li> <li>• Dynamism and responsibility by demonstrating a proactive approach</li> <li>• Emotional motivation the same with rational motivation, both being at the base of business development</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity, initiative, innovation</li> <li>• Empathy, open minded</li> <li>• Divergent thinking</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 3</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Products and services that meet the needs of sustainable development</li> <li>• Attracting investors</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive intrinsic motivation</li> <li>• Emotional refinement</li> <li>• Strong will guided by personal values</li> <li>• Intuitive understanding of the essence of things</li> <li>• Inspired and productive creativity</li> <li>• Mental clarity</li> <li>• Individual awareness spread in society</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 2</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation with institutions or persons who believe in the same values</li> <li>• Creating professional and personal alliances to support the chosen purpose</li> <li>• Development of hierarchical structures based on knowledge, innovation, competence and morality</li> <li>• Investing in human capital through training</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding human biological and mental need</li> <li>• Keeping optimal levels of physical and mental health</li> <li>• Awareness of man's place in the global environment as part of nature</li> <li>• Balancing the ego</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 1</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying and processing ideas according to sustainable development principles</li> <li>• Discovery of the vocation and mission</li> <li>• Establishment of the industry in which they will be applied</li> </ul>

Source: Gabriela Cecilia Stanciulescu & Gabriela Nicoleta Diaconescu, „Sustainable Development Seen as Human Evolution, A Modern Approach with Discussion in Tourism”, 2014, *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, p. 579-580.