

# A LITERATURE REVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM (1990-2016): DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORY AND FRAMEWORK

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## Abstract

**Purpose of the study:** Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world. Just like an enterprise today, sustainability is the long-term objective pursued by tourism industry. However, little effort has been made to systematically provide sufficient information to academicians and practitioners who have great research interests in sustainable tourism. Therefore, this paper aims to figure out the knowledge mapping of sustainable tourism and to indicate its research hot spots and trends for future research.

**Methodology:** This paper surveys the development trajectory of sustainable tourism using a literature review and classification of articles retrieved from 5 online databases with solo keyword “*sustainable tourism*” from 1900 to 2016.

**Main findings:** Based on the scope of 641 articles, this study reveals that the number of publication on sustainable tourism has significantly increased since 2006. In addition, these articles are scattered across 125 journals and mostly published in 23 academic journals. The majority of targeted countries/regions for sustainable tourism focus on Asia, Europe and America.

**Limitation:** Restricted to limited knowledge, we make a brief literature survey on sustainable tourism from 1990-2016 to explore how sustainable tourism and its applications have developed in this period.

**Originality/value:** In fact, sustainable tourism is a belief and an overall concept in every tourism activities. Though this research has done lots, it still has rooms to make more complete. Finally, we present a conceptual framework integrating 13 classifications criteria derived from our analysis with 3247 keywords. Most interestingly, we further present a conceptual framework with visual effect to operationalize the coverage of sustainable tourism. Based on our analysis, any researcher can easily find the popular and right journal to get into it, if he/she is in need, he/she also can roughly know its applications so far and completely get a whole picture of sustainable tourism quickly.

**Keywords:** *sustainable tourism; literature review; application; classification; development trajectory*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world (Neto, 2003). Tourism activities can refer to an extension of a brand–consumer relationship. While growth in many industries is flat, worldwide tourism revenues continue to grow (Chang & Katrichis, 2016). Contrast to the tangible product, tourism is referring to an intangible one and is more characterizing experience/trust attributes. Tourism is essentially a social phenomenon defined by the consequence of the movement of people to and their temporary stay at a place away from their normal residence (Sharpley, 2014). To some degrees, tourism can be seen as a relationship among environment, brand and consumer. That is a tourism activity in the real world must cope with the potential/actual impacts from the environment and visitors. Undoubtedly, a tourism activity, just like a business today, also runs for its ultimate objective- *sustainability*. However, an excellent tourism performance should not be merely attributed to the non-monetary benefits (e.g., *visitors' repurchase behavior/intention*) or the momentary befits (e.g., *profitability/return of investment*) without concerning with environmental/socio-cultural impacts surrounding (e.g., Neto, 2003; Stange, Brown, Hilbruner, & Hawkins, 2011). Therefore, the term “*sustainable tourism*” seems better viewed as a universal value rather than a research interest as it could be applied to any other tourism research interests (Chang & Katrichis, 2016). Accompanied with the

popularization of sustainability in recent decades, the mass interactions among tourism, environment and travelers/visitors have attracted attentions of researchers and practitioners. However, little effort has been made to systematically examine the vast sustainable tourism-related literature to broaden better understandings.

Literature reviews are an essential part of all kinds of research (Seuring, Müller, Westhaus, & Morana, 2005). Literature review is a systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars, and practitioners (Fink, 2009). As noted by Boote and Beile (2005), "A thorough, sophisticated literature review is the foundation and inspiration for substantial, useful research. In general, a research comprises problem, theory, and methods/tools and these three are usually captured by the keywords assigned to an article. To seek to better understand the issues associated with a topic of research (Burgess, Singh, & Koroglu, 2006) and to provide direction for future studies that can address existing knowledge gaps. Since the aim of doing a literature review is to find out what is already known about a specific topic (Jesson & Lacey, 2006), therefore, the literature review will not be effective if the literature gathered by the researcher is of low quality, incomplete or irrelevant.

Accompanied with the popularization of sustainability in recent decades, the mass interactions among tourism, environment and travelers/visitors have attracted many attentions of researchers and practitioners. There are numerous definitions of sustainable tourism. For example, sustainable tourism can be defined as "*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*" (UNWTO<sup>1</sup>). Some scholars (e.g., Hunter, 2002:5; Swarbroke, 1999:18) believe that "*the development of tourism must provide economic benefits to all partners (stakeholders), provided they do not adversely affect resources available for future generations*". Liu (2003:461) defined sustainable tourism as "*all forms of tourism (conventional or alternative) that are compatible with and contribute to sustainable development*". However, little effort has been made to systematically examine the vast sustainable tourism-related literature to broaden better understandings. For example, a study of Bâc (2004) using an in-depth literature review on a short history of sustainable tourism further revealed 5 critical viewpoints to the emergence of sustainable tourism. Zolfani, Sedaghat, Maknoon and Zavadskas (2015) aimed to explore the progress of research on sustainable tourism from 1993 to 2013 and obtained 132 scholarly papers from 47 journals categorized into 14 application areas.

The main difference between the old and the new form of tourism is moving the focus from the wellbeing of the tourist to the wellbeing of the host community (Weaver, 1998:31). As a matter of fact, sustainable tourism has emerged in response to the negative impacts that are more visible. So, sustainable tourism has emerged as a reactive concept, which seeks to eliminate the negative impacts (Bâc, 2004) while some authors (e.g., Fennel, 2007; Mason, 2003; Saarinen, 2007a) have identified these negative impacts as *economic, social and environmental*. In contrast to the past studies, our paper is one of generalized research with the development of an integrated framework. In this regard, we adopted a literature review with a variety of keyword indexes to select articles, thereby developing an integrated framework to understand the development trajectory of sustainable tourism. Most importantly, this paper is to create a sort of strategic blueprint for the researchers/practitioners in both industry and academia to be able to identify not only the major streams of research, but also the layout of the tributaries. The article ends with some suggestions and conclusions.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To identify a comprehensive list of articles for inclusion in our survey, we utilized a simple keyword search of available online journal databases. Five online journal databases (i.e., *Science Direct*, *Emerald*, *Wiley*, *SAGE* and *Taylor & Francis*) were searched with the major keyword phrase, "*sustainable tourism*" on Sep. 30, 2016 to provide an extensive bibliography of the

<sup>1</sup> <http://sdt.unwto.org/en/content/about-us-5>

academic literature in English on sustainable tourism. According to the selection criteria<sup>2</sup> which eliminate those articles not actually related to sustainable tourism, this study would start with 641 articles in the following analytical processes.

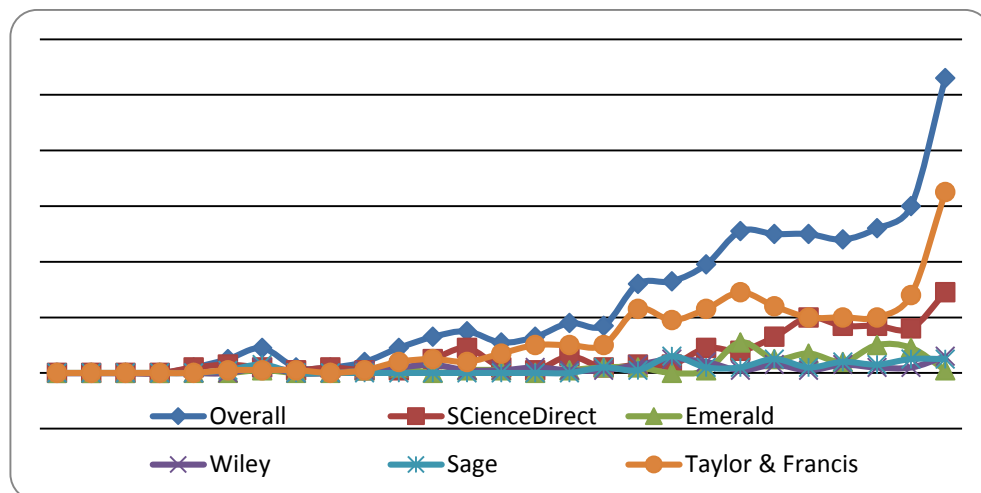
**Table 1. The publication of sustainable tourism in six phases (by database)**

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV	Phase V	Phase VI
	1990~1995	1996~2000	2001~2005	2006~2010	2011~2015	2016+
Overall	7	26	70	172	260	106
Science Direct	5	7	23	25	83	29
Emerald	0	4	3	16	35	1
Wiley	0	5	8	14	11	6
Sage	1	3	0	13	19	5
Taylor & Francis	1	7	36	104	112	65

### 3. CLASSIFICATIONS AND ANALYSES

#### 3.1 Research trend of sustainable tourism

Prior to 1996, there were only 7 articles (1.1% of the total), with the total publications of the next five years (1996–2000) accounting for 26 articles (4.1% of the total). In the phase III(2001–2005), 10.9% of the total were published. The next decade (phase IV - V ) accounted for 432 articles (67.4% of the total) which were 6 times of those in phase III. In other words, there has been a steady growth in sustainable tourism since 2006 (see Figure 1). Most interestingly, the number of articles in recent one or two years was almost reaching 40% of that appeared in phase V(2011–2015). It seems that a boom of sustainable tourism research is next five years is expected. In addition, most of sustainable tourism articles were coming from Taylor & Francis and Science Direct (497 articles, 77.53% of the total). The publication trait of the former is more consistent with the overall trend of sustainable tourism while the publication trait of the last is only close to the trend in 1995–2005 and the recent two years (2015–2016).



**Figure 1: The distribution of sustainable tourism articles by years**

<sup>2</sup> Only those articles that had been published in tourism, travel and hospitality journals were selected. Next, conference papers, masters and doctoral dissertation, textbooks and unpublished working papers were also excluded, since academics and practitioners alike most often use journals to acquire information and disseminate new findings. Finally, those articles with no significant keywords were neglected.

### 3.2 Publication outlets

The selected 641 articles in this study were scattered across 125 various academic journals. The amount of the top 20 journals<sup>3</sup> has already come up to 74.1% of the total. 4 of them (170 articles, 35.8% of the total) could be identified as the journal belonging to the fields of sustainability/ecology, including Journal of Ecotourism, Journal of Sustainable Tourism, International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology and Sustainable Development. 16 journals (259 articles, 54.5%) could be clearly attributed to the journals of tourism, travel and hospitality, such as Annals of Tourism Research, Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, Current Issues in Tourism, International Journal of Tourism Research, Journal of Travel Research, Tourism Recreation Research, Tourism and Hospitality Research, International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration, Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, Worldwide Hospitality & Tourism Themes, Tourism Geographies, Journal of Heritage Tourism, Tourism Management, Tourism Management Perspectives, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management and Journal of Environmental Management. The remaining journals, while being tourism specific, could not be classified merely by their title and accounted for 46 articles (9.68% of the total), for examples, Anatolia, Journal of Cleaner Production and Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences. From the analytical results mentioned above, we found that researchers and practitioners who were highly interested in the field of sustainable tourism could directly search for those journals titled in “tourism”, “travel” and “hospitality”. Meanwhile, we also found that 10 of these 23 journals could be tracked by the social science citation index (SSCI). Therefore, it seems that researchers should not emphasize SSCI/SCI at the expense of other non-SSCI/SCI journals as it would likely narrow the scope of their research and increase the risk of missing articles.

### 3.3 Comprehensive analysis with keyword index

In this paper, we collected 3247 keywords from 641 articles of sustainable tourism. It meant that an article related to sustainable tourism often carried with 5.06 keywords. This is consistent with the keyword required in most of academic journal. Basically, a research comprises 3 aspects, that is problem, theory, and methods/tools while the keywords of a research article usually include these three aspects (Liao & Wen, 2007). Therefore, the keyword-index search can be seen as an approach to reference literature from an online digital database to help researchers establish the research framework. In this regard, many studies among extant literature have adopted keywords as a literature review method, for example, Croom, Romano and Giannakis (2000), Liao (2003, 2005), Liao and Wen (2007), Hong, Suh and Kim (2009), LaPlaca and Katrichis (2009), Adolphs and Winkelmann (2010), Liao, Chang, Wu and Katrichis (2011), Chang (2013), Shirzad and Bell (2013), Chang and Chung (2015) and Chang and Katrichis (2016).

#### 3.3.1 Keyword involving sustainable tourism and problem domains

From the scope of 3,247 keywords in this study, we obtained 7 problem domains related to sustainable tourism thoroughly the research periods, including environmental management, tourism management, destination management, community management, resource management, tourist/visitor management and supply chain management. In this regard, there are some interesting clues as follows:

**Environmental management** – Among the present economic sectors, tourism is considered the one least prepared for the risks and opportunities posed by climate change (Scott, 2011). Undoubtedly, climate changes can have direct impacts on tourism (e.g. Bank & Wiesner, 2011; Dawson & Scott, 2013). The characteristics of tourism such as seasonality and land scarcity, set interesting challenges to public-private partnerships related to municipal solid waste management system (Arbulú, Lozano, & Rey-Maqueira, 2016). Contrast to the traditional macro environment, the perception of tourism stakeholders is also a key factor

<sup>3</sup> The top 20 journals are composed of 23 academic journals. For example, Annals of Tourism Research, Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, Current Issues in Tourism, Tourism Management, International Journal of Tourism Research, Journal of Travel Research, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality & Tourism, Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Tourism Geographies, Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism

to the implementation of environmental management practices (Sánchez-Medina, Díaz-Pichardo, & Cruz-Bautista, 2016). The specific characteristics of tourism such as seasonality and land scarcity would set interesting challenges to public-private partnerships related to municipal solid waste management (MSWM) system. To ensure the sustainable management of ecology and environment, many tourist destinations now are paying more attention to the control of carry capacity (e.g. Christofakis, Mergos, & Papadaskalopoulos, 2009; Ponting & O'Brien, 2014).

**Tourism management** – Sustainability has become an important topic and concept in relation to tourism planning and development. To providing tourism managers and policy-makers with sufficient information to better understand the transition to sustainability at specific destinations and to encourage them to carry out corresponding policy and management responses, an indicator system proposed/developed to analyze the sustainability of tourist activities in a country with a consolidated tourism sector is required (Blancas *et al.*, 2011). Learning organizations are not only able to become competent but also able to remain competent (Chang & Sun, 2007). The volunteer tourism organizations redesign their activities to include the remaining steps of transformative learning to improve their product for both the tourists and the sustainability outcomes of the projects (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011). Aside from destination managers, the active role of governments engaging in the implementation of sustainable tourism is needed (Bâc, 2004).

**Destination management** – With the growth and maturity of destinations in recent decades, the literature on tourism development has been complemented by a growing body of research on destination management (Pearce & Schanzel, 2015). Many studies contend that strategic marketing approach for sustainable tourism development is critical to the management of a world heritage sites (e.g., Gilmore, Carson, & Ascensão, 2007; Li, Wu & Cai, 2008; Zan & Lusiani, 2011). In addition, tourism is vital to the economy of a country and sustainable tourism development which is positively related to brand/destination image (Manhas, Manrai, & Manrai, 2016). Biodiversity is a main ecological feature and tourist attraction in protected areas, therefore, managers need to incorporate the principles of biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism in tourism planning/management (Catibog-Sinha, 2008). More importantly, a responsible tourism must respect the natural environment, culture and socioeconomic surroundings (Santos-Corrada & Figueroa, 2012) while green economy is particularly relevant for tourism destinations experiencing rapid change without the capacity to respond (Law, De Lacy, Lipman, & Jiang, 2016).

**Community management** – Based on the definitions of sustainability, sustainable tourism can be identified as 4 distinct groups: *the present visitors, future visitors, present host community, and future host community* (Byrd, 2007). Community-based tourism is tourism which residents manage their resources in community as the tourism supply and provide it to tourist (Polnyotee & Thadaniti, 2015). To understand the effects of components of sustainability on the attitudes of the respondents about future tourism development, 3 major components of sustainable tourism (e.g., *long-term planning, full community participation and environmental sustainability within tourism*) are critically related to support for tourism and to the positive and negative impacts of tourism (Choi & Murray, 2010).

**Resource management** – Despite concern for sustainability, the absence of resource management in tourism discourse is highlighted (Carter, Baxter, & Hockings, 2001). Tourism is a complex adaptive system involving in energy/resource intensive challenges (Day & Cai, 2012). Facing increasing prices of basic commodities, such as energy and water, encourage the implementation of energy and water efficiency in hotel facilities (Bohdanowicz, 2006). Business demands or added costs also present challenges in fully materializing an operator's environmentally sustainable practices, particularly concerning water consumption in service areas, such as in toilets, which represents a large proportion of total water usage (Alonso & Ogle, 2010). Therefore, water resource use is likely to become an increasingly important issue in tourism management (Hadjikakou, Chenoweth, & Miller, 2013).



**Tourist/Visitor management** – From management point of view, the visitor impacts are significant on management success in two primary mandates: resource protection and recreation provision (Marion & Farrell, 1998). Empirical findings supported the positive relationships between environmental concern and the willingness to accept economic sacrifices to protect the environment and to buy ecologically sustainable tourism alternatives (Hedlund, 2011). The role of tourist/visitor in the service chain of tourism is not only an ultimate consumer, but holds the key to the economic development of tourism (Chang & Katrichis, 2016). Therefore, the management of issues of tourist/visitor's motivation (e.g., Dodds, Graci, & Holmes, 2010; Bentz, Lopes, Calado, & Dearden, 2016), preference (e.g., Passafaro *et al.*, 2015), attitude (e.g., Weiler & Smith, 2009; Dodds *et al.*, 2010; Medina-Muñoz, Medina-Muñoz, & Sánchez-Medina, 2016) and experience/satisfaction (e.g., Cottrell, Vaske, Shen, & Ritter, 2007; Coghlan, 2012; Liu *et al.*, 2016) is required by members among tourism supply chain.

**Supply chain management** – Sustainable supply chain management encapsulates the trend to use purchasing policies and practices to facilitate sustainable development at the tourist destination (Font, Tapper, Schwartz, & Kornilaki, 2008). To some degrees, supply chain management emphasizes each buyer-supplier relationship in a supply chain (Leenders, Fearson, Flynn, & Johnson, 2002). To tourism stakeholders, numbers of weaknesses have found in the sustainable tourism policy, including lack of clear objectives, lack of collaboration between government departments as well as conflicts between local and national politics etc. (Muangasame & McKercher, 2015). The keywords involving problem domains are categorized in Table 2.

**Table 2 Keywords involving problem domains**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Biodiversity	Catibog-Sinha (2008); Boley & Green (2016)
Carrying capacity	Christofakis <i>et al.</i> (2009); Ponting & O'Brien (2014); Santos Lobo (2015)
Climate change	Scott (2011); Mycoo (2014); Doiron & Weissenberger, (2014)
Hotel	Liburd (2007); Day & Cai (2012); Azouz & Galal (2016)
Stakeholder	Lee & Hsieh (2016); Poudel <i>et al.</i> (2016); Sánchez-Medina <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Green/Greening	Dolnicar (2006); Muangasame & McKercher (2015); Law <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Tourism policy	Choi & Murray (2010); Hall <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Tourism planning	Trousdale (1999); Blancas <i>et al.</i> (2011); Padin (2012); Cárdenas <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Tourism governance	Bramwell (2010); Sofield & Li (2011)
Waste management	Meade & Pringle (2001); Qian & Schneider (2016); Arbulú <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Indicator	de Sausmarez (2007); Cottrell <i>et al.</i> (2007); Lim & Cooper (2009); Ingelmo (2013)
Willingness to pay(use)	Yan <i>et al.</i> (2008); Hedlund (2011); Doran <i>et al.</i> (2015)
World heritage sites	Gilmore <i>et al.</i> (2007); Li <i>et al.</i> (2008); Zan & Lusiani (2011)
Water resource/scarcity	Alonso & Ogle (2010); Hadjikakou <i>et al.</i> (2013); Tekken & Kropp (2015)
Visitor attitude	Weiler & Smith (2009); Dodds <i>et al.</i> (2010); Medina-Muñoz <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Tourism satisfaction/experiences	Cottrell <i>et al.</i> (2007); Coghlan (2012); Liu <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Tourist motivation	Dodds <i>et al.</i> (2010); Bentz <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Tourist preference	Passafaro <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Collaboration	Muangasame & McKercher (2015); McComb <i>et al.</i> (2017)
Community development	Trousdale (1999); Marschall (2012); Hammersley (2014)
Community participation	Byrd (2007); Li & Hunter (2015)..
Destination competitiveness	Mayaka & Prasad (2012); Boley & Green (2016)
Destination development	Sörensson & von Friedrichs (2013); Manhas <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Destination branding	Tasci <i>et al.</i> (2014); Pencarelli <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Learning	Coghlan & Gooch (2011); Hammersley (2014)

### 3.3.2 Keyword involving sustainable tourism and attributes

Based on 3247 keywords in our survey, we found 10 major attributes of sustainable tourism: *ecotourism*, *rural tourism*, *community tourism*, *nature-based tourism*, *responsible tourism*, *heritage tourism*, *wildlife tourism*, *indigenous tourism*, *volunteer tourism* and *mass tourism*. Apart from these top 10 attributes of sustainable tourism, the others can be categorized into 6 different groups, for example, **Specific area**–Antarctic, coast, urban, farm and island; **Exciting adventure**–surf and pesca/fishing;

**Featured**–Low-carbon, geology and low country; **Humanities**–Cultural; **Event/activity**–Sport and culinary; **Others**–Alternative. More interestingly, if we further examine the trajectory of sustainable tourism since 2010, there were two impressive findings here: one is the emerging issues involving sustainable tourism in recent 5 more years were *volunteer tourism, coast tourism, low-country tourism, surf tourism, culinary tourism, Antarctic tourism, alternative tourism, geo-tourism, low-carbon tourism* and *pescatourism* and so on; the other is the high-growth issues involving sustainable tourism in recent 5 more years were *wildlife tourism, responsible tourism, community tourism, heritage tourism, sport tourism, farm tourism, urban tourism* and *cultural tourism* etc. Apparently, all these attributes mentioned above are characterized as **irreplaceable tourism resources**. The keywords involving sustainable tourism and attributes are categorized in Table 3.

**Table 3 Keywords involving attributes**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Ecotourism	Björk (2000); Russell (2007); Bowman (2011); Collins-Kreiner <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Rural tourism	Saarinen (2007b); Ghaderi & Henderson (2012); Nair <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Nature-based tourism	Puhakka & Siikamäki (2012) ; Tyrväinen <i>et al.</i> (2014); Mustika <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Wild-life tourism	Bentz <i>et al.</i> (2016); Mustika <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Indigenous tourism	Smith (1996); Whitford & Ruhanen (2010); Whitney-Squire (2016)
Volunteer tourism	Rattan (2015); Weaver (2013); Coghlan & Noakes (2012)
Cultural tourism	Whitney-Squire (2016); Bitsani & Kavoura (2014)
Sport tourism	Gibson <i>et al.</i> (2012); Ziakas & Boukas (2012)
Heritage tourism	Reid & Schwab (2006); Chhabra (2009)
Urban tourism	Timur & Getz (2009); Maxim (2016)
Mass Tourism	Ioannides & Holcomb (2003); Weaver (2012a, 2014)
Community tourism	Shikida <i>et al.</i> (2010); Sánchez-Cañizares <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Farm tourism	Gössling & Mattsson (2002); Barbieri (2013)
Coast tourism	Romero-Padilla <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Culinary tourism	Okumus <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Antarctic tourism	Vila <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Alternative tourism	Kilipiris & Zardava (2012); Coghlan & Noakes (2012)
Low-carbon tourism	Hornig <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Surf tourism	Ponting & O' Brien (2014)
Geotourism	Boley & Nickerson (2013); Boley <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Pescatourism	Lai <i>et al.</i> (2016)

### 3.3.3 Keyword involving sustainable tourism and environment

A key element of a successful tourism industry is the ability to recognize and deal with change across a wide range of key factors and the way they interact (Dwyer *et al.*, 2009). In narrower sense, the term environment refers to the physical environment that includes natural and manmade components. In broader one, social and cultural environments are also considered (Inskip, 1991; Mathieson & Wall, 1996). Other point of view, such as strategic management perspective, the forces of change/trends on macro environment can be categorized into four segments (PEST)– *political, economic, social/societal and technological* (Fahey & Narayanan, 1986). The keywords involving sustainable tourism and environment are categorized in Table 4.

**Table 4 Keywords involving environment**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Stakeholder	Lee & Hsieh (2016)
Plastic pollution	Eagle <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Climate change	Doiron & Weissenberger (2014)
Landscape planning/ Environmental preference	Tyrväinen <i>et al.</i> (2014).
Carrying capacity	Johnson (2002); Salemo <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Environment impact	Reynolds & Braithwaite (2001)
Environmental management	Lim & McAleer (2005); Healy (2006); Adriana (2009); Jalani (2012)
Environmental performance	Budeanu (2005); Aminian (2012)
Environmental consciousness	Gössling (2002)

Environmental impact assessment/statement	Zubair <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Environmental supply chain management	Adriana (2009)
Environmental ethics/economics	Holden (2009)
Resource management	Parolo <i>et al.</i> (2009)

### 3.3.4 Keyword involving sustainable tourism and destination

Among extant literature, some researchers (e.g., Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Presenza, Sheehan, & Ritchie, 2005) emphasize the need for destination management in order for destinations to be competitive and sustainable and discuss the activities that need to be undertaken to achieve these goals, for example, *destination marketing* (e.g., Jamal & Camargo, 2014), *destination branding* (e.g., Tasci, Croes, & Villanueva, 2014), *destination positioning* (e.g., Manhas *et al.*, 2016) and *destination certification* (Aall, Dodds, Sælensminde, & Brendehaug, 2015). Others (e.g., Bieger, Beritelli, & Laesser, 2009; Bodega, Cioccarelli, & Denicolai, 2004; Sainaghi, 2006) are concerned with the structures and processes required to manage destinations effectively, for example, *innovation* (e.g., Ali & Frew, 2014), *resource management* (e.g., Karatzoglou & Spilanis, 2010), *crisis management* (e.g., de Sausmarez, 2007) and *integrated quality management* (e.g., Kocevski & Risteski, 2012). A third group (e.g., Bornhorst, Ritchie, & Sheehan, 2010; Fuchs & Weiermair, 2004; Zehrer, Pechlaner, & Hölzl, 2005) focuses on the stakeholders that need to be taken into account in managing destinations, for example, *public-private partnership* (e.g., Arbulú *et al.*, 2016), *equity* (e.g., Jamal & Camargo, 2014) and *environmental preference* (e.g., Tyrväinen, Uusitalo, Silvennoinen, & Hasu, 2014). The keywords involving sustainable tourism and destination are categorized in Table 5.

**Table 5 Keywords involving destination**

Keyword indexes	Researchers (years)
Destination marketing	Jamal & Camargo (2014)
Crisis management	de Sausmarez (2007)
Brand image	Cave & Brown (2012); Manhas <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Positioning	Manhas <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Public-private partnership	Arbulú <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Visitor attitude	Medina-Muñoz <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Destination certification	Aall <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Destination competitiveness	Boley & Green (2016)
Accommodation	Medina-Muñoz <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Environmental preferences	Tyrväinen <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Integrated quality management	Kocevski & Risteski (2012)
Innovation	Ali & Frew (2014)
Branding	Tasci <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Profitability	Mill (1996)
Resource management	Karatzoglou & Spilanis (2010)
Equity	Jamal & Camargo (2014)
Transport	Robbins <i>et al.</i> (2007)
Destination loyalty	Weaver & Lawton (2011)

### 3.3.5 Keyword involving sustainable tourism and marketing management

The importance of tourism marketing implemented in various organizations/destinations has been attracting many attentions from academicians (e.g., Witt & Moutinho, 1994; Font & Ahjem, 1999; Palmer, 2001; Dewhurst & Thomas, 2003). Facing the possible impacts of disasters (e.g., *tsunami*) posing challenges for sustainable tourism in the destinations, it is essential for the public/private sectors of the tourism industry to prepare strategies to assist in managing the potential difficulties which lie ahead (Ghaderi & Henderson, 2013). In their delivery of ecotourism services, the differences do exist between the certified and the noncertified operators. So, the role of education in certification marketing is critical to ensure sustainability of ecotourism operators as well as in establishing a shared philosophy between operators, visitors, and residents (Bustam, Buta, & Stein, 2012). On the other hand, tourism activities can be seen as an extension of a brand-consumer relationship. Therefore, tourism producers must be capable of fulfilling visitor's expectations and satisfying their needs, enhancing return intentions and loyalty (Chang &



Katrichis, 2016). From this, many marketing concepts can be applied to tourism, including *segmentation* (e.g. Weaver *et al.*, 2015) and *marketing mix/4Ps* (e.g. Pomeroy, Noble, & Johnson, 2011; Marcotte & Bourdeau, 2012). To achieve an excellent tourism performance, potential collaboration between tourism businesses, specifically between accommodation properties and tour/bus companies (i.e., members of tourism supply chain) is expected (Slocum & Curtis, 2016). The keywords involving sustainable tourism and marketing management are categorized in Table 6.

**Table 6 Keywords involving marketing management**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Tourist choice/Behavioural change	Araña & León (2016)
Partnership	Sharpley & Pearce (2007)
Cultural sustainability/justice	Jamal <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Indigenous community	Myeza <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Market segmentation	Weaver <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Collaboration	Slocum & Curtis (2016)
Destination branding	Tasci <i>et al.</i> (2014); Pencarelli <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Internet marketing	Bustam <i>et al.</i> (2012)
Social/ Societal marketing	Mill (1996); Dinan & Sargeant (2000)
Web sites	Marcotte & Bourdeau (2012)
Sustainable development	Jamrozy (2007); Santos-Corrada & Figueroa (2012)
Destination marketing	Litvin (1996); Ghaderi & Henderson (2013); Forristal <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Green marketing	Santos-Corrada & Figueroa (2012)
Promotion method	Marcotte & Bourdeau (2012)
Green/eco travel	Litvin (1996)
Marketing mix	Pomeroy <i>et al.</i> (2011)
Competitive advantage	Jarvis <i>et al.</i> (2010)

### 3.3.6 Keyword involving sustainable tourism and innovation management

As for rural tourism, benchmarking innovations and new practices from other countries/nations can be secured in Asia's rural tourism destinations (Nair, Hussain, Lo, & Ragavan, 2015). Throughout history, tourism has been a phenomenon characterized by immense innovativeness (Hjalager, 2010). The characteristics of the tourism sector with high levels of competitiveness oblige firms to innovate to keep up with competition (Hall & Williams, 2008). On the other hand, tourism firms find it more difficult to protect innovation as copying competitors is easy. That is why these tourism organizations need to constantly innovate to keep up their competitive advantage (Porter, 1998). A study of Smerecnik and Andersen (2011), they found that the perceived simplicity of sustainability innovations and high levels of opinion leadership of hotels/resorts were most strongly associated with the adoption of sustainability innovations. As the utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) for sustainable tourism, Innovation was fostered to facilitate better understandings of the tourism product, monitoring, measuring and evaluating, forecasting trends, developing partnerships and engaging and supporting stakeholder relationships (Ali & Frew, 2014). The keywords involving sustainable tourism and marketing management are categorized in Table 7.

**Table 7 Keywords involving innovation management**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Benchmarking	Nair <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Sustainable development	Moscardo (2008); Smerecnik & Andersen (2011); Nair <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Destination management	Ali & Frew (2014)
Innovation diffusion	Le & Hollenhorst (2005); Smerecnik & Andersen (2011)
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Ali & Frew (2014)
Social responsibility	Marko <i>et al.</i> (2014)

### 3.3.7 Keywords involving sustainable tourism and human resource management

In tourism industry, there are many service features contribute significantly to the complexity of managing quality in such environments while the 'people' aspects are playing the critical role in tourism management (Hope & Muhlemann, 1998). Many

studies illustrate the poor conditions of employment in the tourism and hospitality sector, suggesting that there is little adoption of human resource management philosophy in hotels as well as providing little evidence of human resources being seen as a source of competitive advantage (Kelliher & Johnson, 1997; Wilton, 2008). For sustainable tourism, the prevailing focus on tourism development needs to be changed with more prominence given to human resource development- the core of the tourism (Shakeela & Cooper, 2009). The adoption of environmental supply chain management, in the absence of regulatory pressures and cost saving benefits, is triggered by public pressures and its implementation is limited by organizational factors and strategic myopia (Adriana, 2009). Despite empowerment has been playing a crucial role in sustainable tourism development, the international applicability of resident empowerment through tourism scale (RETS) still be considerably used as a valid tool for tracking the effectiveness of their marketing and management efforts aimed at increasing resident empowerment (Boley & McGehee, 2014; Boley, Maruyama, & Woosnam, 2015). Using the case of the Maldives, Shakeela, Ruhanen and Breakey (2011) suggested that the tourism industry will be impacted upon by a myriad of social, human resource, economic, institutional and religious factors which affect the attraction and retention of local people in tourism employment. The keywords involving sustainable tourism and human resource management are categorized in Table 8.

**Table 8 Keywords involving human resource management**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Empowerment	Boley & McGehee (2014); Boley <i>et al.</i> (2014); Boley <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Learning	Richard <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Destination management	Cave & Brown (2012)
Community development	Clayton <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Human resource development	Shakeela & Cooper (2009); Shakeela <i>et al.</i> (2012)
Emotional intelligence	Cavelzani <i>et al.</i> (2003)
Supply chain management	Adriana (2009); Font <i>et al.</i> (2008)
Service quality	Cavlek (2002)
Training	Richard <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Expatriate/local employment	Shakeela & Cooper (2009); Shakeela <i>et al.</i> (2011)

### 3.3.8 Keywords involving sustainable tourism and information technology

Inevitably, the tourism industry is also affected by the technological revolution. Both tourism destinations and enterprises increasingly need to adopt innovative methods and to enhance their competitiveness (Buhalis, 1998). It is thanks to ICT that information is becoming more rapidly access to an ever-wider public by providing a broad platform for exchanging data, coordinating activities, sharing information, emerging private and public sectors and supporting globalization commerce, all based on powerful computing and network technology (Smits, 2002; Liao, 2003). More importantly, the presence of voluntary hotel chains in countries with major tourism industries is widespread in the accommodation sector (Confalonieri, 2014). As information is the life-blood of the tourism industry, effective use of information technology is pivotal. Therefore, no one can escape from the impacts of information technology rapidly diffused throughout the entire tourism industry (Poon, 1993). As for the attitude of community, partnerships and networks is a prerequisite for the acceptance of the sustainable tourist development of a community (Bitsani & Kavoura, 2014). The keywords involving sustainable tourism and information/technology are categorized in Table 9.

**Table 9 Keywords involving information technology**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Gateway community	Frauman & Banks (2011)
GIS	Parolo <i>et al.</i> (2009); Scolozzi <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Decision making/Goal programming	Zhang (2016)
Participation	Thipsingh (2015)

Communication channel	Dabphet <i>et al.</i> (2012)
Entrepreneurship	Bitsani & Kavoura (2014).
Governance	Robertson (2011); Farmaki (2015)
Accommodation	Confalonieri (2011); Confalonieri (2014)
Supply chain management	Confalonieri (2014)
Collaboration	Fadeeva (2005); Robertson (2011)
Resource management	Parolo <i>et al.</i> (2009)
Destination planning	Confalonieri (2011)
Innovation	Ali & Frew (2014)
Internet	Sangpikul (2010).

### 3.3.9 Keywords involving sustainable tourism and tourist/visitor behavior

Consumer behavior is one of the most researched areas in tourism. Researchers have generally agreed that lots of important indicators for predicting the tourist/visitor behavior in the tourism industry, for example, *perception* (e.g., Esparon, Gyuris, & Stoeckl, 2014), *motivation* (e.g., Dodds *et al.*, 2010), *satisfaction* (e.g., Marzuki, Mohammad, & Abdullah, 2015) and *attitude* (e.g., Weiler & Smith, 2009; Dodds *et al.*, 2010; Medina-Muñoz *et al.*, 2016; Bentz *et al.*, 2016). However, different but related tourism activities behave differently to specialization (e.g., Bentz *et al.*, 2016). Using the context of luxury eco-cottages, tourism experiences designed to appeal to specific character strengths can encourage tourists to adopt pro-environmental behaviors (Warren & Coghlan, 2016). On the other hand, it is not enough to only assess a visitor centre's sustainability by its popularity with visitors. More importantly, it is also important to consider the needs of managers, operators, and local and cultural communities (Fallon & Kriwoken, 2003). The keywords involving sustainable tourism and tourist/visitor are categorized in Table 10.

**Table 10 Keywords involving tourist/visitor behavior**

Keyword indexes	Researchers (years)
User specialization	Bentz <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Visitor attitude	Weiler & Smith (2009); Dodds <i>et al.</i> (2010); Medina-Muñoz <i>et al.</i> (2016); Bentz <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Visitor segmentation	Weaver (2012b)
Visitor centre	Fallon & Kriwoken (2003)
Visitor management	Hall & Wouters (1994); Tan & Law (2016)
Visitor attractions	Krausse (1995)
Visitor impact	Catibog-Sinha (2008); Dodds <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Visitor satisfaction	Marzuki <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Visitor communication	Weiler & Kim (2011)
Tourist experience	Coghlan (2012); Warren & Coghlan (2016)
Responsible visitor	Warren & Coghlan (2016)
Tourist motivation	Dodds <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Visitor economy	McEvoy <i>et al.</i> (2008)
Visitor perception	Esparon <i>et al.</i> (2014)

### 3.3.10 Keywords involving sustainable tourism and performance

The terms “*performance*” can be seen as the result of activities (e.g. of an organization) over a given period of time. As for its measurement, performance can be seen as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of more than simply financial performance (e.g., Baker & Sinkula, 2005; Henderson & Cockburn, 1994; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993). In a word, these measurement indicators, including tourism performance, can be either quantitative, or qualitative, or a hybrid of the two. For example, *profitability* (e.g., Mill, 1996), *competitive advantage* (e.g., Jarvis, Weeden, & Simcock, 2010; Boley & Green, 2016), *sustainability* (e.g., Sörensson & von Friedrichs, 2013; Castellani & Sala, 2010), *economy* (e.g., Sofield & Li, 2011; Law *et al.*, 2016; McEvoy *et al.*, 2008; Bramwell, 2010), *efficiency* (e.g., Aminian, 2012), *diversification* (e.g., Gössling & Mattsson, 2002), *certification* (e.g., Esparon *et al.*, 2014) and *responsibility* (e.g., Budeanu, 2005). The keywords involving sustainable tourism and performance are categorized in Table 11.

**Table 11: Keywords involving performance**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Energy efficiency	Aminian (2012)
Responsibility	Budeanu (2005)
Certification	Esparon <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Sustainability	Sörensson & von Friedrichs (2013)
Sustainable performance index	Castellani & Sala (2010)
Green economy/growth	Law <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Community economy	Amir <i>et al.</i> (2015).
Political economy	Bramwell (2010)
Destination competitiveness	Boley & Green (2016)
Visitor economy	McEvoy <i>et al.</i> (2008)
Market economy	Sofield & Li (2011)
Participative Planning	Bramwell (2010)
Tourism governance	Bramwell (2010)
Economic diversification	Gössling & Mattsson (2002)
Competitive advantage	Jarvis <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Transition/transformation	Sofield & Li (2011)
Profitability	Mill (1996)

### 3.4 Theories adopted in tourism research

In our survey, there were more than 20 theoretical foundations applied to sustainable tourism (see Table 10). For example, *stakeholder theory* (e.g., Byrd, 2007; Nicholas, Thapa, & Ko, 2009; McComb, Boyd, & Boluk, 2017), *grounded theory* (e.g., Hardy, 2005; Kensbock & Jennings, 2011; Stumpf, Sandstrom, & Swanger, 2016), *system theory* (e.g., Plummer & Fennell, 2009; Wided & Sonja, 2014), *social exchange theory* (e.g., Boley, McGehee, Perdue, & Long, 2014; Lawton & Weaver, 2015) and *vaule-belief-norm theory* (e.g., Weaver, 2013; Kiatkawsin & Han, 2017). However, there still have lots of theories from different domains continuously introduced into sustainable tourism, for example, *expectancy theory* (e.g., Kiatkawsin & Han, 2017), *attribution theory* (e.g., Abascal, Fluker, & Jiang, 2016), *agency theory* (e.g., Yasarata, Altinay, Burns, & Okumus, 2010), *cognitive dissonance theory* (e.g., Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014) and *diffusion theory* (e.g., Dabphet, Scott, & Ruhanen, 2012). This

phenomenon stands for that the sustainable tourism has become a comprehensive and diverse issue. The keywords involving targeted countries/regions are categorized in Table 12.

**Table 12: Keywords involving theories**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Value-belief-norm theory (VBN)	Weaver (2013); Kiatkawsin & Han (2017)
Expectancy theory	Kiatkawsin & Han (2017)
Practice theory	Iaquinto (2016)
Rogers theory	Dibra (2015)
Emergency life history theory	Bessa & Goncalves-de-Freitas (2014)
Cognitive dissonance theory	Juvan & Dolnicar (2014)
Social representations theory	Weaver & Lawton (2013)
Social exchange theory	Boley <i>et al.</i> (2014); Lawton & Weaver (2015)
Agency theory	Yasarata <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Stakeholder theory	Byrd (2007); Nicholas <i>et al.</i> (2009); McComb <i>et al.</i> (2017)
System theory	Plummer & Fennell (2009); Wided & Sonja (2014)
Social theory	Bramwell (2007)
Affective theory	Song <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Theory of planned behavior	Chancellor <i>et al.</i> (2012)
Grounded theory	Hardy (2005); Kensbock & Jennings (2011); Stumpf <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Field theory	Matarrita-Cascante <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Attribution theory	Abascal <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Diffusion theory	Dabphet <i>et al.</i> (2012)
Fuzzy set theory	Tsaur & Wang (2007)

### 3.5 Methods adopted in sustainable tourism

From the evidences in Table 13, the top 5 methodologies adopted in the research of sustainable tourism were *qualitative research*, *confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)*, *case study*, *content analysis*, *cluster analysis* and *importance-performance analysis (IPA)*. Most importantly, some methods had been more widely used in recent 3 more years, including *multi-criteria analysis*, *network analysis/analytic hierarchy process (AHP)*, *discourse analysis*, *SWOT*, *mixed methods* and *participatory rural appraisal (PRA)*.

**Table 13: Keywords involving methods**

<i>Keyword indexes</i>	<i>Researchers (years)</i>
Multi-criteria analysis	Michailidou <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Network analysis/Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP)	Zhang (2016); Jeong <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Qualitative research	Stumpf <i>et al.</i> (2016); Molina-Azorín & Font (2016)
Mixed research	Puhakka <i>et al.</i> (2014); Molina-Azorín & Font (2016)
Quantitative research	Molina-Azorín & Font (2016)
Research framework	Waligo <i>et al.</i> (2013)
Literature review	Zolfani <i>et al.</i> (2015); Carter <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)	Boley <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Cross-cultural analysis	Wided & Sonja (2014)
Participatory Action Research (PAR)	Auesriwong <i>et al.</i> (2015)
Content analysis	Nyahunzvi (2013); Lu & Nepal (2009)
Case study	Lee & Hsieh (2016); Gibson <i>et al.</i> (2012)
Importance-performance analysis (IPA)	Sörensson & von Friedrichs (2013); Esparon <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Cluster analysis	Lawton (2009); Veisten <i>et al.</i> (2015)



### 3.6 Targeted countries/regions

Based on keyword indexes covering 80 countries/regions, the top 10 countries/regions frequently shown in studies of sustainable tourism were *China* (including *Hong Kong* and *Macau*); *Australia and New Zealand*; *United Kingdom, United States*; *Spain*; *Thailand*; *Cyprus*; *Greece, Indonesia, Brazil*; *Jamaica*; *Malaysia, Portugal, Iran, Maldives, Finland and Costa Rica*; *Taiwan, Croatian, Canada, Philippines and India*, respectively. Obviously, the 217 keywords related to targeted countries/regions of sustainable tourism have shown that the research trajectory of sustainable tourism has covered the world. However, the most favorite targeted continents for those researchers concerned with sustainable tourism are still eying on *Asia, Europe and America*. Most interestingly, the 3 smallest countries (e.g., *Taiwan, Cyprus and Maldives*) ranked well in front of some of largest countries (e.g., *Canada, Brazil, India and Iran*). That is the development of sustainable tourism is not completely in accordance with countries' geographic area, but their specific/unique tourism characteristics. Besides, all these top 10 countries are located nearby the ocean/or surrounded by the ocean, highlighting the critical role of ocean in the sustainability of tourism. After all, the concepts/objectives of “*Sustainable development*” and “*Green Economy*” make sense only if the ocean is fully incorporated (IOC/UNESCO, IMO, FAO, & UNDP, 2011: 4). The keywords involving targeted countries/regions are categorized in Table 14.

**Table 14 Keywords related to sustainable tourism involving countries/regions**

Targeted countries/regions (frequencies)				
Asia (74)	Taiwan (3)	Malaysia (4)	Turkey (2)	Hong Kong (3)
	Thailand (8)	Japan (2)	South Korea (2)	Jordan (2)
	Nepal (1)	Cambodia (1)	Israel (2)	Iran (4)
	Indonesia (7)	Philippines (3)	Saudi Arabia (1)	Vietnam (1)
	Singapore (2)	China (14)	India (3)	Macao (2)
Europe (60)	Burma/Myanmar (1)	Sri Lanka (1)	Brunei (1)	Maldives (4)
	United Kingdom (11)	Croatian (3)	Greece (6)	Portugal (4)
	Spain (9)	Cyprus (7)	Ukraine (1)	Slovenia (1)
	Poland (1)	Norway (1)	Sweden (1)	Iceland (1)
	Finland (4)	Germany (1)	Romania (2)	Italy (2)
	Lithuania (2)	France (1)	Denmark (1)	Malta (1)
Africa (14)	South Africa (2)	Kenya (2)	Morocco (1)	Lesotho (1)
	Botswana (2)	Zambia (1)	Maurice (1)	Ghana (1)
	Zimbabwe (1)	Gambia (1)	Tanzania (1)	
Oceania (19)	Australia(16)	New Zealand(1)	Papua New Guinea (2)	
America (50)	Costa Rica (4)	Jamaica (5)	Ecuador (1)	Puerto Rico (1)
	United States(11)	Brazil(6)	Canada (3)	Mexico (2)
	Guyana (2)	Barbados (1)	Panama (2)	Grenada (1)
	Caribbean Islands (2)	Dominican (1)	Saint Lucia (1)	Pacific islands (1)
	Honduras (1)	Colombia (1)	Bolivia (2)	Peru (2)

## 4. DISCUSSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

### 4.1 Discussions

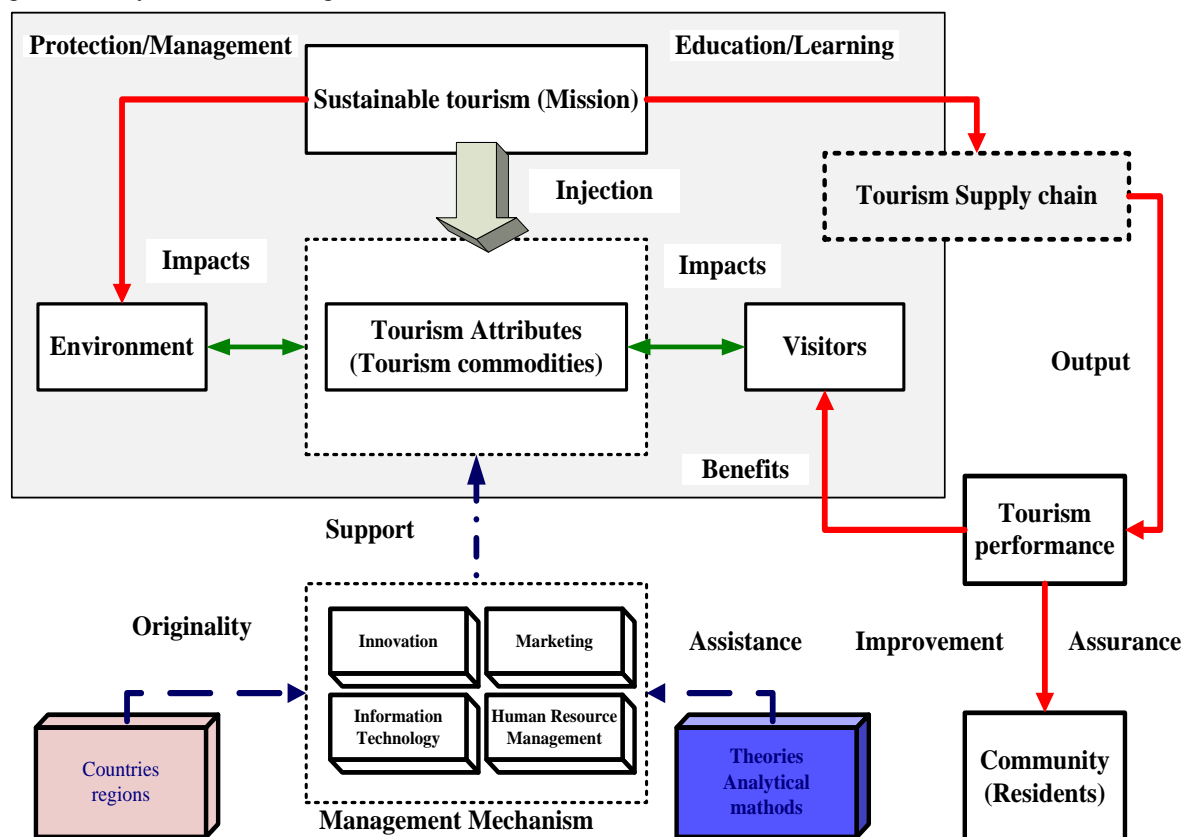
Based on Krippendorff<sup>4</sup> (1980), we first collect all the data we need from 5 electronic on-line academic databases with a main keyword index, “*sustainable tourism*”. By using them and examining the research domains we have aggregated, we might do the work of inference and intensive analysis on the development trajectory of sustainable tourism. Finally, all these implications between/among these constructs/variables would be shown in the conceptual framework which clearly indicated the possible relationships/impacts and these evidences might be turned into hypotheses to be validated in the future. From this literature review, we found that its applications and technologies applied in sustainable tourism were diverse due to author's expertise, background and research domains. Based on 641 articles, some scholars have showed consistent interests in specific areas, for examples, *indicators* (e.g., Blancas *et al.*, 2010; Blancas, Lozano-Oyola, González, & Caballero, 2016; Blancas *et al.*, 2011),

<sup>4</sup> There are 5 steps in a content analysis, including *data collection, data condensing, inference, analysis and validation*.

empowerment (e.g., Boley & Gaither, 2016; Boley & McGehee, 2014; Boley, Ayscue, Maruyama, & Woosnam, 2017), *climate changes* (e.g., Gossling, 2002, 2009; Gössling *et al.*, 2005; Gössling & Buckley, 2016), human resource development (e.g., Shakeela, Ruhanen, & Breakey, 2012; Shakeela & Cooper, 2009) and *protected area* (e.g., Weaver, 2012b, 2013, Weaver & Lawton, 2011). Some researchers focused on specific countries/regions, for example, *Spain* (e.g., Ayuso, 2006, 2007), *Cyprus* (e.g., Farmaki, 2015; Farmaki, Altinay, Botterill, & Hilke, 2015) and *Finland* (e.g., Puhakka & Siikamäki, 2012; Puhakka, Sarkki, Cottrell, & Siikamäki, 2009; Puhakka, Cottrell, & Siikamäki, 2014). This may direct the development of sustainable tourism toward expertise orientation. On the other hand, a few authors work in different technologies and applications. For example, *mixed research/discourse analysis* (e.g., Puhakka *et al.*, 2014) and *qualitative/quantitative research* (e.g., Molina-Azorín & Font, 2016). This indicates that the technology applied in sustainable tourism is also diversified due to author's research interests and abilities.

#### 4.1.1 The core value of the conceptual framework

Figure 2 presents a road map to the 641 pieces of sustainable tourism research summarized in this study. Here we see that the term “*sustainable tourism*” is an ultimate mission for any other tourism attributes (e.g., *activities/products*) in today’s tourism market. Moreover, the concept of sustainable tourism, just likes a catalyst, in recent decades has strongly injected into the soul of the present tourism programs. Sustainability covers all elements that constitute a complete tourism experience (Zolfani *et al.*, 2005). No surprising, tourism attributes (e.g., *activities/products*), environment and tourists/visitors have already comprised a solid life community in the past. In this interaction mode, sustainability reminds us of managing/protecting the environment while also teaching/educating the tourists/visitors. However, all efforts on sustainable tourism development should not be left without taking community-based factor (e.g., resident) into account.



**Figure 2: The conceptual framework of sustainable tourism**

Many scholars have strongly supported that an improvement to the residents' quality of life often resulted from an optimization of local economic benefits, a protection of the natural, an establishment of environment and a creation of a high-quality

experience for visitors (e.g., Bramwell & Lane, 1993; McIntyre, 1993; Park & Yoon, 2009; Park, Yoon, & Lee, 2008; Stabler, 1997). On the other hand, successful tourism programs can be resulted from an excellent management mechanism that is composed of various organizational capabilities, such as innovation, marketing, human resource management and information technologies. Apparently, there are two driven forces in this figure which directly lead to an excellent tourism performance, for example, the internal forces referred to organizational capabilities while the external forces referred to the harmony of the triangle interaction among environment, tourism attributes (i.e., *brand*) and tourists/visitors. Of course, a qualified tourism programs still be in accordance with smooth operations among tourism supply chain members. Furthermore, we also found that the final tourism performance in any tourism program cannot be at the expense of community-based development, including its local employment, environment protection and economic development and so on. To sum up, our conclusions derived from this integrated framework appeared to be consistent with WCED (1987) that highlighted the close connections between economic development, environmental protection and social equity, each element reinforcing the other.

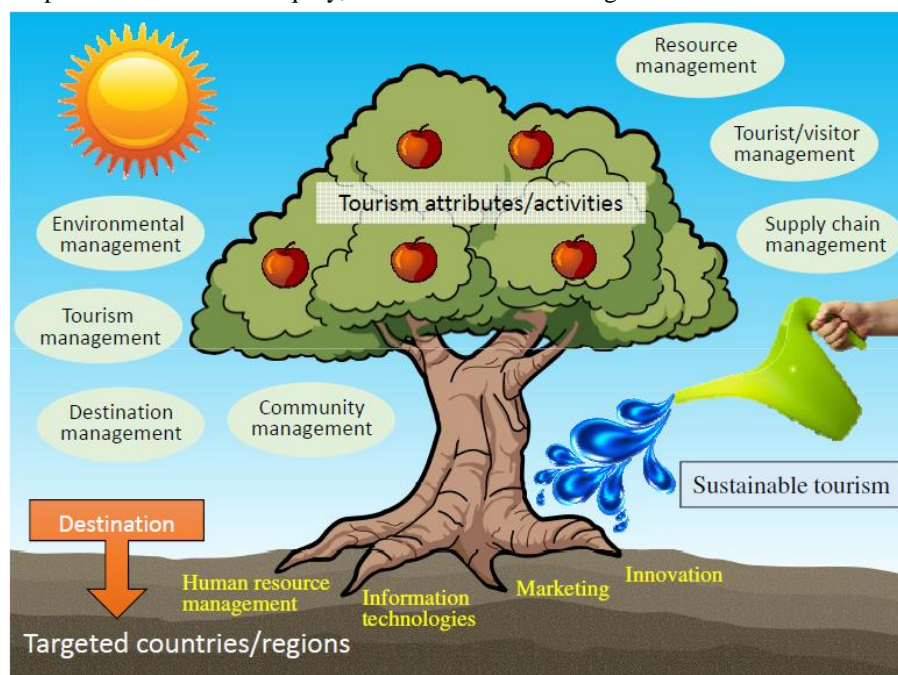


Figure 3: The visual map of sustainable tourism (Part 1)

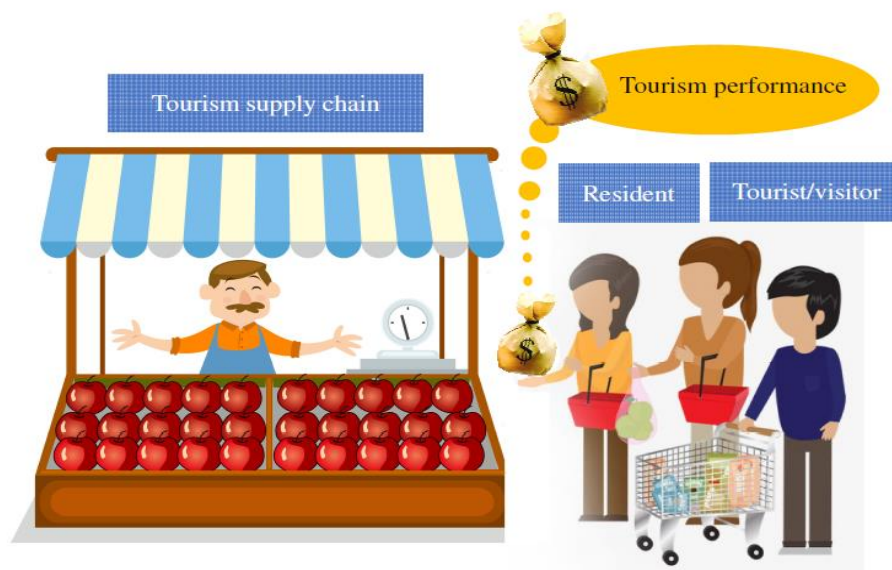


Figure 4: The visual map of sustainable tourism (Part 2)

#### 4.1.2 Visual map – managerial implications

To facilitate better understandings of sustainable tourism, we further introduced a visual map to highlight the positioning of sustainable tourism in today's interactions. In this regard, this visual map was shown as Figure 3. From this figure, the term “sustainable tourism” here refers to a tree which has several fruits (i.e., *tourism attributes*) whereas the 7 problem domains are scattered among the space surrounding. The tree is located at the ground (i.e., *targeted countries/regions*), meaning where is the concept of sustainable tourism applied for. As for the term “*management mechanism*”, it can be seen as the key roots absorbing the nutrients from the soil (See Figure 3). Let's us turn to the other scenario (see Figure 4), all these tourism attributes/programs labeled with sustainable tourism finally sent to the store (i.e., *tourism supply chain*) for sales. Then there are two types of tourism consumers (i.e., *tourist/visitor* and *resident*) come to the chain store and pay the bills to get the tourism performance. According to these two pictures, it is clear to see that the ultimate objective of sustainable tourism is undoubtedly to create a *trilateral win-win situation* for the environment, the tourists and the residents.

The main purpose of this study is running for an ideal goal of tourism activities—*sustainability*. However, the implementation of this big task today still has a long way to go. Why it is so hard to put the spirit of sustainable tourism into the real world. The problem is our tourism programs (i.e., *travel & accommodation*) today are almost running out those resources they have involved in while the essence of sustainable tourism totally asks these tourism programs go along with it. In a word, sustainable tourism is market-oriented and the traditional tourism is sales oriented. To fill the gap, tourists/visitors must be educated as well as the members among the service delivery processed need to be educated. In addition, tourism management/governance (i.e., *planning, organizing, staffing and controlling*) must be efficiently executed. Finally, the consciousness of community-based priority should be recalled.

**Table 15: The comparison among this study, Chang and Katrichis (2016) and Zolfani et al. (2005)**

	<i>Chang and Katrichis (2016)</i>	<i>Zolfani et al. (2005)</i>	<i>This study</i>
Search of databases	5	6	5
Period	1990-2013	1993-2013	1990-2016
Selected articles/journals	773 articles/196 journals	132 articles/47 journals	641 articles/125 journals
Subjects/problem domains	5	14	7
Applications	13	14	13
Research issues	Tourism management	Sustainable tourism	Sustainable tourism
Searching technique	Keyword index	Any accurate picture of sustainable tourism development	Keywords
Framework	Framework	N/A	Framework+Visual map
<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Chang and Katrichis (2016)</i>: To draw up an integrated framework of Tourism management.</li> <li>● <i>Zolfani et al. (2005)</i>: To study the progress of research on sustainable tourism and to outline and identify the key disciplines journals, articles and authors.</li> <li>● This study: To explore the development trajectory of sustainable tourism.</li> </ul>			
<b>Core spirit:</b> <p>While <i>Chang and Katrichis (2016)</i> have put their heavy emphases on the production/management sides of tourism, this paper is concerned with the relationships among environment, sustainable tourism, tourist and residents. Contrasts to the</p>			

others, [Zolfani et al. \(2005\)](#) pay much attention to comprehensively examine those published scholarly papers of sustainable tourism.

#### *Distribution by publishers (The top 3):*

In the study of [Chang and Katrichis \(2016\)](#), they don't focus on the distribution by publishers. The top 3 distribution by publishers in our study and [Zolfani et al. \(2005\)](#) are ①Taylor & Francis; ②ScienceDirect; ③Emerald.

#### *Supplementary theories/models:*

In the study of [Chang and Katrichis \(2016\)](#), they totally integrated two triangle theories (i.e. *research triangle* & *service triangle*) and essence of strategic management that is characterizing the relationships among environment, strategy and performance into their conceptual model while this paper merely focused on the essence of strategic management.

#### *Coverage:*

Compared with [Chang and Katrichis \(2016\)](#), their topics on tourism management seemed to be a subset of our study. In a word, tourism management is an issue of sustainable tourism. As [Zolfani et al. \(2005\)](#), their 14 categories of sustainable tourism might be deeper, but not wider than ours. On the other hand, the so-called accurate picture of sustainable tourism development is more subjective terms rather than us.

## 4.2 Comparative analysis among this study, [Chang and Katrichis \(2016\)](#) and [Zolfani et al. \(2005\)](#)

To be a comprehensive literature review, we make further comparative analysis among [Chang and Katrichis \(2016\)](#), [Zolfani et al. \(2005\)](#) and our research. First, [Chang and Katrichis \(2016\)](#) published an article using literature review to examine the development trajectory of tourism management from 1990 to 2013. Next, [Zolfani et al. \(2005\)](#) aimed to study the progress of research on sustainable tourism from 1993 up to 2013. The basic comparisons (i.e., *similarities & differences*) are shown as Table 15.

## 4.3 Contributions

In fact, sustainable tourism is a belief and an overall concept in every tourism activities. Though this research has done lots, it still has rooms to make more complete. However, we strongly believe our works would provide researchers of great interests on sustainable tourism with some useful information. For example, the development trajectory of sustainable tourism, including publication years, published journals, applications with keywords classification, theories, methods and targeted countries/regions. To sum up, this literature review plays as a guidebook of sustainable tourism. Based on our analysis, any researcher can easily find the popular and right journal to get into it, if he/she is in need, he/she also can roughly know its applications so far and completely get a whole picture of sustainable tourism quickly.

## 4.4 Limitations and suggestions

Restricted to limited knowledge, we make a brief literature survey on sustainable tourism from 1990-2016 to explore how sustainable tourism and its applications have developed in this period. Since sustainable tourism is too broader so as not to deal with it completely in any single literature, therefore, we make attempts to step back and take a comprehensive overview of this concept. This paper has some limitations. First, the keyword index might hinder presenting an overall picture of this subject. Second, those papers excluded for lacking keywords or not categorizing in SSCI list might provide more detailed information to trace the development trajectory of sustainable tourism and its applications. Finally, most of the sustainable tourism articles here were lacking of more evidences to lead us to effectively link the human-environment relationships with tourism activities around the real world today. Owing to these limitations, there are some suggestions in the future works as follows:

- *Switch of analytical model:* [Zolfani et al. \(2005\)](#) proposed 14 applications for comprehensive examinations of sustainable tourism. Following these criterions, another literature review on sustainable tourism is expected.



- *Focus on specific topics of sustainable tourism:* As sustainable tourism is a multi-faceted concept (see Figure 3) involved with *environmental management, tourism commodity management* (i.e. *marketing, innovation, human resource management & technologies*), *community management* (i.e. *destination management & community development*) and *tourist management*. Therefore, the future works taking a segmented field for a comprehensive analysis into account is necessary.
- *Integration of methods:* In our study, some sustainable tourism articles focus on qualitative methods (e.g. *grounded theory and focus-group interview*) and some focus on quantitative methods (e.g. *structural equation modeling and regression*). However, it is hard to come to a complete conclusion by using any single method alone for exploring those problems (Liao, 2003). Therefore, an integration of methods is required.
- *Adopting another techniques:* Different from keyword-index survey, future work is expected to use data mining or another techniques to retrieve data.
- *Others:* This paper reviews sustainable tourism papers by examining 5 online academic databases and then gets 641 articles. Future works can focus on specific journal, for example, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism or Tourism Management*, and make a comprehensive literature review to trace its overall trend is expected.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this study is to provide a guide to those practitioners/researchers interested in understanding the concept of sustainable tourism and its development trajectory. Based on 641 articles from 1990 to 2016 retrieved from 5 online databases with solo keyword “*sustainable tourism*”, the trend of sustainable tourism research has significantly increased since 2006. Most of them can be found in 23 journals. Besides, the majority countries/regions for sustainable tourism still focused on the 3 continents, Asia, Europe and America. Finally, we present a conceptual framework integrating 9 classifications derived from an analysis of 3247 keywords from 641 articles. The framework can be used as an example to facilitate the understandings of sustainable tourism.

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