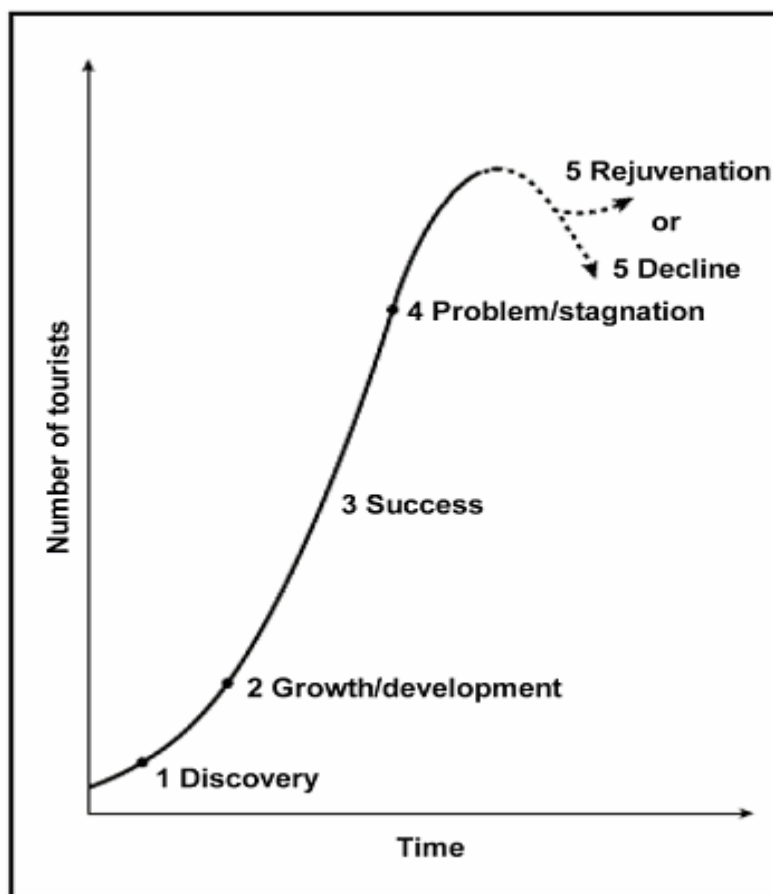


Tourism of Sri Lanka- Butler's sequence for
Mirissa, Sri Lanka.

The main objective of Butler's sequence model is to analysis the way that tourist destination grow and develop. Like all other industries, tourism industry is also highly dynamic and changing quickly and constantly. Thus, butler's sequence explain how tourist destination or resort change overtime according to dynamic demands of the industry and many other factors such as environment. This model provide opportunity to compare real scenario with the model and predict the future trend of the destination. Based on the predications, corrective actions can be taken for sustainable development of the destination. There are five stages in Butler sequences as illustrate in figure 01. Here, knowledge I got about Butler's sequence has been applied for Mirissa, Sri Lanka, which is one of main tourist attraction in Sri Lanka, to analyze the way that the destination grow and develop.

Figure 01 – The five stages of Butler's sequence.



Mirissa is one of the main beach in southern coast in Sri Lanka which located between Matara and Galle. Currently, this has become ‘a must visit destination’ for all tourists who visit Sri Lanka. According to statistics of Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), average stay of tourist in Sri Lanka in 10.8 days in 2018. Average stay in Mirissa Area is recorded as 2.7 days. Therefore, Mirissa is a highly popular tourist destination in Sri Lanka. Some tourists stay more than 3, 4 weeks in the area. It is a famous for beautiful beaches, surfing, whales and dolphin watching, snorkeling with turtles and great bars and restaurants.

Discovery stage

This stage refer that the time that tourist destination was explored by smaller number of tourists. Once they explained their experience to others, tourists start to visit the destination and locals find a new economic opportunity by providing services to the tourists. Mirissa was not a popular tourist destination before 2009 and it was a little fishing village. After end of the civil war in 2009, Sri Lanka became highly popular as tourist destination and this long beautiful beach, which has surf waves, was started to popular as new attraction in the island. Surfers were firstly attracted to the beach.

Growth and development stage.

More and more tourists come after hearing about the new location verbally and via articles in travel supplements and blogs. By the early publicity, additional tourists are attracted and tourists who like to experience new things are attracted to the location. This lead to build new hotels, restaurants and bars in the area. Whales and dolphin watching is the main reason to become Mirissa highly popular as a tourist destination. There are higher whales density around Sri Lanka due to sea depth and high availability of nutrients. The fishermen in the area has known that there are whales and dolphins in the sea close to Mirissa. However, it was not the popular tourist activity in those days. With the popularity of the destinations, locals identified this as a great opportunity and started to take tourists to the sea to watch whales and dolphins. Many local fishermen moved from their traditional jobs and involved to this for better economic benefits. Mirissa became highly popular in social media too. The local attractions such as “Coconut tree hill”, Parrot rock are highly popular Instagram hotspots. Further, location has developed a reputation as a party destination among young travelers. The top hotel chains in the country has opened their hotels in the area. Homestay

facilities are available in almost all the houses in the area. Therefore, currently, Mirissa is in this stage of Butler's model.

Success stage

This is the stage that a resort or destination is fully utilized. Currently, according to my view, Mirissa as a tourist destination is reaching to this stage. In the season, beach becomes fully crowded. Beach called "secret beach" is not a secret anymore. Available lands close to beach are almost fully occupied by the hotels and restaurants. There is a high level of competition among hotels and restaurants. Government already has limited to provide licenses for whales watching ferries. Area is highly touristy and it appears that local culture is being diminished by western culture. However, still number of tourist arrival to Mirissa is still growing and few star category hotels are built up in the area. Therefore, Mirissa is still in growth and development stage but it will reach to success stage very soon.

Problem- stagnation stage

This is the stage that popularity of the location is started to decrease. Tourist may become bored with the tourist destination. The effect of falling tourism if the destination goes out of fashion leads to economic decline and the underutilization of tourist infrastructure. The eventual closure of some of the businesses will lead to a rise in unemployment.

Mirissa is far from this stage. However, there are few areas that all stakeholders need to consider to sustainable development of the destination. Few issues have been raised in the area that could be lead to this stage earlier than expected. One of main concern is that whales watching ferries come very close to whales and it cause to disturb their lifestyle. Ferry operators chase whales rather than watching them by certain distance. Number of ferries which operates are getting stagnated. These activities lead to whales starts to move away from this area to deep sea further. Compared to previous, now it takes more time to spot whales.

Further, waste management is becoming a huge issue in the area due to high level of crowd. Some illegal constructions have been build up in the area. on the other hand, this culture can become a culture shock for the other areas of the country.

Decline or rejuvenation

After the problem stage, the destination has two options; either go into decline or rejuvenate and develop more sustainable strategies based upon lower visitor numbers.