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Cultural Tourism in Mauritius: From Rhetoric to Reality

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Abstract- This conceptual paper builds on the assertion that, though there is a dire need to revisit the traditional tourist attractions of Mauritius in order to increase earnings, offset seasonality of beach tourism and boost up competitiveness and attractiveness of the destination, not much headway has been made to diversify the country's tourism sector through the development of cultural tourism. It is proven that this type of tourism not only attracts high-spending visitors to a host country, but also helps consolidate its arts and culture sector. Albeit the fact that there has been a rich rhetoric as regards the necessity for a convergence of arts and culture and tourism in Mauritius, very few concrete actions have been undertaken so far. Based on a combination of theories of marketing and psychology, the author under takes a review of the relevant literature, enumerates the main rhetoric pertaining to cultural tourism in Mauritius, as stated in the official documents of the country, and, through critical thinking and reflective analysis, puts forth a conceptual model and some action-oriented proposals on how cultural tourism could be realised concretely in this country together with their justifications. The author also brushes over the main obstacles that could be impeding this kind of tourism.

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Cultural Tourism in Mauritius: From Rhetoric to Reality

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I. Introduction

Tourism industry has been and willremain a vital economic sector of development in Mauritius. Though Foreign Tourists Arrivals (FTA)[1]reached 1,151,723, Gross Earnings, 49.5 billion, and direct employment, 29,107 in 2015, one cannot afford to remain complacent. The lethal combination of the aftermath of the 2008 economic recession and euro-zone crisis, tough competition from other regional countries (Lallch and, 2013: 1-4),and persistent sluggish world economic growth (OECD Report, 2015)[2], despite lower oil prices and the country's shifting strategy from EURO to BRIC markets, must have triggered concern among stakeholders in this industry. Since 2011, it must have been realised that the traditional 3Ss, 'sun, sand and sea' (even if we add a 4th and a 5th'S'– smile and sex) and other conventional and predictable attractions would no longer work to bring the sector to greater heights. A convergence of the cultural heterogeneity of the country and tourism was, thus, placed in the centre stage, and a rich rhetorical delivery, both verbal and written, ensued[3].Admittedly, rhetoric is important, for the rhetor/s could construct and put forth solid arguments, be persuasive and thus, present a vision, which could galvanize an audience. However, the present author opines that no real change could be brought about with rhetoric only and, as of date, very few concrete and significant steps have been taken, if at all, by the different actors to make of cultural tourism a source of earnings and job creation, let alone a means for consolidating the arts and culture sector.

This conceptual paper will attempt to she dlight on some of the rhetoric pertaining to the development of cultural tourism and the possible stumbling blocks in its realisation, and put forth a few action-oriented proposals based on a conceptual and theoretical framework built up from relevant literature on psychological and marketing theories. There is need to 'walk the talk' now.

II. Purpose of Inquiry and Inquiry Questions

In this submission, the author presents the main rhetoric on cultural tourism publicised in the last five years, discusses the main impede mentsandun folds a plausible way forward for making cultural tourism industry yet another major pillar of economic development in Mauritius. Therefore, the two questions put forth for this paper are:

1. To what extent is cultural tourism mostly rhetorical?
2. What could be done to make of cultural tourism a reality and, consequently, a major contributor to the country's sustainable development?

III. Importance of the Submission

This paper is significant and timely, as the country is presently undertaking a major revamping exercise of its socio-economic development agenda. The proposals put forth herein will, hopefully, trigger further intellectual ramification son the part of researchers and fructification of ideas and actions from policy-makers.

IV. Outline of Theoretical Framework

The fact that the materialisation, and success of cultural tourism are determined, largely, by the satisfaction of the inward tourists' needs, values and expectations, which, in turn, shape their travel motivations, choices and behaviours, and experiences, the discussion herein focuses on two most important components of cultural tourism, namely; tourists and their motivations, and the attractions and their experiences. It is based on an overarching theoretical framework combining Maslow's (1943:2-20, 1970) Theory of Hierarchical Needs, Pine and Gilbert's (1999:

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97-105)Theory of Progression of Value and the Concept of 4Es, and McKercher and Du Cros' (2003: 46-58) Typology of a Cultural Tourist.

According to Maslow's (1943:2-20) Theory of Hierarchical Needs, there is a hierarchy of five basic human needs, namely; Physiological; Safety; Belongingness or Love; Esteem and Self-actualization. People's desires to satisfy these needs act as motivations for them to make choices, take decisions and behave accordingly. These motivations also influence their expectations, and the meeting of which determine their lasting experiences. In 1970, Maslow came up with two more needs, namely; Aesthetic Need and Need to Know and Understand, which are also very relevant to cultural tourism.

Pine and Gilbert's (1999:97-105) Theory of Progression of Value for more competitiveness and attractiveness, and the Concept of 4Es, namely; Educational, Esthetic, Escapist, and Entertainment areused to explain the kinds of attractions, goods and services stakeholders in the cultural tourism sector could offer, and the kinds of experiences the tourist is expected to have for everlasting impressions and repeat visits.

McKercher and Du Cros' (2003: 46-58) Typology of a Cultural Tourist is used to give a picture of the types of cultural tourists the country can expect to receive, and the marketing strategies to be implemented.

V. Definition of Terms

a) Culture

Williams (1976) is quoted by Throsby (2001: 4-5) as saying that culture is "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language." There is, at least, unanimity on the view that 'culture' is one among the most slippery words to define.Having said this, it is made clear at the very outset that it is neither within the purview, nor purpose of this paper to embark on an in-depth discussion on the definitions of the terms 'culture' and 'cultural tourism'. However, with a view to giving a direction to the ensuing discussion, some working definitions of 'culture' and 'cultural tourism' are given below.

The author subscribes to a definition of culture from an anthropological perspective, as a system of shared attitudes, values, beliefs, practices, customs, and traditions that give identity to a community or group of people, and bind them together. Culture is also understood from a more pragmatic viewpoint, as an activity involving the creation and practice of the arts, which can include, but not restricted to, music, dance, drama, painting, sculpture, literature, poetry, and films (Throsby, 2001:4-5).

b) Cultural Tourism

When asked to define cultural tourism, McKercher and Du Cros (2002) states, "…this seemingly simple question is actually very difficult to answer because there are almost as many definitions…of cultural tourism as there are cultural tourists". The reason for this difficulty is that even the word 'culture' itself is difficult to define.

For the purpose of this paper, three definitions of cultural tourism have been retained, namely; the conceptual definition as put forth by Richards (1996)which defines the nature of the phenomenon of tourists consuming culture; the WTO's (1985) definition of Cultural tourism which distinguishes the purpose of the cultural tourist (tourist-based) from that of a non-cultural tourist; and the CACN's (1994)definition of cultural tourism[4], which is all-encompassing in nature. All three are, however, based on the above definition of culture.

Conceptual Definition of Cultural tourism (Richards, 1996)

"The movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs".

World Tourism Organisation's (1985) Definition

WTO defines Cultural tourism as '(M) ovements of persons for essential cultural motivations, such as study tours, performing arts, cultural tours, travel to festivals and other events, visits to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore or art, and pilgrimages.'

Commonwealth of Australia Creative Nation's (CACN's), (1994) Definition

'Cultural Tourism embraces the full range of experiences visitors can undertake to learn what makes a destination distinctive – its lifestyle, its heritage, its arts, its people – and the business of providing and interpreting that culture to visitors.'

c) Cultural Tourist

A thorough examination of the literature would give us a clue as to who a cultural tourist could be, though it is very difficult to pin down such a tourist to one definition. However, an indication of what the author understands, though partially, by a cultural tourist is given hereunder:

"A cultural tourist is aculture-oriented tourist who is, exclusively, partly, or incidentally, involved in cultural activities and/or attracted by the cultural resources of a host community with a view to acquiring more knowledge and experiences, besides spending a pleasant time experiencing them" (Pudaruth, 2012).

d) Tourist Motivation

Need and motivation are interconnected according to consumer behaviour literature(Witt &

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Wright, 1992:44).Tourist motivation is explained through the dynamic process of certain needs creating tension or disequilibrium within the tourists, resulting in performance of certain actions to satisfy those needs and thus, restoring that equilibrium (Crompton, 1979: 408-424).Here, it is important to underscore that need is different from desire. When a tourist satisfies her/his need, it is her/his 'recognized need', also termed as 'desire', which is referred to in psychology. Tourist motivation is the driving force behind any behaviour, including travel.

e) Rhetoric

The word 'rhetoric'used in this paper refers to discourses that are persuasive and effective, and not in a pejorative sense to mean 'empty words', or 'empty language'. On the contrary, this word is mentioned to confirm that the different rhetors, over a fairly long period of time, have been able to put forth solid claims and arguments in favour of cultural tourism, and the audience, the general public, is now fully convinced of its necessity for further development in the country. The next step is to translate rhetoric into reality.

f) Reality

Reality can be defined as that which "exists independently of ideas concerning it", or "Whatever is accepted as having objective existence, independent of thought or language" (Webster's College Dictionary, 2010, & Dictionary of Unfamiliar Words by Diagram Group, 2008).

VI. Literature Review

Cultural tourism is not a new concept in the world. Since ancient times, people have been travelling with the motivation to discover and experience new civilisations, new cultures, and new ways of living of people. However, it is only since the early 1980s that cultural tourism has been regarded as a form of tourism different from recreational tourism and "viewed as a major source of economic development for many destinations" (OECD, 2009: 19).The key motivators for cultural tourism are to get involved in and learn and understand about new cultures, places, peoples, and practices for self-enrichment and self-development.

According to the World Tourism Organization, domestic and inbound/in ward cultural tourism (Internal Tourism) are regarded as an important industry having the capacity to generate jobs and earnings directly, and, indirectly, through externalities or spill-overs, and multipliers effects. Cultural tourism is now increasingly becoming one of the largest and rapidly-growing tourism markets worldwide (OECD, 2009:9-22). This is mainly due to the fact that culture is leveraged as the main attraction to increase competitiveness and appeal of tourist destinations. Conversely, cultural tourism can also provide an important means for enhancing culture of the host country by creating income "which can support and strengthen cultural heritage, cultural production and creativity" (OECD, 2009:17).In the 1980s, cultural tourism was more motivated by curiosity and the desire to merely discover new cultures and their cultural, historical and archaeological assets. Whereas in the 1990s, the key motivator for cultural tourism was to understand and learn about new cultures, places, peoples, and practices for self-enrichment and self-development.

Many developing and developed countries have realized that cultural tourism is worth pursuing, because it is a high-spending kind of tourism involving highly educated individuals (Richards, 2014). According to OECD (2009:21), 40% of global tourism trips (898 million Total International Arrivals) was dedicated to cultural tourism (358 million Cultural Trips) in 2007. Diversity of experiences, more inclined towards 'life-seeing' rather than 'sight-seeing', is now becoming one of the most important motivations for the tourists (OECD, 2009:20).

Each culture has its own cultural expressions and arte facts, or, simply put, symbols, through which certain meanings are conveyed and certain realities are represented.

The UNCTAD Creative Report 2008 mentions 'heritage' as the origin of all traditional cultural expressions or manifestations. These can begrouped under tangible and intangible as follows:

Tangible

- Arts-and-crafts, festivals, celebrations
- Monuments, archaeological sites, gardens, parks
- Books, ancient treatises
- Painting and sculpture
- Intangible
- Music, dance, theatre, puppetry, opera, ballet, circus
- Language, script
- Forms and appearances of jewellery, accessories, costumes, footwear

According to Throsby (2010), heritage is an important determining factor of cultural expressions. Cultural heritage refers to inherited things from the past that have cultural significance. There are three types of cultural heritage.

- Built or Immoveable heritage: buildings, monuments, sites, locations and so on.
- Moveable heritage: artworks, archives, artefacts and so on. These two are tangible heritage.
- Intangible heritage: music, dance, literature, poems, language, various cultural practices, rituals, skills; knowledge and so on.

UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (CSICH) defines intangible cultural heritage as:

'the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects,

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artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.'[5]

In short, it can refer to the behaviours, values, traditions, customs/convention (a set of agreed, stipulated and accepted standards, norms, rules and criteria), practices, beliefs, artistic expressions and language of a group of people or people in a particular society.[6]

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) classifies broadly the cultural heritage as follows:

- Literature
- Architectures and Sculptures
- Photographs
- Music
- Dance
- Lifestyles
- Myths
- Rituals
- Festivals
- Legendary figures/artistes

From the above, it is understood that cultural heritage, whether tangible or intangible, is inherited from the past, and is unique and worthy of preserving and maintaining in the present, and bestowing to posterity. Heritage can include not only the traditional, but also the contemporary things, expressions and practices of the people, the popular culture (Richard, 2014:3,Csapo, 2012: 201-231, OECD, 2009:25). Some cultural heritage resources can have transnational dimension as well (Rizzo, 2015: 2), for their being declared as World Heritage by UNESCO. Aapravasi Ghatat Trou Fanfaron and Le Morne Cultural Landscape in Mauritius are cases in point.

Richards (2003:7), quoting the European Centre for Traditional and Regional Cultures (ECTARC, 1989), Wales, puts forth a typology of cultural resources/ attractions as follows:

a) Archaeological Sites and Museums
b) Architecture (ruins, famous buildings, whole towns)
c) Art, Sculpture, Crafts, Galleries, Festivals, Events
d) Music and Dance (classical, folk, contemporary)
e) Drama (theatre, films, dramatists)
f) Language and Literature Study, Tours & Events
g) Religious Festivals, Pilgrimage Sites
h) Complete (folk or primitive) Cultures and Sub-cultures

Here, it is worth noting that the number and nature of the cultural attractions are not fixed and static. These are and will be subject to change. This is due to the fact that the concept of culture itself is undergoing change. What was considered as culture to mean only high culture and ancestral culture (classical music and dance, traditions and customs, literature, fine arts, museums, etc) is now sharing space with culture which encompasses the popular culture and contemporary culture. The above-stated typology of cultural attractions depict this wider spectrum of the definition of culture.

Dwyer and Kim (2003:378-381) mention cultural heritage and the activities related thereto as important factors of competiveness and attractiveness of a tourist destination. It is argued, however, that only the inherited factors might not bring in the competitive edge. It is how the inherited assets are worked upon without losing any of its symbolic value and deployed which make the difference. In an OECD Report (2005, pp 83-84), Xavier Greffe et al mention, among others, permanence of cultural attractions and activities and participation of local people therein, and capacity of the host country to provide the goods and services on a constant and consistent basis, as three main determinants for a successful, competitive and attractive cultural tourism. According to Porter (1990, pp. 77-79), out of the main 'drivers' of competitiveness, factor conditions, which are twofold, namely; inherited and created factors, are relevant to tourism, in general, and cultural tourism, in particular. Thus, a country has to leverage all its factor conditions creatively, effectively, and efficiently in order to be more competitive and attractive. In their Experience Economy Framework, Pine and Gilmore (1999:97-105) argue that today's customers' value comes from 'positive, engaging, memorable, lasting experiences', termed as 'experiential value', in addition to high quality products. Experiential value refers to the experience of benefits the customers get from not only high quality goods and services, but also from interactions with people, things, and places. In the case of a cultural attraction, say an Indian music recital, the venue, the décor, the smiling and welcoming hostesses, the anchor, the high quality performances, the merchandise (free or against payment musical artifacts or 'musicabilia' (Pudaruth, 2012)), the culture-based food products available, interaction with the performers after the recital, and the personalized hands-on, on-site experiences with the music/musical instruments are some of the positive elements that will go a long way in making the tourist's experience a memorable, lasting one. The creation of experiential value requires a new vision, and a good amount of opportunity detection, innovation, and creativity on the part of the provider.

According to OECD (2009:19-22),the following are some justifications for developing cultural tourism:

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From the demand side

- Increased interest in culture and travel due to higher education level and standard of living;
- More emphasis on personal development rather than materialism;
- Need for direct experiences;
- Need for cultural understanding;
- Increased facilities for accessing other cultures.
- Accessing information easily on culture and tourism through ICT.

From the supply side

- Cultural tourism for further sustainable development;
- Recognition of cultural tourism as 'quality' and 'high-spending' tourism;
- Cultural tourism as means for valorising and preserving cultural heritage;
- Increased cultural attractions due to development;
- Less seasonal as compared to beach and other tourism;

There have been several typologies put forward on who a cultural tourist is, each based on her/his degree of cultural motivation (Richards, 2003:9). The scale can oscillate from general to specific interest in culture (Stebbins, 1996,&Silberberg, 1995, as cited in (Yun D. et al, 2008:101-102)).By water (1993), as cited in Richards (2003:9), mentions three types of cultural tourists; culturally-interested, culturally-motivated and culturally-inspired. However, the typology proposed by McKercher and Du Cros (2003: 46-58) is worthy of giving some thoughts and considerations, for it is based on and takes into account not only the tourists' motivation and interest in culture, but also their expected 'depth' of cultural experiences.

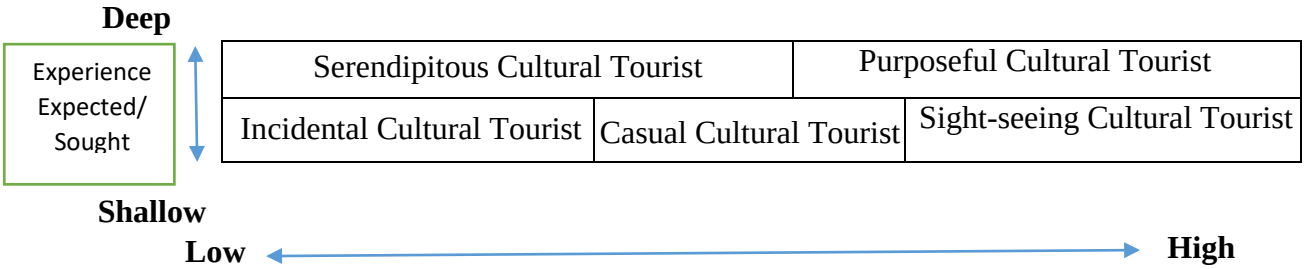


Fig. 1: Typology of Cultural Tourists as Proposed by McKercher and Du Cros (2003: 46-47)

Table 1: Motive, Interest and Experience Obtained of the Five Types of Cultural Tourists

Type of Cultural Tourist	Motive for Travel/Visiting a destination	Interest	Experience Obtained
Purposeful cultural tourist	Primary motive – Cultural tourism (Ct)	High	Deep
Sight-seeing cultural tourist	Primary motive – Cultural tourism (Ct)	High	Shallow
Serendipitous cultural tourist	Primary motive - General, and not Ct	Low	Deep
Casual cultural tourist	Weak motive - Ct	Mixed	Shallow
Incidental cultural tourist	Ct is no motive at all	Low	Shallow

From the above table, one can easily make out that the demand of the first three is quite strong, whereas that of the 4th and 5th is weak, if not, downright, nil. It is precisely for these categories that there should be greater resource mobilization and deployment.

Data collected by different tourism agencies on the profile of the cultural tourist have given the following indications:

i. Considered as high-spending tourist;
ii. comes mostly from the more developed countries in the northern hemisphere, 'western world';
iii. earns more money and likes to spend more to acquire experiences;
iv. spends more time in one place;
v. is very much interested in doing shopping;
vi. is more educated and culturally-inclined;
vii. belongs to the senior citizens' category;
viii. belongs more to the female gender;
ix. gives more importance to quality time which cultural activities can offer;
x. follows the 'travel, trek, relax and unwind'mantra (Bhatia, 2011);
xi. is more apt to search for meaning in life which she/he finds in culture, heritage and nature (Richards, 2014:13);
xii. is free from active life and filial responsibilities.

Several research studies on the ground have evinced that in order to understand the reasons why tourists travel and look forward to have a good time in a host country, one has to start with the variable called 'tourist motivation', among other variables. Motivation explains everything from satisfying needs, making choices, taking decisions and performing actions to reach certain goals. Below is an indication on how the needs-based of Maslow (1943), is applied to explain the cultural tourists' behaviours.

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Needs-based Theory

Many research studies have, by and large, assumed that a tourist chooses a destination in order to satisfy her/his needs for self-actualisation (Shoemaker, 1994, Yuan & McDonald, 1990, Witt & Wright 1992, as cited in Kay, 2003; Stephens, 2000). As mentioned earlier, according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, there are five needs or goals, namely; Physiological, Safety, Love, Esteem, and Self-actualization. Later, he came up with two more, namely; Aesthetic Need and Need to Know and Understand.

Satisfaction of Physiological Needs as Motivation

The satisfaction of hunger, thirst and other basic physiological needs is important not just for the cultural tourist, but for any tourist for that matter. However, for the cultural tourist, the experience of some exotic food and beverage, in short, the culinary and gastronomic experiences offered by the host country could be a motivation for travel and a significant cultural attraction because these form part of the local culture. Moreover, consumption as an attraction can also be linked with production. Tours in the fields/plantations/farms, products picking and/or tasting, and sale of foodstuff as souvenir can also be included in the attractive packages. Thus, besides quality, healthy and excellent meals, a suitable and comfortable place to put up, and food and beverage projecting the cultural identity of the host country could be great motivations for travel.

Satisfaction of Safety Needs as Motivation

Like other general tourists, cultural tourists also are motivated to travel and visit a destination with the expectation that there is safety all around and at all levels and thus, she/he is free of danger of all sorts. Food, shelter and travel safety and security are important determining factors in tourism, in general. The tourists expect protection from both psychological as well as physical harm. Is 'culture shock' a harmful or an enriching experience for the tourist? This is an area worthy of further probing.

Satisfaction of Belongingness or Love Needs as Motivation

Satisfaction of these needs is crucial in cultural tourism. It implies giving a fair treatment to and expecting a similar one from others. Giving and receiving of friendship, brotherhood, affection, and respect, and showing mutual tolerance and understanding among peoples are needs that ought to be satisfied for cultural tourism to develop and progress. Satisfaction of these needs fosters and enhances social interaction with one another, a 'sine qua non' for the advancement of cultural tourism. A warm and friendly welcome and hospitality and a congenial and rejuvenating environment are the key words for satisfying such needs. Different kinds of social and cultural activities should be organized to bring about interaction and integration among locals and visitors.

Satisfaction of Self-esteem Needs as Motivation

These needs of the tourists could be satisfied by others by providing all kinds of information, support and advice required to make of their stay a comfortable one. In the process, the self-esteem needs of the tourists are satisfied. The tourists themselves can contribute to satisfy these needs by traveling, learning, and understanding others and their cultures, and the whole world. Satisfaction of these needs leads to the feeling of self-confidence and adequacy.

Satisfaction of Aesthetic Need and Need to Know and Understand as Motivation

The satisfaction of these two needs are of paramount importance to cultural tourism, for they denote appreciation of beauty and acquisition of knowledge and skills. We can even go to the extent of saying that unless these needs are satisfied, the self-actualization needs cannot be met. Aesthetic need and need to know and understand could be satisfied by organizing festivals, exhibitions, concerts, tours and visits to specific sites, treasure-hunt kinds of activities, bottom-sea exploration, mountaineering, and by offering short-term courses to acquire specific skills, and so on and so forth. Opportunities must be provided so as to enable the tourists to inquire, question, express, experiment and appreciate.

Satisfaction of Self-actualization Needs as Motivation

Maslow argues that even if all the above-stated needs are satisfied, there is the possibility that a person develops "a new discontent and restlessness" (Maslow, 1943), unless she/he does something what she/he is fitted for. These needs can be satisfied by enabling the tourists to satisfy their other needs at a more professional level with the help of experts, or to do good to others as an expression of their altruism, or to create something new, or to settle down in a new environment. Hence, the satisfaction of these needs varies from individual to individual.

There are three main reasons why these needs ought to be satisfied. Firstly, a fully satisfied tourist will, most probably, recommend the same destination and products (goods and services) to his friends, acquaintances and relatives; secondly, she/he will not think twice and be tempted to repeat the experience, and thirdly, it is neither desirable, nor advisable to let the tourists go unsatisfied, for it is detrimental to the reputation of the organization and the host country, at large.

VII. From Rhetoric

Mauritius can, undoubtedly, boast around, for it has not only beautiful beaches, welcoming and friendly citizens, world-class services, and up market hotels, but is also the abode of the four great cultures and religions of the world, and a remarkable instance of peaceful co-existence. Therefore, the rhetoric on the creation of

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values, both cultural and economic, from its tangible and intangible heritage is not unwarranted. An indication of some proposed schemes (Budget Speeches 2011-2016, Republic of Mauritius, 2015 (President's Speech), Republic of Mauritius, 2015 (Prime Minister's Speech)Republic of Mauritius, n.d. (Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Tourism & External Communications, Strategic Paper))is given hereunder:

Promoting attractiveness, accessibility, visibility and sustainability of the tourist destinations;

Restoration, preservation, promotion and optimization of cultural and historical sites and their conversion as cultural venues for easy accessibility to the creative and cultural industries, and ultimately, tourists;

Promoting local cultural assets andwell-being of the locals;

Building up of a 'Stade Musical' (Musical Stadium);

Boosting up the fashion and entertainment industries;

Relating film festivals and film industries with tourism;

Setting up of a National Cultural Troupe;

Setting up of a National Centre for Performing Arts, and School of Arts;

Setting up of school bands;

Subsidizing 50% of the cost of cultural venues for local artistes;

Providing facilities to help cultural entrepreneurs;

Fostering urban development focused on arts and culture;

Creating new jobs (8000) in the tourism industry;

Setting up of Mauritian history, arts and culture – related museums;

VIII. Possible Obstacles in the Materialization of Cultural Tourism in Mauritius

Hereunder are given briefly some possible hindrances which might have impeded the realization of the above submission.

a) Policy Deficit

The convergence of culture and tourism is bound to receive little beyond lip-service in the absence of an informed, holistic, multi-sect oral, and evidence-based National Cultural Policy, which is, presently, non-existent. The author argues that it is only through the most appropriate, efficient, and effective tools that any government can bring about a paradigm shift, and expedite development through the building up of a synergy between arts and culture and tourism. And these tools are cultural policies which should be formulated in such a way as to cover a wider spectrum of ideas and actions (e.g. consolidation of cultural identity and diversity, creation of cultural and economic values, among others) and, at the same time, to use the multi-artistic and multi-cultural richness of the country and its people as the main resources for promoting quality, sustainable tourism.

b) Abuse of All-inclusive Package

The all-inclusive packages offered by most hotels is a major stumbling block. Tourists are given very little freedom, if at all, to move around and interact with the different cultural facets of the country and locals.

c) Lack of Security and Law and Order

Lack of security and safety for tourists has been considered a major hurdle in the development of tourism. Issues related to the security and safety of tourists have been and are still considered as significant causes for concern by the authorities. Cultural tourism implies free movements of tourists in a new destination with a view to knowing, understanding and experiencing others and their cultures. If they do not feel secured and safe in such an environment, there is no motivation to engage in any tourist activities at all, let alone culture-related ones.

d) Absence of 24x7 Culture

It is to be conceded that there is no night life in Mauritius, as it is the case in India and other big metropolises elsewhere. All important social and economic activities come to a dead end by 6.00 pm. There have been timid efforts on the part of the concerned authorities to implement the '24x7' concept whereby economic and social activities could be carried out throughout the night (at least, late in the night) on all seven days. But this has not had many takers for want of proper planning, monitoring, and awareness campaigns. Unfortunately, workers' federations and associations have taken it as a threat to their employment conditions and rights.

e) Lack of Expert Guidance

The development of cultural tourism not only ramifies upon other ministries of the government, thus soliciting a 'whole of government approach'[7], but also requires inputs from diverse sources, including researchers, professional practitioners, venue providers, corporate funders, cultural journalists and cultural entrepreneurs, to name a few, with a view to following the principle of 'making sense together'[8].

The oft-quoted proposition for the materialization and growth of cultural tourism should cease to be the sole concern of only one ministry or one individual. The development of cultural tourism not only ramifies upon other sectors/ministries of the government, thus soliciting a 'whole of government approach'[9], but also requires inputs from diverse sources, including researchers, professional practitioners, artists, curators, conservators, venue providers, corporate funders, events managers, web designers, cultural journalists and cultural entrepreneurs, to name a few, with a view to following the principle of 'making

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sense together'[10]. The expertise and contribution of each and every one of these agents must be taken on board.

f) Homogenization of Culture

Globalization, which can be understood as an 'acceleration and intensification of economic interaction among people, companies, and governments of different nations'[11] and thus, should have been more of a boon than a bane to developing countries, has, unfortunately, intensified not only economic, but also cultural corrosion. Admittedly, globalization has contributed, in one way or the other, to the socio-economic development of some countries, but on zooming in it is seen that some poor countries are still lagging behind in all respects, and the economically powerful ones are leading the show. Furthermore, the apparently attractive concept of 'global village', is, unfortunately, boiling down to a 'uni-cultural' global village. This unregulated, unchecked globalized economic process is rolling over and undermining local cultures and products, cultural diversity and cultural identity. The world is becoming the abode of a homogenous culture. Rightly enough, the sociologist George Ritzer, in his book, 'The Mc Donaldization of the Society' mentioned the term 'Mc Donaldization' to explain this phenomenon.[12] A global culture or cultural globalization should be founded on diversity, tolerance and respect, rather than mere uniformity.

g) Lack of Support to Cultural Entrepreneurs

The role of the private enterprises, basically MSMEs, involved in the production of creative, artistic and cultural products, whether for consolidation of cultural identity and for commercial purposes cannot be underrated in this scheme of things. The more developed and structured the enterprises are, the more state-of-the-art knowledge and skills the entrepreneurs possess and the more sophisticated their equipment and technologies are, the better and more specialized the final products will be. Forming part of the initial and most important stage of the value chain for providing cultural attractions, the contribution of these specialists is crucial since it determines the quality of the final products downstream and their economic value and success among the tourists.

h) Scarcity of Robust Data

As stated above, given the multi-sect oral nature of cultural tourism, on the one hand, and the nebulous and intangible character of cultural value, as distinguished from economic value, on the other, very little amount of robust data, if at all, is available for informed decision-taking action, thus impeding any concrete advancement in this sphere of activities.

Therefore, It is thus imperative that the Government sets up specialized institutions and put in place mechanisms, processes and strategies for collecting reliable and accurate data on this newly proposed area of operation and making them easily available to interested parties to have a clear picture of its performance and their impact on people, society and economy and to facilitate further studies on the sector for future actions. Availability of these data will also help in making analyses and identifying gaps, as and when needed, and better allocating resources.

IX. To Reality

Having said this, the author argues that only a very small percentage of what has been enumerated in various discourses has been realized so far, and the time is now ripe to translate those words into actions. Several threats to this sector are looming on the horizon. Cultural tourism is an avenue worth exploring to ensure quality 'niche markets'. The main reasons for focusing on the creation and development of these markets in the tourism sector are, firstly, to preserve the Mauritian environment of flora and fauna since "… tourism can be a deadly foe as much as a firm friend in the matter of development" (UNESCO, 2007), thus the greater the number of tourists, the worse the effects will be on the fragile eco-system of the country, secondly, to sustain the development of the vulnerable arts and culture sector, because it is the first to feel the axe when budgets are restrained, and, thirdly, to attract and stimulate interest in high-class, high-spending, sustainable tourism worldwide. It is wiser to increase visitors' spend rather than visitors' numbers.

X. Application of Maslow's Theory on Cultural Tourist Motivation

Several research studies have evinced that in order to understand the reasons why tourists travel and look forward to having a good time in a host country, one has to start with the variable called 'tourist motivation'. Motivation explains everything from satisfying needs, making choices, taking decisions and performing actions to reaching certain goals. As stated earlier, the needs-based theory of Maslow (1943:2-20) is applied to explain the cultural tourists' motivations and behaviours. Many research studies have, by and large, assumed that a tourist chooses a destination in order to satisfy her/his needs for self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943:2-20& 1970; Shoemaker, 1994, Yuan & McDonald, 1990, &Witt & Wright 1992, as cited in (Kay, 2003:600-610); Stephens, 2000).

a) Satisfaction of Physiological Needs as Motivation

The satisfaction of hunger, thirst and other basic physiological needs is important not just for the cultural tourist, but for any tourist. However, for the cultural tourist, the need for experiencing the exotic culinary and gastronomic assets of a host country could be a major motivation for travel. Moreover, consumption of these

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as an attraction can also be linked with their production. Tours in the fields/plantations/farms, products picking and/or tasting, and sale of foodstuff as souvenir can also form part of these cultural attractions.

b) Satisfaction of Safety Needs as Motivation

Like other general tourists, cultural tourists also are motivated to travel and visit a destination with the expectation that there is safety all around and at all levels. The tourists expect protection from both psychological as well as physical harm.

c) Satisfaction of Belongingness or Love Needs as Motivation

Satisfaction of these needs implies giving and expecting a fair treatment while traveling. Giving and receiving of friendship, affection, and respect, and showing mutual tolerance and understanding are some of the basic needs that ought to be satisfied for cultural tourism to develop and progress. Giving a warm and friendly welcome and hospitality, organizing enriching social and cultural activities and providing a congenial and rejuvenating environment could be some strategies for satisfying these needs.

d) Satisfaction of Self-esteem Needs as Motivation

These needs could be satisfied by providing the tourists with all kinds of information, support and advice required to make of their visits comfortable ones. Moreover, the tourists themselves can contribute to satisfy these needs by traveling, learning, and understanding others and their cultures, and the whole world.

e) Satisfaction of Aesthetic Need and Need to Know and Understand as Motivation

The satisfaction of these two needs is of paramount importance to cultural tourism. One can even go to the extent of saying that unless these needs are satisfied, the self-actualization needs cannot be met. Aesthetic need and need to know and understand could be satisfied through different creative ways. Opportunities must be provided so as to enable the tourists to appreciate, inquire, express, and experiment. Culture tourism is thus evolving into 'creative tourism' (Richards, 2015a:4-5, 2005b: Richards & Wilson, 2006:1218-1220).

f) Satisfaction of Self-actualization Needs as Motivation

Maslow (1943:2-20) argues that even if all the above-stated needs are satisfied, there is the possibility that a person develops "a new discontent and restlessness", unless she/he does something what she/he is fitted for. These needs can be satisfied by enabling the tourists either to satisfy their other pre-potent needs at a more professional level with the help of experts, or to do good to others as an expression of their altruism, or to create something new to give vent to their creativity, or to settle down in a new environment. Hence, the satisfaction of these needs varies from one activity to another and from one individual to another.

g) Reasons for Satisfying the above-stated Needs

There are three main reasons why the host country should help the tourists satisfy Maslow's Needs; firstly, a fully satisfied cultural tourist will, most probably, recommend the same destination and products to his friends, acquaintances and relatives; secondly, she/he will not think twice to repeat the experiences, and thirdly, it is not desirable to let the tourists go unsatisfied, for it is detrimental to the reputation of the organization and the host country/community.

Maslow's Theory is applicable to employees' motivation and organizational culture as well, but reflection in these areas have not been taken up in this paper for want of space.

XI. Need to Revisit Cultural Attractions

In Pine and Gilmore's (1999:97-105) Theory, commodities can be processed to make them into goods. These goods can then be processed into services and ultimately into 'positive, engaging memorable experiences', called 'experiential value'.

In the case of a cultural attraction, say an Indian music recital, the merchandise (free or against payment musical art efacts, or 'musicabilia' (Pudaruth, 2012), or DVDs), the venue, the décor, the smiling and welcoming hostesses, the anchor, the high quality performances, interaction with the performers after the recital, and the personalized hands-on, on-site experiences with the music/musical instruments are some of the positive elements that go a long way in making the tourist's experience of that specific attraction a memorable, lasting one. The creation of experiential value requires a new vision, and a good amount of opportunity detection, innovation, and creativity on the part of the providers. Fig. 2 below shows how a commodity such as music, for example, can be 'processed' into an experience value.

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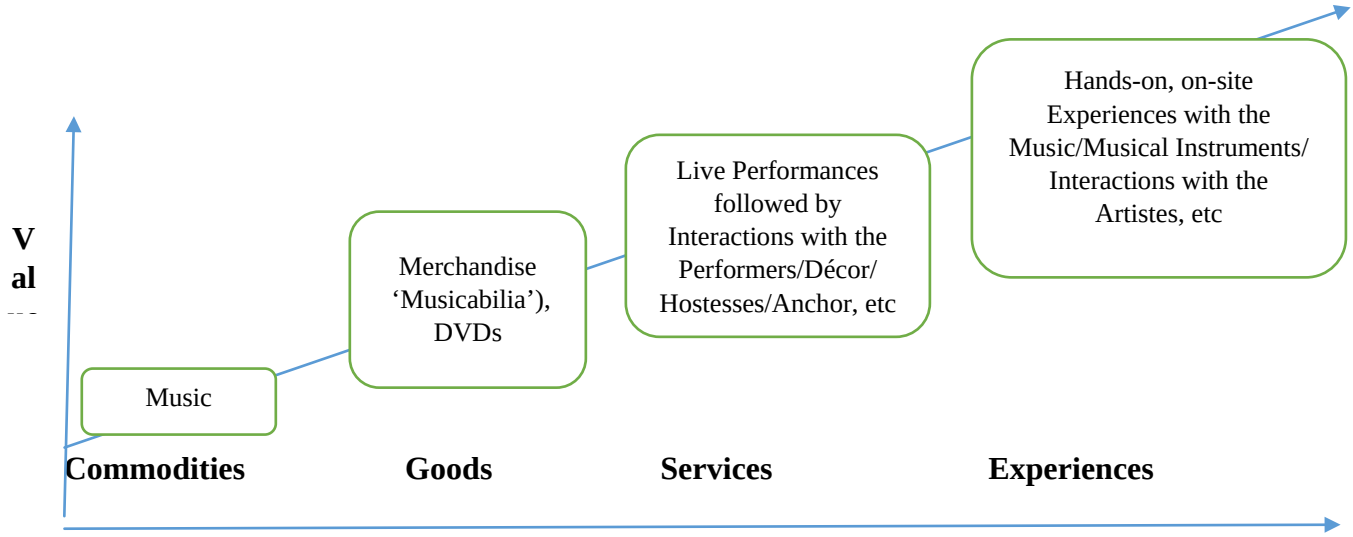


Fig. 2: Application of Pine and Gilmore's Progression of Value in Music

From the above, one can have an idea how providers of attractions could add value to their commodities by taking recourse to a progression of value, and how they could offer a business activity comprising the 4Es for enhancing their competitiveness and attractiveness.

Pine and Gilmore state that the experiential value comprises four dimensions to it, termed as the 4Es, and these are Educational, Escapist, Esthetic and Entertainment. These four experiences vary in accordance with the customer's active or passive involvement and absorption or immersion in it. Any cultural attraction can have any one, two, three or all four experiences in it. Pine and Gilmore argue that a customer passively participates in the Entertainment and Esthetic dimensions, whereas the Escapist and Educational dimensions require her/his active participation. Conversely, the customer is 'absorbed' in the Entertainment and Educational experiences and is 'immersed' in the Escapist and Esthetic dimensions. Absorption occurs when the customer's attention is occupied by the experience received at the mental level and immersion happens when the customer becomes physically a part of the experience itself. Listening to a live music recital is a case of passive absorption in an Entertainment experience, sitting in a well-decorated, traditionally inspired interior of an auditorium is an instance of passive immersion of an Esthetic experience, taking part in a hands-on musical activity, for example, learning how to handle and play the seven notes on a Sitar, is a case of active absorption in an Educational experience, and enacting a character in a real or virtual mystery solving activity or role in a drama is a typical example of an active immersion in the Escapist experience.

After the 'experience' value, Pine and Gilmore (1999:97-105) have hinted at the creation of a fifth value which is in the sphere of 'transformation'. This refers toan experience which can impact, directly, on the experiencer and bring about changes in her/his psycheand behaviour.

XII. The Way Forward: Recommendations

a) *Cultural Attractions*

i. Devise ways and means to apply Pine and Gilmore's Progression of Value to enable the tourist to have 'experiential value', as regards cultural attractions;
ii. Identify unexploited cultural resources for creation of values;
iii. Lay more emphasis on creation of local cultural products and experiences;
iv. Identify historical and cultural sites for conversion into cultural venues;
v. Set up and develop a 'Mauritian Multicultural Resort', as a permanent site which could capture the multiculturalism of Mauritius and could be built in such a way as to receive between 3000-5000 visitors at one go;
vi. Organise different 'area-based' or 'street-based' cultural activities in different locations of the country;
vii. Develop seamless cultural tourist circuits involving the regional countriesto promote progression of values.

b) *Publicity and Marketing*

i. Prioritize development of Cultural Tourism;
ii. Develop a new Brand Name and related themes, slogans and logos for campaigns in targeted countries;
iii. Increase visibility and accessibility of Mauritius;
iv. Host major international events through regional co-operation initiatives.

c) *Training & Skills Development*

i. Identify and address gaps in training and skills development;
ii. Develop new ways and means to professionalise creation and delivery of cultural products;

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iii. Ensure that components of arts, culture and cultural tourism form part of the existing training programmes of the tourism employees;
iv. Devise ways and means of attracting people having expertise in other fields such as arts, culture, history, sociology and psychology to form part of the tourism sector;
v. Ensure that tertiary institutions offer industry-oriented, pre-service and in-service training and education for the advancement of cultural tourism;
vi. Organise workshops, seminars and conferences on cultural tourism;
vii. Set up the National Centre for Performing Arts, under which could emerge the National Cultural Troupe.

d) Safety and Security of Tourists

i. Consolidate PR Unit of the Ministry of Tourism to reassure and inform potential tourists as regards the security and safety measures in place;
ii. Strengthen law enforcing agencieson the ground;
iii. Make intensive and extensive use of ICT and mobile media to assist tourists in need;
iv. Devise and implement appropriate risks/crises management and damage control strategies;

e) Domestic Cultural Tourism

i. Encourage domestic cultural tourism to offset seasonality of inbound tourism, thus ensuring year-round tourist activities;
ii. Encourage organization of corporate activities in specific cultural and historical sites;
iii. Introduce the concept of a Corporate Cultural Responsibility (CCR), thus enabling possibility of tax concessions to corporates involved in cultural actions and promotion, and providing financial support to cultural and artistic start-ups;
iv. Allow income tax benefits on expenses incurred by locals on visits to cultural sites, or purchase of cultural products, or through involvement in cultural activities;
v. Relate cultural tourism with other types of tourism for locals;
vi. Relate visits to cultural sites and involvement in cultural activities with primary and secondary education learning objectives and outcomes.

f) Re-positioning of Mauritius as a Cultural Tourism Destination

i. Devise tourism policies with a strong emphasis on cultural tourism;
ii. Develop a multi-sectoral approach in promoting cultural tourism;
iii. Monitor, measure, re-visit, and re-work strategies in the light of new development in the sector;
iv. Revamp urgently old practices undermining development in the sector;
v. Encourage Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) initiatives to further development;
vi. Involve Mauritian embassies for promotional activities;
vii. Set up a National Cultural Tourism Commission (NCTC) to spearhead cultural tourism projects.

g) Cultural Tourist

i. Build up a database on past, potential and repeat cultural tourists;
ii. Customize packages for repeat visitors,or visitors with specific needs and requirements with diverse cultural products and experiences;
iii. Mobilize and deploy greater resources on serendipitous, casual and incidental cultural tourists.

h) Final Remarks

Given that the cultural, socio-economic and political environments of the country are, presently, conducive for stakeholders in the different sectors to take on the extra mile for bringing in more prosperity and well-being in the country, it is more a matter of necessity than anything else to put into practice what has been said for quite some time now. The convergence of culture and tourism should be the order of the day. If the above submission regarding the materialization of cultural tourism could trigger an intellectual catalysis among well-wishers and proponents of cultural tourism, this attempt is well rewarded. Any effort to shy away from taking concrete actions to develop cultural tourism in Mauritius will be detrimental to not only the socio-economic development, but also the cultural environment of the country in the future.

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Notes

[1] Except for the year 2009
[2] As reported by David Jolly in *New York Times* on 4 June 2015
[3] *Budgets Speeches* 2011 – 2015
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[7]See *Strategic Paper* by Hon. Charles Gaëtan Xavier- Luc Duval, G.C.S.K., F.C.A
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[10] *Draft White Paper*, Creative Mauritius Vision 2025, Ministry of Arts and Culture
[11] See Globalisation101.0rg
[12] Quoted in Globalization 101.org

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