

**INTEGRATING CULTURE AND HERITAGE INTO THE
TOURISM PRODUCT OF THE MALDIVES**

By

Fathmath Rasheeda

THESIS

Submitted to

KDI School of Public Policy and Management

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY

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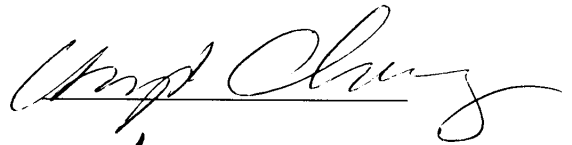
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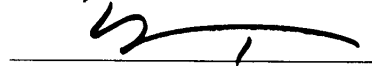
MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY

Committee in charge:

Professor Hongik CHUNG, Supervisor



Professor Taejong KIM



Professor Ha-chung YEON



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ABSTRACT

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The Maldives is known worldwide for its natural beauty. However, the country also boasts of a rich culture and history that have yet to be explored and experienced by the hundreds of thousands of tourists visiting the country every year. The purpose of this paper is, therefore, to explore the possibility of integrating the cultural and heritage resources of the country into its successful tourism industry. The paper examines existing literature on the experiences of other countries that are using their culture and heritage as part of their tourism product. Through the research certain negative impacts such as commodification of the cultural products and loss of traditional values were identified. It was also identified that a successful integration of the tourism product with the cultural and heritage assets would not only enrich the visitors experience, but also help manage the rare and fragile resources in a sustainable manner. Moreover, it would help attain economic and social benefits to the host community. It is believed that certain recommended actions such as strengthening the infrastructure, educating the locals and visitors, establishment of a Cultural Management System and continuous marketing would ensure the success of an integration between the culture and heritage and the tourism industry of the Maldives.

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Dedicated to my mom who has always been a pillar of strength

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND UNITS

AIDS	– Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ICOMOS	– International Council on Monuments and Sites
MOFT	– Ministry of Finance and Treasury
MOTAC	– Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture
MPND	– Ministry of Planning and National Development
NCLHR	– National Centre for Linguistic and Historical Research
PDR	– Peoples Democratic Republic
SARS	– Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
UNESCO	– United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	– World Tourism Organization

UNITS

1 Celsius = 33.8 Fahrenheit

1 hector = 10,000 square meters

1 square kilometer = 100 hectors

USD 1 = MVR 15.36 (as of 01 August 2012)

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Statement

The Maldives is famous for its natural beauty with its white, sandy beaches, crystal clear waters, sunny atmosphere and extraordinary underwater garden. The country also boasts of a history that dates back to the days of pirates and seafarers, of shipwrecks, of heroes who fought for its sovereignty and of culture that is deeply embedded into the daily life of its citizens.

Since the inception of tourism 40 years ago, the government ushered this industry to capitalize on the natural heritage separate from the cultural heritage of the country. As a result, the tourism industry has now become a commodity for the power holders and the wealthy class. The natural heritage has become a cash crop rather than part of life and livelihood of the local citizens. The linkage between the tourism sector and other sectors of the country had not been firmly laid out or developed. The cultural and heritage assets have been disregarded. The local community too had been alienated.

The swift development and growth of the tourism industry had therefore left the rest of the industries far behind. Surely, the government policy has made a strategic tradeoff between short-term benefits and long-term interests of the country. It is, however, possible for these two interests to be reconciled without having to make a grand choice between these two imperatives.

1.2 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the possibility of linking the culture and heritage with the successful tourism industry of the Maldives for social, economic and other benefits. While acknowledging the reasons why culture and heritage has been set aside from the tourism industry till date, the study also aims to discover existing challenges and identify ways to overcome them. As mentioned by Smith (2009), although the Maldives is best known for its natural resources, the nation has the potential to offer cultural experiences to its visitors.

1.3 Significance of the Study

An integration between the cultural and heritage resources of a country and its tourism product can enrich visitors experience together with economic and social benefits for the host community. There is a strong relationship between sustainable tourism and the conservation of a society's' culture and heritage. While the cultural heritage of a community contributes to the growth of its tourism industry, the tourism industry itself has the power to generate the funds necessary to preserve the community's culture and heritage (Endreson, 1999). According to Endreson (1999), tourism loses its potential for growth if not sustainably managed, while cultural heritage loses its meaning without an audience or without the society contributing to it or benefiting from it. Therefore, a successful integration of the tourism product with the cultural and heritage assets would not only enrich the visitors experience but also help manage the rare and fragile resources in an ethically responsible and sustainable manner. Moreover, it would help attain economic and social benefits to the host community.

Countries all over the world have successfully formulated and implemented policies that had brought together their tourism product and their cultural and heritage assets in a sustainable manner.

However, in the case of the Maldives, despite the country's rich culture, traditions, historical sites and history, cultural and heritage tourism had not taken root in the Maldives (MOTAC, 2012a) and little effort has been made to explore this integration. Besides which, no serious research has been conducted to evaluate the possibility of employing the cultural and heritage assets for tourist consumption. Although the integration of these two sectors has been suggested in various national plans, it has yet to be implemented. It is therefore, believed that this research would give the extra push needed in the direction of enforcing these plans.

1.4 Research Question

Tourists are constantly looking for new things, new ways to enrich their experience (Richards, 1996 ed). There is also a persistent need to increase the local participation in the economic growth of the country. Experts believe that the leakages from the tourism industry can be reduced through strengthening the linkages with support sectors (MOTCA, 2007). This brings us to the question behind this research: Should culture and heritage be used as part of the tourism product of the Maldives? What are the challenges and how can they be overcome?

In order to enhance visitors experience, to increase the economic and social benefits for the host community, to increase the respect and awareness among the locals as well as to heighten the interests of the locals in the national development of their community and the country as a whole, culture and heritage should be integrated into the tourism product of the Maldives. Despite the qualms about the potential negative impacts of such an integration,

tourism and culture are inseparable (Richards, 1996 ed) and with corrective and decisive measures, the negative impacts can be reduced if not eliminated.

This paper, therefore, examines the possibility of this integration, concurrently exploring different options. Additionally, with the help of the experiences of various countries, the paper will provide recommendations to overcome the challenges that can hinder the successful assimilation of these two facets of this island nation.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the study

The research is based on the study of the tourism and cultural product of two destinations; namely, Phuket, Thailand and Hoi An, Vietnam. Comparing a similar and competing destination such as Mauritius or Seychelles would have been ideal. However, they too, like the Maldives have yet to integrate their cultural and heritage resources into their tourism product (Smith, 2009). A brief study of the tourism and cultural product of nearby destinations such as Rajasthan (India), Malaka (Malaysia), Kandy (Sri Lanka) and Singapore was carried out to understand the social, economic and environmental impacts of using tourism and culture for tourist consumption. However, due to lack of statistical information, they were not included in the report.

The research has been carried out with the following three options in mind;

1. Leave the tourism industry as it is and continue being a premium beach holiday destination
2. Integrate culture and heritage into the tourism product.
3. Develop cultural tourism as a separate product of its own.

It is important to note at this point that this paper will only be concentrating on the first two options. While, as mentioned earlier, little research has been done on the subject, none of them had been qualitative. Therefore it would require further and much intensive research to address the viability of establishing a specialized tourism product such as cultural tourism in the Maldives. Due to the limited scope of the paper, such a venture had not been addressed.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Background Information

2.1.1 The Maldive Islands

The Maldives is a nation of over 1100 low-lying coral islands (DNP, 2011) scattered across the equator in the Indian Ocean. With an average height of the islands at 1 meter above sea level (MPND, 2008), the country is known to have the worlds' lowest highest point. The country stretched over an area of 859,000 square kilometers, comprises a total land area of approximately 300 square kilometers (DNP, 2011). Only 194 islands are inhabited, the largest island having a land area of 595.6 hectors and the smallest 5.64 hectors (MPND, 2008). Another 107 islands (MOTAC, 2012b) are developed or being developed as tourist resorts while another 55 islands have been reserved for agricultural and industrial use (DNP, 2008). With a temperature ranging between 24 and 33 Degrees Celsius (DNP, 2011) the country is known to have a climate that is warm throughout the year. According to DNP (2011) at the end of 2011 the country's local population was estimated to be at 319,738 with an additional 73,840 foreign workers by the end of 2010. Census 2006 shows that 35% of the local population is located in the capital city Male' (DNP, 2011) which has a land area of 193.2 hectors (MPND, 2008). The rest of the population is distributed among the remaining inhabited islands, where 131 islands have a population of less than 1000 (DNP, 2011), making the island communities unique and the island population very conservative.

2.1.2 The Tourism Industry

The serenity, seclusion and the enchanting and pristine environment of the islands has made the country's tourism experience 'unique' (Gayyoom, 2002, cited in Niyaz, 2002), and has help transfer the country into a "quintessential island holiday destination" with a global

reputation (MOTCA, 2007), winning international awards and recognition. Being awarded World's Most Romantic Destination and World leading Dive Destination a number of years by World Travel Awards (MOTCA 2008) and being listed a number of times in the Country Brand Index by Future Brand (FB, 2008 and FB, 2011) to name a few. A list of recent awards is given under Appendix I.

The tourism industry of the Maldives which began in 1972 with only 2 resorts (MOTCA, 2008) has grown rapidly. The number of registered resorts increased from 2 to 107 (MOTAC, 2012b) within the 40 years of its tourism history. The supply of tourist accommodation increased from 280 beds in 1972 (MOTCA, 2008) to over 25,000 beds by the end of 2010 (MOTAC, 2011). The volume of tourist arrivals have increased from 1,097 in 1972 (Niyaz, 2002) to over 791,000 by the end of 2010 (MOTAC, 2009) which is twice that of the current population of the country. In 2010 tourism accounted for over 35 percent of the GDP, over 713 million US\$ in Tourism Receipts (the expenditure by the tourist during their stay in the Maldives) (DNP, 2011), and more than 25,000 direct employment (MOTCA, 2007), becoming the 'key platform' for the economic development of the country.

Regulations to ensure environmentally sustainable practices was developed and monitored by the central government, willingly adhered by the industry. Regulations were formulated to limit the build-up area, the heights of buildings as well as to ensure reef protection (MOTCA, 2007). Other strict environmental measures were also formulated such as having to set up solid waste management systems, having to carry out Environmental Impact Assessments prior to any developments, and to carry out environmental protection regimes (MOTCA, 2007). These have all led to harmonization of tourism with the fragile natural environment of the islands.

With the 107 registered resorts (MOTAC, 2012b) and 20 registered hotels (MOTAC, 2012c) the country has a variety of local and international chains. Some of the world famous chains invested in the tourism industry include; Amari, Angsana, Conrad, Four Seasons, Hilton, Jumairah, Shangri-La, Six Senses, Taj and W Retreat (MOTAC, 2012b). A list of the hotels and resorts is given under Appendix II.

2.1.3 The Culture and Heritage of the Country

Maldives is not just sun, sand and sea. It has much more to offer, unidentified and untapped. Despite the success story of the successful tourism industry, there are certain aspects of it that require scrutiny. Due to the unique geography of the country as well as the small size of the islands, there was a need for sustainable development of this industry. As such strong regulatory framework governing the “environmental issues, resort development and operation issues and health and safety issues” was put in place and implemented to ensure this sustainable development (MOTAC, 2007). Promoting the concept of “one island-one resort”, every resort in the Maldives is built on an island of its own (MOTCA, 2007) separate and totally detached from the islands inhabited by the locals. According to UNWTO (2000) this policy of separation has been enforced to protect the culture of the host country from the exposure to the western influences. However during the past few years the interest for community-based tourism has been growing (MOTCA, 2007) with an emerging need to profit from the offerings of the proverbial ‘goose that lays the golden egg’.

The means to this community-based tourism is the rich culture and heritage of the country that still awaits discovery and exploration.

According to Mohamed (2002) with the help of copperplate records and archeological evidence it was found that the country had Buddhist worshipers prior to the Islamic period. “Mounds containing ancient Buddhist artifacts have been found” (Mohamed, 2002) in islands throughout the country. Archeological findings have led to the theory that “Hinduism had also existed in the country during a bygone age” (Mohamed, 2002). At present most of the artifacts that have been discovered are placed in the one and only museum - the National Museum, of the country located in the capital city, Male’. Though some sights have been excavated, there are still a lot of historical sites untouched, hidden from view and holding onto a story just beneath the soil (Mohamed, 2002) awaiting discovery.

However, most of the post Islamic structures including ancient mosques and old palaces have been conserved due to the respect given to them owing to their association with the past heroes of the country (Tholal, 2007). These structures depict the craftsmanship of the earlier generations from the intricate coral carvings to the lacquered and richly decorated woodwork. As noted in the MOTAC (2012a) these sites and structures can be developed into cultural attractions for tourists, increasing the range of tourism products offered by the country.

Located in a prime sea route, the country faced a number of attacks from great powers of the Ocean. It is a “lasting tribute to Maldivian courage and religious fervor” that only in one occasion were the country under rule for long (Neville, 1995), and even then not of the whole country. The country inhabited for over 2500 years (Mohamed, 2005) had been ruled under a sultanate until 1953 (Neville, 1995). Reinstating sultanate after one year of being a republic in 1953, the second republic was proclaimed in 1968 (Neville, 1995). Throughout this history there have been drama, tragedy and the obvious fight for power. The Social, Economic and Environmental Impact Study that was conducted by UNWTO in 2000 noted the rich heritage

of mythology of the country and its potential to be developed into “performing arts and island attractions”. The history of the country has stories to tell – stories full of heroes, fighting for the sovereignty of the country which could only be an inspiration to those who hear it.

The country is reputed for its “lacquer work, for weaving intricate designs and making jewellery with indigenous material without a blue print” (The Maldives, 1990). The UNWTO (2000) emphasized the need to explore the promotion of these traditional crafts within the tourism industry. This would not only increase local income opportunities but would also reduce the current leakages due to imported souvenirs and handicrafts.

It’s been recorded that foreign “ships called at the Maldives, stopping over during stormy days of the monsoon, on their way to the East and on the return journey” (Mohamed, 2002). “Shipwrecks dating back to the eighteenth century” (UNWTO, 2000) have been identified some of which are already being visited by divers. However, the waters still need to be explored for hidden treasures.

These facts indicate an aspect of the country which could provide a meaningful experience to its visitors and at the same time increasing the gains to the society from an already flourishing tourism industry.

2.1.4 Bridging the Gap

There had been a recent change in the tourism policy of the country to develop resorts and hotels near population centers (MOTCA, 2007). As a result a number of guest houses have been registered apart from the capital, land has been leased from larger inhabited islands to develop hotels and also islands near those inhabited by locals have been leased to be

developed as resorts (MOTAC, 2012a). Once the construction phases are over there would be tourist establishments developed in each and every Atoll in the country. Currently work is being carried out to inscribe some of the ancient stone carved mosques under the World Heritage list, which would bring about the much needed attention to these sites. A routine sea transport system between islands as well as atolls has also been put in place during the last administration though it still needs to be broadened. The necessary details and policies are now in place. However, the path needs to be paved further. The link between the tourism industry and the local community needs to be strengthened.

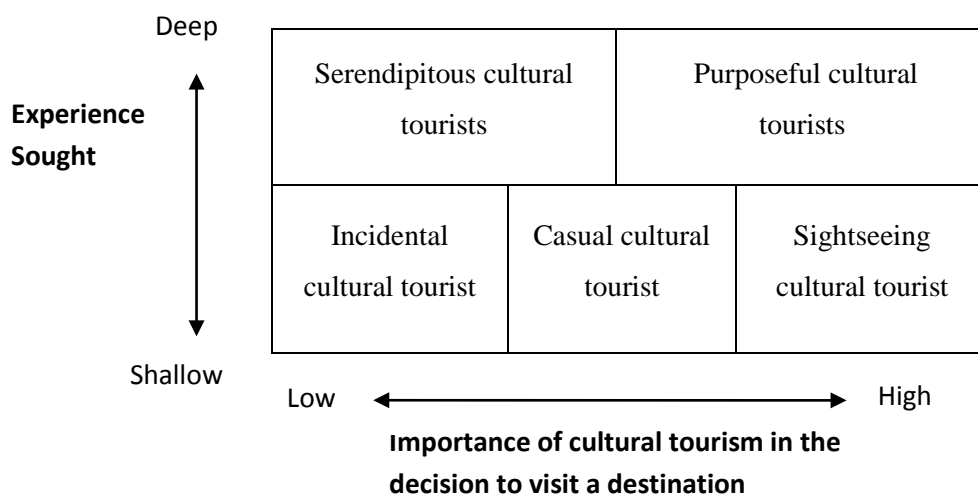
2.2 Theoretical background

A lot of books and articles have identified the problems of defining cultural tourism or tourism and culture as a separate term. According to Richards (1996) cultural tourism can be defined as the movements of individuals to specific cultural attractions such as cultural sites, artistic and cultural exhibitions and expressions, and arts and drama. Tourism can be defined as temporary or short term movement of individuals to destinations outside their place of residence or work. Culture can be defined as a process and culture as a product. Culture as a process can be further defined as “codes of conduct embedded in a specific social group” while culture as product can be defined as “product of individual or group activities to which certain meanings are attached” (Richards, 1996). Cultural Heritage “is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefits of future generations” (Cultural heritage, 2009). According to UNESCO (1972) tangible heritage include monuments such as structures of archeological nature, sculptures, paintings, buildings with universal value and sites with aesthetic, anthropological and ethnological value. Intangible heritage include

traditions, spiritual and aesthetic beliefs, language, customs and festivals and lifestyles (Chung, 2010c).

When discussing the cultural tourism experience and how important it is to the tourist, it is important to see how experts classify the different kinds of tourists seeking different kinds of cultural experience. Figure 1 below shows the typology of cultural tourists by McKercher and Du Cross (2002).

Figure 1: The typology of cultural tourists by McKercher and Du Cros



Source: McKercher and Cros (2002)

According to McKercher and Cros (2002), cultural tourists can be classified into five types and can be defined as follows;

1. The purposeful cultural tourist: cultural tourism is the most important reason for visiting a destination, due to which the individual benefit from a deep cultural experience.

2. The sightseeing cultural tourist: cultural tourism is a major reason for visiting a destination. However the experience is less deep.
3. The serendipitous cultural tourist: the individual does not travel for specific cultural tourism reasons. However, after participating the individual ends up having a profound cultural tourism experience.
4. The casual cultural tourist: cultural tourism is a weak motive for travelling to a destination and the resulting experience is shallow.
5. The incidental cultural tourist: the individual does not travel for cultural tourism reasons but participates in some kind of cultural activities and ends up having a shallow experience.

According to Endresen (1999), visits to natural and cultural significance sites have existed since the time of Greek antiquity. Tourism itself has over the years become an increasingly complex phenomenon (ICOMOS, 1999) and with the increase in sophistication of tourists, there is a higher expectation and need for educational, challenging and unique experiences (Endresen 1999). According to the message by the UNTWO Secretary-General in 2001, experiencing the different cultures, different ways of life, discovering new food and customs have become a “leading motivation for travel” (Rifai, 2001). With this increasing demand for cultural-oriented activities, there is an ever increasing need to revisit and re-direct the tourism product of a country.

The income from tourism is also a crucial source of revenue for safeguarding cultural sites, job creation and revitalization of cultures (Rifai, 2011). This, therefore, brings us back to the question of integrating culture into the existing tourism product of the Maldives. Can the

Maldives harness its tourism product and re-direct it to not only educate the visiting tourist but also to increase the social and economic benefits to the host community?

2.3 Findings of Other Countries

2.3.1 Hoi An, Vietnam

Countries all over the world have a story to share. Incidentally, Hoi An in Vietnam has a success story to share. “Hoi An ... developed an outstanding model” of generating the financial resources needed to revive its history through its tourism industry (UNESCO, 2008). Hoi An known as a quiet, rural town started its growth of its economy and population simultaneously with the growth of its tourism industry. While the population of 32,670 in 1996 grew to 52,991 by 2006, the tourist arrivals increased from 139,982 in 1997 to 878,780 by 2006 (Trang, 2009). The national government of Vietnam with the help of foreign aid had started the restoration of the Hoi An heritage sites in 1997. By the end of 1999 they had succeeded in enlisting as a World Heritage site (UNESCO, 2008). The huge jump in tourist arrivals from 160,314 in 1999 to 199,440 in 2000 to 363,734 in 2001 (UNESCO, 2008) could only be attested to being inscribed as a World Heritage Site.

Despite this increase in the number of tourist, the town is still considered conservative (Ray, Dragicevich, St. Louis, 2007). Every effort was made to harness the benefits of tourism while conserving the traditional values of the local community. By capturing the tourist revenue through sale of entry tickets, the local authorities were able to restore heritage properties (UNESCO, 2008). Through these funds as well as those they received due to the extra attention, they were able to “transform the once deteriorating heritage site[s] into a premier tourist destination” (UNESCO, 2008). Recognizing the value of their intangible heritage as an attraction for tourists as well as a basis for the community life, cultural practices such as

artistic performances and festivals were revived (UNESCO, 2008). This in turn, increased the awareness among the locals for their culture and traditions.

With the increase in the number of tourists visiting Hoi An, there was a huge growth in the local economy. The local community enjoyed the multiplier effect through the goods and services provided to the visitors. There was an increase in the goods and services provided, exports related to touristic activities, foreign investments as well as government investments on infrastructure (Gezgin, 2009). Well known for its tailoring skills, clothing and tailoring shops started increasing (UNESCO, 2008). The number of Souvenir shops and Accessories and lantern shops, Hotel, Guest Houses, and Restaurants also started increasing (UNESCO, 2008). With all these new businesses, the employment opportunities within Hoi An and in nearby towns increased too (Gezgin, 2009). Public and private participation in planning and preservation of the Historical Town started to take place (UNESCO, 2008) strengthening the relationship between the stakeholders. All in all, the small town was brought back to life and the whole community enjoyed the benefits of the attention and money brought in by the tourists.

However, with the phenomenal growth in the tourism industry changes started taking place from conversion of old houses to commercial space, to the changes in the cultural beliefs and lifestyles of the locals. Traditional games, rituals and cultural event especially those linked to fisheries and agricultural practices were no longer practiced as part of everyday life (UNESCO, 2008). Bag-snatching and assaults to lone females and use of children to sell trinkets, newspapers and postcards to tourists (Ray et al., 2007) were some of the petty crimes that started increasing with the influx of tourists.

Accepting that these changes would eventually come about with modernization and globalization, the local and national authorities started taking measures to ensure sustainable management of its tourism industry as well as its cultural and natural heritages. The local authorities started reviving festivals and artistic performances which had started to disappear due to the changes in the lifestyles and livelihood of its residence especially with the shift from traditional occupations such as fishing and agriculture to the service-oriented profession (UNESCO, 2008). The local and national authorities continue to revise their policies and development plans to ensure the sustainable growth of this Ancient Town.

A number of strategies were adopted to manage development of the industries and mitigate the negative impacts. Regulations were enacted to reduce traffic, noise and air pollution including restricting the number of vehicles in the old quarter of the old town during particular periods of the day. To reduce crowding, tourist accommodations and facilities were encouraged to develop outside the historic center of the Town (UNESCO, 2008). Heritage conservation awareness programs for tourists and locals were organized and carried out to increase knowledge and awareness of the importance of the heritage assets. Cultural heritage education was integrated into the curriculum of city schools (UNESCO, 2008) to educate the children of the importance of heritage at an early age. Heritage conservation plans were developed to maintain the historic character of the village while giving room for private enterprises to flourish (UNESCO, 2008). All of these measures were formulated and implemented to ensure the sustainability of the historical town.

2.3.2 Phuket, Thailand

Unlike Hoi An, Phuket has a slightly different experience to share. Phuket, Thailand's largest island is widely known as a tourism destination boasting of a variety of tourism products.

They include; sun, sea, sand, culture, nature, shopping, golf and health tourism (Sungthong, 2009). In 1998 the international tourist arrivals was at 1.8 million and the number increased to 3.2 million by 2007(Churugsa, 2009). Phuket received over USD 1.2 million as tourist revenue in 1998 and over USD 2.5 million in 2007 (Churugsa, 2009).

This tremendous growth in the tourism industry contributed hugely in the development of Phuket. There was an increase in the government revenue, direct and indirect employment opportunities, investments in infrastructure and superstructures, creation of local cooperation in the preservation and rehabilitation of historic places and cultural activities as well as revitalization of local handicrafts (Churugsa, 2009). Additionally, the awareness among the locals of their culture increased and locals started taking pride of their unique culture (Churugsa, 2009). This, therefore, attests to the positive impact on a community once it interacts with tourism.

While the local and national authorities of Thailand acknowledge its huge successes in tourism, they also note the negative economic, social and environmental impacts. Tourist were willing to pay higher price for quality goods and services due to which, the prices of tourism related goods started to increase, cost of living and land value started to increase, resulting in the increase in the inflation level (Churugsa, 2009). Just like any other prime destination the foreign investments and ownership of hotels and tour operators increased (Churugsa, 2009). The number of expatriate labor started to increase too, with the increased employment opportunities and high pay (Churugsa, 2009). The amount of imported goods increased through luxurious accessories and food and beverage (Churugsa, 2009). All this resulted in tourism leakages through expatriate labor and imported goods.

To add to this problem of leakages, social changes started taking place. Social problems such as gambling and prostitution started to increase. The infamous nightlife, the growth of prostitution became the subject of intensive media coverage (Tirasatayapitak, 2009). With the increase in massage parlors and go-go bars providing prostitutes the cases of sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS too started to increase (Churugsa, 2009). To impress the growing number of local and international tourists', changes in the cultural ceremonies and materials were arranged, such as "elaborating and spectacularizing traditional events" (Cohen, 2004). Additionally various new events, unrelated to the main theme of the festival were being introduced too (Cohen, 2004) adding to the already piling problems.

Phuket also faced environmental problems such as smog, noise pollution as well as destruction of vegetations and of endangered species due to congestion of people and vehicles (Churugsa, 2009). The rampant and unchecked development along the coasts threatens the already fragile and unique ecosystems, such as the Ao Phang-Nga National Park. Powerful speed boats shuttling tourist to and from the various islands or the oil spilled into the oceans does not bode well for the marine environment (Skolnick & Austin, 2010) or for those whose livelihood depends on the natural ecology.

To combat the negative impacts and to promote sustainable tourism and community planning, the authorities have taken preventive measures and put in place strategies and legislatives. Some of these include; participation of the resident community in developing the goals and strategies for tourism management as well as strengthening their roles in the implementation stage, impact assessment of the carrying capacity of the sites, and conducting training programs to improve vocational and professional skills as well as improve public understanding (Jamieson, 2006). However, the question of how well they are implemented

and monitored has been asked a number of times by the concerned parties and still needs to be answered.

2.4 Critical Analysis

The literature on major historical sites and its impact on their host communities are extensive including its contribution to the tourism industry and vice versa. In the case of the Maldives, no serious study has been carried out on the success of an integration between culture and history into the tourism product even though the issue has been raised a number of times, especially during the preparation of Tourism Master Plans. The qualitative research that is regularly carried out by the Ministry of Tourism (the tourist opinion survey) once again missed to find the relationship between tourism and other industries of the country. Similar studies on countries that have successful products like beach tourism as in the case of Maldives and Mauritius are limiting too.

Despite this short coming in qualitative information, the Maldives can only learn from the experience of other countries. Prior research and extensive research have been carried out on various destinations to find the impact tourism has had on the local community. This research has tried to bring together the experience of other countries and the current situation of the Maldives. It is believed that this research is going to be significant in getting the Government to decide to go through with the integration between culture and heritage, and the tourism industry of the country.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Method

This paper is based on qualitative information. There are three reasons for this. First, there is a huge range of studies and research on the cultural tourism or on utilization of the culture and heritage for economic growth of different countries and communities. These studies include the success stories, and the failures. The studies also highlights the policies that have been implemented as well as measures that need to be put in place to mitigate the negative impacts. These have not only helped understand the consequences but also to understand what policies and measures need to be implemented in order to succeed in employing the culture and heritage of a country in its economic and social development.

Second, though no serious research has been carried out linking the cultural and heritage resources and the tourism industry of the Maldives, the culture, the heritage and the tourism industry have been studied individually and separately. The tourism industry of the country has been thoroughly studied from its very beginning. The different phases of the development have been carefully documented. The impacts and consequences of various external and internal shocks such as the world financial crisis, the Asian Tsunami, mad-cow disease, SARS, Avian Influenza (or bird flu), the civil war in the neighboring country of Sri Lanka, as well as the civil unrest in the Maldives itself and on the Maldivian tourism industry has been properly monitored. This information, especially the statistics have helped to understand the responsiveness of the Maldivian tourism industry to civil and international issues. The information also has helped in comprehending the link and growth within the other industries of the country. The country's history and the heritage sites too has been documented if not

too extensively. The traditions and craftsmanship too have been studied. These in turn have helped to envision the possibilities.

Third, a lot of countries have been through this integration already. Some of these countries have even developed cultural tourism as a product of its own such as the case of Hoi An, Vietnam. These countries, their successes and failures including the positive and negative impacts to the local communities have been carefully studied by experts and international organizations. This information has helped in identifying what Maldives can do and what it cannot, the kind of precautions and measures that need to be put in place and implemented to ensure the success of an integration between the country's tourism industry and its culture and heritage.

3.2 Research Instrument

Existing research and information on Tourism Industry of the Maldives and its development has been studied to gather background knowledge of the problem. Qualitative as well as quantitative Research that has been carried out over the years regarding the tourism industry of the country has also been studied and analyzed. Existing statistics of various sectors were also studied to gain a better understanding of the linkage between tourism and the rest of the industries of the country.

For further understanding of the existing status of the industry and the cultural aspects of the country, unstructured and informal interviews with relevant actors have been carried out.

Existing Literature on the culture and tourism product of various countries have been studied thoroughly, scrutinizing the policies in place and the extent to which they have been implemented and finally reviewing the impact of using culture as a part of the tourism product of these countries.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

The literature published by the concerned local authorities was used to gather the statistical and empirical information needed. The information came either in the form of printed books, reports and articles or as documents published over the website of the relevant authority. Most of the information on the Maldives was collected from the local authorities including the Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture - and its heritage department, the Maldives Marketing & PR Corporation, the Ministry of Finance and Treasury, the Department of National Planning and the Ministry of Economic Development.

Information on various theories was gathered through the lecture notes and study materials provided during the program at KDI School of Public Policy and Management. Information on other countries was gathered through personal visits, seminars, and training programs that had been attended in the past.

For further information on these countries, published books, papers and reports were scrutinized. Some of these reports and publications were from international organizations such as UNWTO, UNESCO, ICOMOS and FutureBrand.

For additional information and for any missing information on the specific countries, their issues as well as for background reading, articles and reports published over the Internet were studied.

3.4 Validity

Every effort was made to collect statistical information from its original source. Where the original source was unavailable, a number of sources were checked to make sure that the data and information available were credible.

To ensure that this paper is free of bias, a lot of materials were scrutinized on both pros and cons of the topic at an international and at a local level. Keeping in mind the fact that this October celebrates 40 years since the inception of tourism in the Maldives and the fact that culture and heritage has yet to be integrated, reasons for this dissociation was explored at every twist and turn.

3.5 Reliability

As mentioned above more than one source was checked to ensure the validity of the information. Every effort was made to use information that was consistent throughout. Wherever there was a discrepancy, original source was examined, and if the original source cannot be used to verify the information, such information was discarded. At the same time, the information gathered through the interviews were also verified with existing published data to ensure its validity.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

As highlighted at the very beginning of the paper, to enhance visitor's experience, to increase the economic and social benefits for the host community and the country as a whole, culture and heritage should be integrated into the tourism product. This can result in an increase in the respect and awareness among the locals for the tradition, culture and heritage as well as heighten the interests of the locals in the national development of their community. However, as seen from the research certain strategies should be in place to overcome the negative impacts.

The positive and negative impacts of an integration between the tourism industry and the culture and heritage of the country is discussed below. Additionally, with the help of the experiences of various countries, this paper will recommend certain measures that need to be implemented to overcome any challenges that can hinder the successful assimilation of these two facets of the island nation. All of these will be discussed issue by issue.

4.1 Negative Impacts

As identified by the experience of Hoi An and Phuket, tourism brings with it, its own evil. Tourists with different cultures and temperaments as well as simply the number of visitors can have profound impacts on the environment, society and culture of a community, especially considering the unique and fragile environment of the Maldives. Three major impacts are discussed below.

4.1.1 Commodification and Cheapening of the Cultural Product

One huge concern of various cultural tourism States is the commodification of culture and the resulting cheapening of the cultural product. This occurs when the demands of tourist for tangible and intangible culture “drives the production and ‘packaging’ of heritage for tourist consumption” during the process in which the traditional values and meanings are lost (Timothy, 2011). The amount of local handicrafts available in the souvenir shops is small leading to imported handicraft (UNWTO, 2000). Even now, products similar to those prepared locally are imported from foreign countries, labeled and sold as local souvenirs. As with the case of Phuket, the increased demand for the local products has already led to loss of authenticity of certain products. With an integration of the tourism industry with the country’s heritage and culture there would be a further increase in demand for traditional cultural products whether it is traditional crafts, festivals, or others.

Therefore it is important to note that once the authenticity of the cultural and heritage product is lost, the quality of the experience will be lost, reducing the number of visitors and therefore the industry and the community becoming worse for wear. Steps would have to be taken to be taken to prevent this from continuing to happen.

4.1.2 Loss of Traditional Values and Cultures of the Local Community

One of the reasons why tourism industry was developed separate from the local communities was due to potential negative influence on the traditional values and culture of the local communities (UNWTO, 2000). The islands are smalls, the population in each island even smaller and the ecosystem that balances all is extremely fragile. Already the yearly tourist’s arrival doubles that of the country’s population. Once the number of tourists visiting these small communities starts to increase, changes in the culture and values of the society will

start to take place. In the case of Hoi An and Phuket, the culture and values of the local community changed with the interaction of the different cultures of the tourists. The traditional values were considered backward and old and were discarded and replaced in the name of development and modernization.

However, it is important to note that with globalization and development, with access to internet, foreign TV programs and foreign travel, changes to the social fabric of the community is inevitable. In Atolls exposed to these conditions this change is something that is already taking place (UNWTO, 2000) especially with the young generation wanting to imitate their idols, pop stars, movie stars and so on.

What the local communities can do, however, is to take the necessary steps to mitigate or soften the changes that would continue to take place.

4.2 Positive Impacts

While the socio-cultural and economic implications of developing cultural tourism looks grave, there are “several important ways in which tourism can contribute to social and cultural [and economic] well being [of a society]” (Timothy, 2011). Five such positive impacts are discussed below.

4.2.1 Enrich the Tourists Experience

One reason to integrate culture into the country’s tourism product is to enhance the visitor experience. The tourists visiting the Maldives get to enjoy the beaches and facilities tailor made for tourists in a separate island, while the locals live their daily uneventful lives in their own separate island communities. More often than not, most of the tourists do not even get to

interact with a local citizen. According to visitor survey carried out in 2011, Only 18 percent of the tourists visiting the country got to visit the local islands out of which 38 percent of the tourists visited Male' the capital city (MOTAC, 2012d). The visits to Male' would usually consist of visits to various souvenir shops located in the city as well as visits to the historical building including the National Museum. The remaining 62 percent visited inhabited islands and uninhabited or picnic islands (MOTAC, 2012d). Unfortunately, the survey left out a vital question of asking how many of them actually visited inhabited islands only. With such information, it would have easier to assess the accessibility of tourists to local community and the resulting trickling effect.

According to UNWTO (1999), even though the separation policy of having tourists in a separate island had sheltered the Maldivian culture from outside influence, it however, limits the knowledge of the tourists on the host country's culture. One of the heritage sights maintained in HA. Utheemu, the northern most Atoll of the country receives a monthly average of about 90 tourists (A. Mauroof, Personal communication, September 3, 2012). This is in comparison to the over 3000 beds (MOTAC, 2011) established in the Northern Province itself and with the country boasting of an average occupancy rate of 74 percent (MOTAC, 2011) over a year. This, therefore, shows that there is potential and yet untapped revenue sources.

Furthermore, today's travelers are increasingly seeking enhanced experiences and value for money. According to McKercher and Cros, (2002) "demand is high for cultural experiences and will ... continue to grow as tourists become more sophisticated". Although it is soon to tell whether the country can promote cultural tourism and attract cultural tourists, the country can attract 'serendipitous cultural tourists' who can enjoy a profound cultural tourism

experience in the country. With a growing demand for cultural enrichment, it would be unwise not to attend to those demands. Therefore, in order to enrich visitor's experience, it is necessary to incorporate local culture and history into the tourism product.

4.2.2 Encourage Preservation and Development of Cultural and Historical Resources

Apart from the need to enhance the visitor experience, the integration of culture into the existing tourism industry could provide certain social benefits to the host community. The assimilation of culture and tourism can play a huge role in conserving and increasing the value of the tangible as well the intangible heritage of a community (EAHTR, 2009). According to Timothy (2011) "tourism has provided the economic rationale for saving historic building that might otherwise have been demolished". Tourism can support historical places by generating economic value, with increased visitation. It can also give an incentive to bring back historical buildings into productive use (EAHTR, 2009), creating further reasons to invest in the community's heritage.

Currently, the National Centre for Linguistic and Historical Research (NCLHR), the government office in charge of the promotion and protection of the country's culture and heritage, has little funds and limited number of employees to assist in the conservation (UNWTO, 2000) of the existing historical sites. According to the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (2012) less than MVR 7 million is allocated for NCLHR, out of the MVR 13 billion budget of 2012. Additionally, with the lack of awareness and interest, less than a handful of people in the country are educated in the fields necessary to maintain and preserve such an important part of the history (Thariq, 2007) including the intangible heritage of the country. As mentioned earlier, the annual number of tourist visitors doubles that of the current population of the country. However, in this case the power of tourism to fund cultural

conservation has not yet been taken up (UNWTO, 2000). Even if a small percentage of the tourists can be encouraged to visit the existing sites, it could bring in a significant amount of funds and support. The revenue generated by the tourist can be “reinvested in ... planning and management of heritage assets” McKercher and Cros, (2002), ensuring their sustainability.

4.2.3 Provide Funding for Site Preservation and Management

Tourism being an important part of the economy of the country, anything it touches is viewed with worth. If tourism and culture is integrated, the extra attention that is bound to be created towards the culture and heritage sector would generate publicity that could help gain sponsors and further support from the Government, the private sector and the general public. As with the case of Hoi An, with the influx of tourist, extra attention was received by the private and the public sector (UNESCO, 2008). Since tourism can help generate the badly needed revenue for the maintenance and promotion of cultural and heritage resources, culture and heritage should be integrated into the tourism product of the country.

4.2.4 Boost the Economic Growth of the Local Community

In addition to creating a sense of pride at a local and national level, the integration of culture and tourism can also help increase the local participation in the economic growth of the community. According to McKercher and Cros (2002) “opportunities can arise to develop local economies to be more entrepreneurial and self-reliant” with multiplier effects “which are associated with both the direct and the induced effects” (Bille and Schulze, 2006). One such direct opportunity includes “employment and income generated ... [by the] activities themselves” (Bille and Schulze, 2006), through artists for various cultural and traditional events, and through direct employment such as tourist guides and guards for the sites. The

induced effects that can be generated include the spending of visitors on cultural events or on food, drink, transportation (Bille and Schulze, 2006) and accommodation. With a link between the successful tourism industry and the local community, the trickling effect would increase, encouraging investments and new businesses. Therefore, to gain the benefits of the multiplier effect of the cultural sector, culture and heritage should be integrated into the tourism product of the Maldives.

4.2.5 Job Creation

The increased opportunities for small businesses such as family restaurants, souvenir shops and promotion of local handicrafts would create more jobs direct and indirect, skilled and unskilled and therefore, increase the trickling effect from the tourism industry. According to Timothy (2011), research shows that for various reasons cultural tourists tend to be big spenders. Cultural tourists are more affluent and therefore can spend more and at the same time people often want to take a piece of the past with them as souvenirs (Timothy, 2011). According to the visitor survey (MOTAC, 2012d) 12 percent of the visitors surveys spent over USD 5000 during their trip (excluding the tour package). If even a small percentage of this can be tapped, it would create the trickling effect necessary for the local community to prosper.

As stated in the UNWTO study (2000) it is clear that until now, “opportunities [are] ... being missed to increase the linkages and thereby earn more ... income for the Maldivians”. Therefore, for the growth and prosperity of the economy of the local community it is very much necessary to utilize the culture and history of the country as part of the tourism product.

4.2.6 Establish National and Local Identity and Prestige

Culture and cultural heritage are central to the community's identity, dignity and self-respect (Endresen, 1999). The “exposure gained by presenting cultural heritage assets for tourism consumption can foster greater awareness of the value of the asset and of the need to conserve its unique attributes” (McKercher and Cros, 2002). When communities realize the interests outsiders have on their culture and traditions, “it can help incubate a sense of cultural pride” (Timothy 2011), which in turn create the need to preserve and revitalize the local culture and heritage.

With the introduction of tourism in the Maldives, attention was given to the preservation of the fragile environment of the country, which “creat[ed] a legacy defined by unprecedented awareness amongst stakeholders in practicing sustainable and responsible tourism” (MOTCA, 2007). Linking the culture and heritage with the tourism product, would create similar awareness among the locals and therefore create a sense of pride for the local history and culture. Therefore, this too becomes an incentive to link the culture and heritage of the country with the tourism product.

4.3 Challenges

Keeping in mind the afore mentioned reasons, there are counter arguments as well as conditions impeding the assimilation of culture and heritage into the tourism product of the Maldives.

Additionally the challenge is how to integrate the commercial need of tourist with the substantially different social objective of cultural heritage management (McKercher and Cros, 2002). According to Tholal (A. Tholal, NCLHR, Personal Communication, April 03, 2010)

“when ... combin[ing] culture and tourism, the downside is that the reasons for exposure is different for culture and tourism. While culture does not demand for profit, tourism is vehemently demanding for it. While culture requires regulations to ensure the protection of the place, tourism inevitably demands expansion and diversification at the expense of the site itself”, therefore, emphasizing the contrasting needs of these two sectors.

4.3.1 Underdeveloped Sites and Ill-equipped Resources

One major challenge facing the integration of culture into tourism is the inexistence of proper cultural heritage management without which cultural values may be compromised for commercial gains. As mentioned at the very beginning, most of the historical sites that dates back to pre-Islamic era of the country, still needs to be unearthed. The Kaashidhoo site that had been excavated properly and professionally, in 1998 by Oslo University, Norway (A. Tholal, NCLHR, Personal Communication, April 03, 2010) is now in ruins since the country is ill-equipped to take care of such a precious product.

This brings to the question of the human resources or the lack of it. Currently there are none who have been trained in the field (A. Salih, MOTAC, Personal Communication, September 3, 2012). Though short term technical training have been provided in the past, there is an urgent need to train professionals on the necessary technical skills.

4.3.2 Access to Historical Sites and Local Communities

Over the lack of a proper heritage management system, another challenge confronting the successful integration of culture into tourism is the one thing that is ensuring the success of the tourism sector: the isolation remoteness of these individual islands. The routine air taxi services or sea plane services, provided the much needed support required by the industry to

transport tourists from the Male' International Airport to designated resorts. However, this would be too costly an option, especially for cultural visitors.

Although a routine sea transport system has now been established between inhabited islands, it is not frequent enough, and therefore, limiting the access to far away islands. Additionally, there is no sea transport system between the resort islands and the locally inhabited islands which was purposefully implemented, as mentioned before, to minimize any negative social impact on the local community.

4.4 Findings

Going through the research findings, some of the positive impacts identified include; enriching the tourism experience through the interaction with the local culture and traditions and visits to historical sites, development of underdeveloped historical sites and conservation and maintenance of existing historical sites as well as the culture and traditions, establishment of community pride, and the economic growth of the local community through direct and indirect trickling effect.

The possible negative impacts include commodification and cheapening of the cultural and heritage resources, damage to the sites and facilities due to overuse, and loss of traditional values and cultures due to direct interact with foreign cultures.

Some of the challenges to possible integration of the cultural and heritage resources of the country with its tourism product include, the underdeveloped sites and resources, and the limited access to the existing cultural and heritage resources.

As stated by Worm (2008) “the impact of tourism is not necessary negative ... [and] tourists prompt the conservation of local heritage sites and they garner resources for physical and cultural development”. While it is true that there are positive and negative impacts of using the culture and heritage of the host community for economic benefits, the positive impacts outweighs the negative. At the same time acknowledging the challenges that can hinder such as assimilation, it is important to identify these and implement proper policies and take corrective measure to overcome any exiting challenges as well as any foreseeable negative impacts.

CHAPTER V: RECOMMENDATION

Culture and heritage is everywhere, and revolves directly around living cultures, environment, faith, tradition, arts and handicrafts, folklore and the everyday life of the people (Timothy, 2011). Even though certain negative impacts have been identified – especially inherent in anything linked with tourism, there are a significant amount of existing research on the positive impact tourism can have on the local culture and heritage. There is also positive influence the local culture and heritage can have on the development of the tourism product as well as the positive impact tourism can have on the development of the cultural and heritage resources of a country. Therefore, it is highly recommended to integrate these two industries of the Maldives.

To overcome the problems hindering the successful integration of culture into the tourism industry, certain measures have to be put in place. Careful planning and conservation efforts need to be established to counteract the damage that can otherwise be caused by tourism to the local community. It is important to note here that due to the limited or lack of resources, and the poorly developed institutions, technical and physical infrastructure, the main responsibility in alleviating the foreseeable problems lies in the hands of the government (UNWTO, 2002). Therefore, to ensure the successful integration of culture and heritage into the tourism product of the country, following are the recommended action and measures that would need to be implemented.

5.1 Recommended Actions

5.1.1 Educate the Locals and the Visitors

Tourists are not known to be the most sensitive to the culture and social norms of the societies they visit. Much disrespect is shown when tourists takes “photograph[s] of religious functions ... speak too loudly or refuse to take of their shoes” or wear inappropriate clothing when visiting religious sites (Timothy, 2011). This can, therefore, be a huge issue since the Maldives is a religious nation with a very conservative population.

At the beginning of the tourism development in the country, campaign after campaign was carried out to educate and create awareness among the locals and the visitors on the fragile environment of the country. Environmental Studies was introduced into the school syllabus and therefore, teaching children at an early stage to care for the fragile environment of the country. The same can now be done with regard to the maintenance of the culture and heritage of the country. Educating the public on the possible negative impacts as well as on attaining the maximum benefits of tourism would ensure the success of an integration between the cultural and tourism sector of the country.

5.1.2 Improve and Strengthen the Infrastructures

One of the most important factors ensuring success of maintaining cultural heritage is its accessibility. Given the geographical distribution of the islands, population, the heritage sites and the resorts, an inter-atoll and inter-island transportation system is very vital.

The air-transport network needs to be enhanced and the existing regional airports need to be upgraded and their capacity increased (MOTAC, 2007). The marine-transport network needs to be enhanced and harbor facilities for the bunkering of safari vessels need to be developed

too (MOTAC, 2007). With the government subsidizing the cost involved, and the rest of the cost being divided between the resort management and the host community, a routine ferry service can be established between the resorts and the nearby local communities. Such a system would ensure easy access to the cultural sites and traditional events. This would in turn increase the number of visitors to the site and help generate more revenue. As mentioned earlier, the subsequent increase in the multiplier effect, in the end, would increase the social and economic benefits of tourism to the local communities.

5.1.3 Market and Promote the Cultural and Heritage Sites and Activities Continuously

One reason behind the success of any industry would be continuous and extensive marketing. “Promotion is the sum of all the ways ... [that] destination[s] tell the world about their product (Timothy, 2011). Currently the existing heritage site, the traditional festivals and cultural events are not properly marketed to the necessary audience. Tourists need to know what is available, so that they can make informed decisions. Successful promotion and packaging will increase consumer motivation to participate in cultural activities and therefore, increasing the number of visitors (Lord, 1999). Developing the correct media, to reach the target audience of tourists visiting the country is imperative.

Additionally, as with the case of Hoi An, Inscription on the World Heritage List, can cause the site to become a major tourist attraction (Endreson, 1999) that in itself creates the much needed fuss among the actors, including the local communities.

Until 2008, the two central authorities governing the tourism industry (Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation) and the culture and heritage industry (National Centre for Linguistic and

Historical Research) had been separate until 2008. Since the restructuring of the government authorities later that year, the tourism and history and culture are now administered under one umbrella – under the Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture. This would therefore, create the opportunity to develop and market these two sectors together and in a cohesive manner.

It is worthwhile to note here, that according to the visitor survey (MOTAC, 2012d) 28 percent of the surveyed population knew about the Maldives through word of mouth, internet, travel agents and magazines follow close behind. Although 73 percent of the surveyed population identified themselves as first time visitors, 27 percent are repeat visitors (MOTAC, 2012d). Therefore, with a little effort, the market of those tourists visiting the country because they learned about the country through word of mouth as well as the repeat visitors can easily be tapped.

5.1.4 Establish a Cultural Heritage Management System

As mentioned earlier, it is true that the profit hungry needs of the tourism industry are very much different from the needs of the cultural sector, whose main goal is to preserve and protect what has been passed on by previous generations. However, it is also true that with the proper presentation of assets, the tourists as well as the local community can understand the need for the “conservation and retention of important cultural heritage assets.” (McKercher and Cros, 2002) leading to a harmonious integration of these opposing needs. At the same time a strong partnership has to be built between “tourism and cultural heritage management... to work together to achieve common, mutually beneficial goals” (McKercher and Cros, 2002). Therefore, the government would need to strengthen the role of Department of Heritage and establish a cultural heritage management system for the sustainable use of the cultural heritages.

5.2 Further Research

As mentioned earlier, little serious research has been carried out on the subject. The tourist opinion survey regularly carried out by the Ministry of Tourism itself, had left out the vital component of linking tourism with other industries of the country especially that of the cultural industry. Therefore, further research, especially a qualitative one would be needed to reinforce the findings of this research at the same time to identify whether the knowledge and experience of other countries can be applied to the situation in the Maldives.

Since the cultural and historical sites are scattered all over the country and since almost every island has a culture and tradition of its own with little documented information on any of it, a primary research would have been very time consuming and costly. Therefore, due to limited resources, such a research was not carried out for this paper.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

Throughout the paper, various reasons for the integration of culture and heritage into the current tourism product have been discussed. These arguments undoubtedly prove that the Maldives has more to offer than just the sun, sea and sand. The challenges that can hinder a successful integration of these two industries as well as measures that can be taken to overcome those challenges have also been discussed. Moreover, taking into consideration the social and economic benefits involved, and since the benefits outweighs any negative impact, the Maldives should integrate culture and heritage into its tourism product.

As discussed before, the assimilation of the country's culture and heritage resources with the successful tourism industry can bring about a number of benefits to the country including the local community. One such benefit is the enhancement of the travelers experience in the Maldives. With the increased attention given to the cultural and heritage sector, it would also help to acquire the resources necessary to develop and maintain the cultural sites. Additionally, it would also increase the importance given to culture and heritage, creating further awareness among locals as well as tourists, cultivating a need to protect them as well as establishing national and local identity and prestige. Integrating culture and heritage into the tourism product would also encourage the emergence of secondary industries and increased employment opportunities at the same time increasing the economic growth of the local community.

Therefore, in order to enhance visitors experience and to increase the economic and social benefits for the host community and the country as a whole, culture and heritage should be integrated into the tourism product of the Maldives.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Appendix I: list of Recent Awards

- 2011 World's Most Romantic Destination
- 2011 Indian Ocean's Leading Cruise Destination
- 2011 Indian Ocean's Leading Honeymoon Destination
- 2010 World's Most Romantic Destination
- 2010 Indian Ocean's Leading Cruise Destination
- 2010 Indian Ocean's Leading Honeymoon Destination
- 2009 Indian Ocean's Leading Destination
- 2008 World's Leading Island Destination
- 2008 Indian Ocean's Leading Destination
- 2007 World's Most Romantic Destination
- 2007 Indian Ocean's Leading Destination
- 2007 Indian Ocean's Leading Dive Destination
- 2007 Indian Ocean's Leading Tourist & Convention Bureau
- 2006 World's Leading Dive Destination
- 2006 Indian Ocean's Leading Destination
- 2005 Indian Ocean's Leading Destination
- 2005 Indian Ocean's Leading Tourist & Convention Bureau
- 2004 Indian Ocean's Leading Tourist & Convention Bureau
- 2003 World's Leading Beach
- 2003 Indian Ocean's Leading Destination

Appendix II: List of Hotels and Resorts

List of Hotels

#	Name of the Hotel	Name of the Island	e-mail	Beds / Rooms
1	Central Hotel	Male'	info@centralmaldives.com	80 beds 43 rooms
2	Coral Hotel & Spa	Male'	info@coralhotel&spa.com	81 beds 41 Rooms
3	Equator Village	S. Gan	equater@dhivehinet.net.mv	156 beds 78 rooms
4	Hotel Relax Inn	Male'	hotelrelaxinn@relaxmaldives.com	74 beds 37 rooms
5	Hulhule Island Hotel	Hulhule	sales@hih.com.mv	272 bed 136 rooms
6	Hulhumale' Sunshine Hotel	Hulhumale'	zaid@demaltravel.com	30 beds 15 rooms
7	Kam Hotel	Male'	resevation@kam.com	24 beds 12 rooms
8	Lucky Hiya Hotel	Male'	info@luckyhiyahotel.com.mv	39 beds 33 room
9	Marble Hotel	Male'	reservation@marble.mv	55 beds 30 rooms
10	Mookai Hotel	Male'	mookai@dhivehinet.net.mv	102 beds 51 rooms
11	Mookai Suites	Male'	kaimoo@dhivehinet.net.mv	98 beds 49 rooms
12	Nalahiya Hotel	Male'	infor@beehivehotels.com	84 beds 42 rooms
13	Nasandhura Palace Hotel	Male'	info@nasandhurapalace.com	36 beds 18 rooms
14	Off Day Inn	Male'	info@offdaymaldives.com	30 beds 15 rooms

15	The Boutique Inn at Villa Shabnamee	Male'	info@bamaldives.com	24beds 12 rooms
16	Baani Hotel	Male'	admin@altairholdings.net	34 beds 17 rooms
17	Traders Hotel Male' Maldives	Male'	farahdidi@gmail.com	234 beds 117 rooms
18	Gan Island Retreat	S. Gan	info@mvkmaldives.com	50 rooms 100 beds
19	Reverries Diving Village	L.Gan	info@bason.com.mv	23rooms 46beds
20	Hotel Octave Ma. Janbumaage	Male'	holidays@impex.com.mc	07 Rooms 14 Beds

List of Resorts

No.	Name	Island and Atoll	No. of Beds	Contact
1	Adaaran Club Rannalhi	K. Rannalhi	260	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3323 Fax: (+960) 331 5238
2	Adaaran Prestige Vadoo	K. Vaadoo	100	Tel: (+960) 332 3323 Fax: (+960) 331 5237
3	Adaaran Select Hudhuranfushi	K. Lhohifushi	354	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3323 Fax: (+960) 331 5238
4	Adaaran Select Meedhupparu	R. Meedhupparu	470	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3323 Fax: (+960) 331 5238
5	Alidhoo Island Resort	HA. Alidhoo	200	Tel: (+960) 331 64 64 Fax (+ 960) 331 0206 Fax: (+960) 332 1616
6	Alimatha Aquatic Resort	V. Alimatha	260	Tel.: (+960) 332 3214 Fax: (+960) 332 2516
7	Anantara Kihavah Villas, Maldives	B. Kihavah Huravalhi	110	Tel: +60 (87)453-288, 334 1716 Fax +60 (87)451-288, 332 7058
8	Anantara Resort and Spa Maldives	K. Dhigufinolhu	220	Tel:(+960) 331 4008 Fax: (+960) 332 7058
9	Angaaga Island Resort and Spa	ADh. Angaaga	140	Tel: (+960) 331 3523 Fax : (+960)331 3522
10	Angsana Resort & Spa Maldives - Velavaru	Dh. Velavaru	236	Tel.: (+960) 6760028 Fax: (+960) 6760029
11	Angsana Resort & Spa Maldives Ihuru	K. Ihuru	90	Tel: (65) 8495888 (+960) 664 3502 Fax: (65) 4620186 (+960) 664 5933
12	Asdhu Sun Island	K. Asdhu	60	Tel: (+960) 333 0575 Fax: (+960) 332 5982
13	Diamonds Athuruga Beach & Water Villas	ADh. Athurugau	146	Tel.: (+960) 332 3617 Fax: (+960) 332 5336
14	Ayada Maldives	GDh. Magudhuvaa	200	Tel: (+960) 745 8336 Fax:(+960) 330 3003
15	Bandos Island Resort and Spa	K. Bandos	450	Tel.: (+ 960) 664 0088 Fax: (+960) 664 3877
16	Banyan Tree Maldives Vabbinfaru	K. Vabbinfaru	96	Tel: (65) 8495888 (+960) 664 3147 Fax: (65) 4620186 (+960) 664 3843

17	Baros Holiday Resort	K. Baros	150	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3080 Fax: (+960) 332 0274 (+960) 332 2678
18	Bathala island Resort	AA. Bathala	90	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3323 (+ 960) 332 7443 Fax: (+960) 331 5238 (+ 960) 332 7442
19	Biyaadhoo Island Resort	K. Biyaadhoo	192	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3323 (+ 960) 332 7443 Fax: (+960) 331 5238 (+ 960) 332 7442
20	Centara Grand Island Resort & Spa Maldives	ADh. Machchafushi	224	Tel.: (+ 960) 333 3644 (+ 960) 332 0850 Fax: (+960) 331 5453 (+ 960) 332 3463
21	Chaaya Island Dhonveli	K. Kanuoiy Huraa	296	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 9083 Fax: (+960) 664 2973
22	Chaaya Lagoon Hakuraa Huraa	M. Hakraahuraa	160	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 9083 Fax: (+960) 664 2973
23	Chaaya Reef Ellaidhoo	AA. Ellaidhoo	224	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 9083 Fax: (+960) 664 2973
24	Club Faru	K. Farukolhufushi	304	Tel: (+960) 6640554 Fax: (+960) 6642415
25	Club Med Kanifinolhu	K. Kanifinolhu	458	Tel.: (+960) 664 3152 Fax: (+960) 664 4859
26	Coco Palm Boduhithi	K. Boduhithi	206	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 4658 (+ 960) 333 6611 Fax: (+960) 332 5542 (+ 960) 333 6622
27	Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu	B. Dhunikolhu	200	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 4658 (+ 960) 333 6611 Fax: (+960) 332 5542 (+ 960) 333 6622
28	Coco Palm Kudahithi	K. Kudahithi	14	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 4658 (+ 960) 333 6611 Fax: (+960) 332 5542 (+ 960) 333 6622
29	Cocoa Island	K. Makunufushi	70	Tel.: (+ 960) 664 0088 Fax: (+960) 664 3877
30	Conrad Maldives Rangali Island	ADh. Rangalifinolhu	304	Tel.: (+ 1) 3054443444 (+960) 668 0629 Fax: (+1) 3057743895 (+960) 668 0619)
31	Constance Halaveli Resort	AA. Halaveli	172	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 2719 Fax: (+960) 332 3463
32	Constance Moofushi Resort	ADh. Moofushi	124	Tel: (+960) 333 3644 Fax: (+960) 331 5453
33	Dhiggiri Tourist Resort	V. Dhiggiri	90	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3214 Fax: (+960) 332 2516
34	Diamonds Thudufushi Beach & Water Villas	ADh. Thundufushi	144	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 5349 (+ 960) 332 3617 Fax: (+960) 332 5336
35	Dream Island Maldives	K. Villivaru	120	Tel.: (+960) 33 44911 Fax: (+960) 33 44922
36	Embudhu Village	K. Embudhu	236	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 2212 (+960) 331 8005 Fax: (+960) 331 8057

37	Eriyadhoo Island Resort	K. Eriyadhoo	114	Tel: (+960) 334 3840 Fax: (+960) 334 3841
38	Fihaalhohi Island Resort	K. Fihaalhohi	300	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 2313 Fax: (+960) 331 4429
39	Filitheyo Island Resort	F. Filitheyo	250	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 7373 Fax: (+960) 332 1826
40	Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa	K. Kuda Huraa	212	Tel.: (+ 960) 664 4888 Fax: (+960) 664 1188
41	Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Landaa Giraavaru	B. Landaa Giraavaru	214	(+960) 660 0600 Fax: 0065 6738 8379
42	Fun Island Resort	K. Bodufinolhu	118	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 5195 Fax: (+960) 332 5177
43	Gangehi Island Resort	AA. Gangehi	72	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 9013 Fax: (+960) 332 9014
44	Gasfinolhu Island Resort	K. Gasfinolhu	80	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 4149 (+ 960) 664 2078 Fax: (+960) 331 4150 (+ 960) 664 5941
45	Giraavaru Tourist Resort	K. Giraavaru	132	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 8422 Fax: (+960) 331 8505
46	Helengeli Island Resort	K. Helengeli	100	Tel.: (+41) 19916909 (+ 960) 664 4615 Fax: (+41) 19916908 (+ 960) 664 2881
47	Amari Addu Maldives	S. Herethere	546	Tel: (+960) 3347766 Fax: (+960) 3347733
48	Hilton Maldives -Irufushi Resort & Spa	N.Medhafushi	442	Tel: (+960)3325977 Fax:(+960) 3333897 (+960) 332 0419
49	Holiday Inn Resort Kandooma Maldives	K. Kandoomafushi	322	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 4377 Fax: (+960) 331 4378
50	Holiday Island	ADh. Dhiffushi	284	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 5195 Fax: (+960) 332 5177
51	Huvadhumaafushi	Ga. Funamauddua	150	Tel: (960) 331 4877 Fax (960) 331 4378
52	Huvafenfushi	K. Nakatchafushi	102	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3080 Fax: (+960) 332 0274 (+960) 332 2678
53	Jumeirah Dhevanafushi	Ga. Meradhoo	74	Tel:(+960) 3339992 (+960) 333 3644 (+960 682 8800) Fax:(+960) 331 5453 (+960 682 8811)
54	Jumeirah Vittaveli	K. Bolifushi	174	(+ 960) 664 2020 Fax: (+960) 331 5453
55	Kanuhura	LH. Kanuhuraa	200	Tel: +1-284-494-2434 (+ 960) 333 4466 Fax +1-284-414-3754 (+ 960) 333 4471
56	Kihaad Resort	B. Kihaadhuffaru	230	Tel.: (+ 960)3000027 +960 660 6688 Fax: (+960)3000029 +960 660 6633
57	Komandoo Maldiv Island Resort	Lh. Komandoo	120	Tel.:0039064706803 (+960) 332 6565 (+960) 662 1010 Fax:0039064706396

58	Kudarah Island Resort	ADh. Kuda Rah	60	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 6454 Fax: (+960) 331 0206
59	Kuramathi Tourist Resort	AA. Kuramathi	580	Tel.: (+ 960) 32 3080 Fax: (+960) 32 0274 (+960) 32 2678
60	Kuredhdhu Island Resort	Lh. Kuredhdhu	768	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 6545 Fax: (+960) 332 6544
61	Kurumba Maldives	K. Vihamanaafushi	362	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3080 Fax: (+960) 332 0274 (+960) 332 2678
62	Lily Beach Resort	ADh.Huvahendhoo	250	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 7464 Fax: (+960) 331 7466
63	Lux* Maldives	ADh. Dhidhdhoofinolhu	394	Tel.: (+ 960) 333 3644 Fax: (+960) 331 5453
64	Maayafushi Tourist Resort	AA. Maayafushi	150	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3214 Fax: (+960) 332 2516
65	Madoogali Resort	AA. Madoogali	112	Tel.: (+ 960) 32 1017 Fax: (+960) 32 7334
66	Makunudhoo Island	K. Makunudhoo	72	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 4658 Fax: (+960) 332 5543
67	Medhufushi Island Resort	M. Medhufushi	240	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 7373 Fax: (+960) 332 1826
68	Meeru Island Resort	K. Meerufenfushi	570	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 4149 Fax: (+960) 331 4150
69	Mirihi Island Resort	ADh. Mirihi	72	Tel: (+960) 331 4149 Fax:(+960) 331 4150
70	Naladhu	K. Veligan'du Huraa	138	Tel:(+960) 331 4008 Fax: (+960) 332 7058
71	Nika Island Resort	AA. Kudafolhudhoo	76	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 4541 Fax: (+960) 332 5097
72	Olhuvveli Beach and Spa Resort	K. Olhuvveli	332	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 5977 Fax: (+960) 332 0419
73	One & Only Reethi Rah,Maldives	K. Medhufinolhu	268	(+ 960) 664 8800 Fax: + 1(242)3632767
74	Palm Beach Island	Lh. Madhiriguraidhu	248	Tel: (+960) 333 1998 Fax: (+960) 333 2001
75	Paradise Island Resort and Spa	K. Lankanfinolhu	568	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 5195 Fax: (+960) 332 5177
76	Park Hyatt Maldives, Hadahaa	Ga. Hadahaa	100	Tel: (960) 3313388 Fax (960) 331 6783
77	Ranveli Village	ADh. Villingilivaru	112	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 6826 Fax: (+960) 331 1703
78	Reethi Beach Resort	B. Fonimagoodhoo	248	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 2626 Fax: (+960) 331 2727
79	Rihiveli Beach Resort	K. Mahaana elhi Huraa	100	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 8422 Fax: (+960) 331 8505

80	Royal Island Resort and Spa	B. Horubadhu	304	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 5195 Fax: (+960) 332 5177
81	Shangri -La Viiingili Resort & Spa	S.Villingili	284	Fex:(960)3321722
82	Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa	K. Furanafushi	352	Tel.: (+ 960) 333 2211 Fax: (+960) 333 3618 (+960) 332 2678
83	Six Senses Laamu	L. Olhuveli	194	Tel: (+960) 332 6685 Fax:(+960) 332 4660
84	Soneva Fushi By Six Senses	B. Kunfunadhoo	130	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 6686 Fax: (+960) 332 4660
85	Soneva Gili By six Senses	K. Lankanfushi	94	Tel.: (+ 960) 333 6663 Fax: (+960) 333 6664
86	Summer Island Village	K. Ziyaaraiyfushi	230	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 2212 (+960) 331 8005 Fax: (+960) 331 8057
87	Sun Island Resort and Spa	ADh. Nalaguraidhoo	852	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 5195 Fax: (+960) 332 5177
88	Taj Exotica Resort and Spa Maldives	K. Embudhu Finolhu	128	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 7530 Fax: (+960) 331 4059
89	The Waldorf Astoria Maldives	HA.Manafaru	170	Tel: (+ 960) 332 5977 (+960) 650 0550 Fax: (+960) 332 3897 (+960) 650 0444
90	Thulhaagiri Island Resort	K. Thulhaagiri	172	Tel: (+960) 3313523 Fax: (+960) 3313522
91	Twin Island Resort	ADh. Maafushivaru	98	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3080 Fax: (+960) 332 0274 (+960) 332 2678
92	Vakarufalhi Island Resort	ADh. Vakarufalhi	150	Tel.: 6680007 Fax: 6680004
93	Velassaru Maldives	K. Velassaru	258	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 3080 Fax: (+960) 332 0274 (+960) 332 2678
94	Velidhoo Island Resort	AA. Velidhoo	200	(+ 960) 330 4755 Fax: (+ 960) 3325982
95	Veligandu Island Resort	AA. Veligan'du	148	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 2432 Fax: (+960) 332 4009
96	Vilamendhoo Island Resort	ADh. Vilamendhoo	368	Tel: (+960) 334 3840 Fax: (+960) 334 3841
97	Vilu Reef Beach and Spa Resort	Dh. Meedhuffushi	200	Tel.: (+ 960) 332 5977 Fax: (+960) 332 0419
98	Vivanta by Taj -Coral Reef,Maldives	K. Hembadhu	132	Tel.: (+ 960) 331 7530 Fax: (+960) 331 4059
99	W Retreat and Spa-Maldives	AA. Fesdhoo	164	Tel.: 00 65 6333 8878 (+ 960) 666 2222 Fax: 00 65 6333 8733 (+ 960) 666 2200
100	Zitahli Resorts & Spa,Kudafunafaru	N.Kudafunafaru	100	Tel: (+960)331 7373 Fax: (+960) 332 1862

101	Dusit Thani Maldives	B. Mudhdoo	208	Tel: (+960) 334 4911 Fax:(+960) 334 4922
102	Viceroy Maldives	Sh. Vagaru	97	Tel: (+960) 3339992 (+960)654 5413 Fax:(+960) 3339998 (+960)654 5555
103	Niyama	Dh. Embudhufushi and Olhuveli	154	Tel: (+960) 300 5552 Fax:(+960) 300 5553
104	The Residence Maldives	GA. Falhumaafushi	108	Tel: (+960) 300 6929 Tel: (+960)7707419 Fax:(+960) 330 9041

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