

## Models for studying culture tourism

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### Abstract

The use of models in studies is important to enhance our learning and understanding of practices in reality. A model is a simplified representation of reality; it can allow us to deal with reality and to grapple with complexities of the real world. In this paper I present various models of culture tourism and I try to discuss and provide explanations of these models in order to enhance the learning and understanding of the reader. These models may not encompass all aspects of culture tourism, but they serve useful purposes for application in practice.

**Keywords:** culture tourism models, simple model, multi-concept model, stakeholder relationship model, activity based model, outcome model, variable commercialization model, distribution model, destination and communication model

### Introduction

We could not imagine living life without models. As children, some of us grew up with models as playthings; we made our own models from clay or watched someone else do a demonstration, such as planting a banana tree or tying up the stalks of sugarcane. This was useful for our learning and understanding of practices in life. Neil Leiper (1996) made the following remarks in his unpublished monograph titled, 'Models for studying tourism'.

When people study something, even outside formal studies in a university or college, they tend to use models. A model is a simplified representation of reality, an abstraction from something which we can carry in our mind or represent in diagrams. A model can never precisely represent reality, but it can allow us to deal with reality and to grapple with complexities of the real world. A model is, in this sense, a kind of theory. (Leiper, 1996, p. 1)

Leiper continued on to say that people use models in everyday life even without being conscious of it. For example, people observe how things are done in everyday living: mum cooking food, dad fixing the broken pig fence, aunt mending the torn dress with needle and thread bought from the store and uncle fixing the leaking roof with fresh '*kunai*' (sword-grass). 'Models in those cases are how we *see* the item in its future fixed state and how we *see* ourselves going about the case', (Leiper, 1996, p. 1).

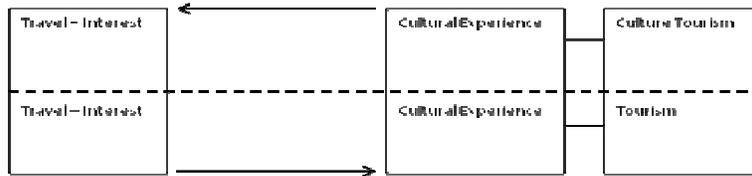
This paper presents explanations of models that would connect tourism and culture so that it enhances learning and serves some purpose for application in

practice. The intent is not to argue and/or compare existing models, though it may bear resemblance to current models.

**A simple model of culture tourism**

In trying to study and understand culture tourism and the connection between tourism and culture, I present two models. These models may not be complete in encompassing other important and relevant concepts, but they serve the purpose of explaining the concepts behind these models. A simple model of culture tourism shows two levels.

**Figure 1: A simple model of culture tourism**

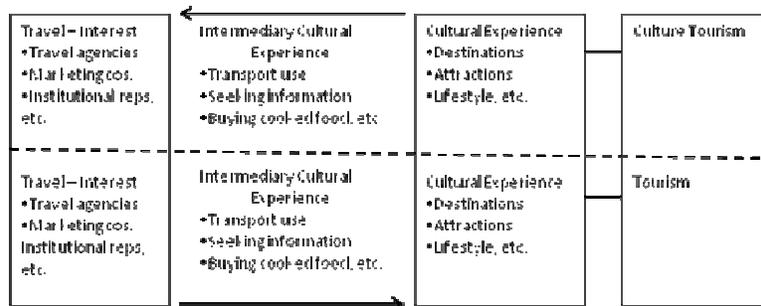


The upper level indicates that someone (a tourist) who travels with the interest or intention of experiencing culture in other places. Their actions benefit culture tourism. This has direct relevance for culture tourism. The lower level indicates that someone (a tourist) who travels without the interest or intention of experiencing culture in other places. Their actions have benefits for tourism but they have no interest in culture tourism. The two arrows indicate the nature of tourism, which is temporary travel. Figure 1 demonstrates this.

**A multi-concept model of culture tourism**

Figure 2 shows a multi-concept model of culture tourism and the connection between tourism and culture.

**Figure 2: A multi-concept model of culture tourism**



A multi-concept model of culture tourism has the same basic structure of a simple model of culture tourism but with additional concepts such as suppliers

or service providers and cultural products and services. It also depicts intermediary cultural experiences by the tourist, such as experiencing local cultural experiences, while journeying from Banz to Madang. When someone, a potential tourist is preparing to travel, travel agencies, destination marketing companies and institutional representatives such as foreign government offices promote aspects of culture tourism to potential tourists in those countries to travel and experience cultures in other places, to both the culturally inclined and non-inclined tourist. When experiencing cultures in other places, these can comprise destinations, which is to do with the physical outlook of a place, its makeup and the atmosphere surrounding it; for instance, a domestic tourist from Jiwaka journeying for the first time is thrilled to see Madang town because of its natural beauty comprising the neat residential areas, clear blue ocean and beaches, and friendly relaxing people. This becomes a cultural experience for the Jiwakan because of meeting new people and seeing new places.

### **Further explaining the simple and multi-concept models of culture tourism**

From the tourist region, factors that are responsible for influencing the tourists' decisions to travel for cultural experiences are an important consideration. Travel agencies, marketing companies, institutional representatives, weather patterns, economic conditions, etc. influence potential tourists to make the travel decision which creates benefits from the actions taken. When a culturally-inclined tourist makes a booking from a travel agency closest to his/her home, it generates revenue for the travel agency to meet the cost of its operations. When the weather pattern in the tourist region is not conducive to the health or liking of the tourist, it influences the tourist to take a trip to escape bad weather. If we were to learn from these two cases, it would require in-depth studies.

When the culturally-inclined tourist or tourist with an interest in foreign cultures (travel '+' interest) travels to experience cultures in other places, like visiting museums and sampling local food in other places, this has relevance for culture tourism. When the culturally non-inclined tourist or tourist without an interest in foreign cultures (travel '-' interest) travels for a reason other than to experience cultures in other places, like a tourist who spends time in a village with an expatriate friend who works for a local non-government organization but has no interest in the local culture, it can still have benefits for tourism. This is because, while visiting, the tourist may spend at a local hotel or restaurant in town and buy items from shops in town which will benefit the local tourism industry and contribute revenue into the economy.

Other tourists consume cultural products without intending to or consciously being aware of it. A business tourist who stays at a local hotel in a foreign country consumes the local architectural design of the building and the rooms and services provided by foreigners. This becomes part of the intrinsic cultural experience of the tourist who has travelled to that place.

In distinguishing between tourists with a cultural motive and tourists without a cultural motive, it is useful in targeting and meeting customer needs to consider how to provide customer satisfaction. Tourists with a cultural motive have specific interests and do specific activities that are different from other types of tourists. A culturally-inclined tourist who wants to learn about traditional Papua New Guinean village lifestyle would spend more time in a village, interact with the village people and learn their ways. A diver and a mountain climber have specific interests, to do diving and mountain climbing in Papua New Guinea. They may visit a nearby local village and take a few pictures of the smiling villagers and the village setting or buy '*bilums*' (string bags) from village women. While this is secondary to their main purpose for travelling, it benefits tourism and the local culture.

Comparing two tourists at the Madang Resort Hotel, the more culturally-inclined tourist would walk out of the resort gates, walk around town and look at the shops and the kinds of people that move around town, spend some time in the market and take pictures, ask questions and buy a few items before heading back to the resort. This type of tourist would also ask for tours to the villages and islands and sites of cultural significance. A culturally non-inclined tourist is likely to spend more time at the resort, sit on the balcony and look out to the sea or read a book, dine in the restaurant at nights, ask for guided tours in a bus and transfer to Jais Aben Resort Hotel to spend time there.

Published information reveals that culture tourism is considered by many to be a growth phenomenon with more citizens and travellers taking an interest in culture (Smith, 2003; Ali-Knight & Robertson, 2004; McCool & Moisey, 2008). In the United States of America, it was reported that cultural tourists, specifically heritage travellers, stay longer and spend more on average compared to other travellers (US Federal Heritage Tourism Summit 1 in Washington DC, November 14 2002 Report). In Europe, culture has been a common interest among travellers (Richards, 1996). In PNG, when one asks a local tourist, friend or relative what they are doing in a place away from their home place, a common reply is, '*lukim ples tasol*' (just seeing the place). 'Seeing the place' implies an interest in the culture of the place.

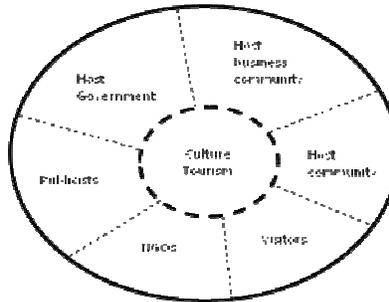
The fact may be that much of the interest in culture may occur from tourists who do not see themselves as cultural tourists. The World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission (2005, p. viii) reported in their research findings that although culture is the single most important motivation for city trips in Europe not many visitors viewed themselves as cultural tourists. From this discussion and referring to cases described earlier, it can be agreed that 'cultural tourists' as such comprise a fraction of the total tourist count in any country.

### **A stakeholder-relationship model of culture tourism**

The idea of identifying stakeholders in a tourism destination was postulated by Bushell (1998), who identified government authorities, the local business community, the local community and the visitors in a model for organizing and

managing tourism in a community context. The same concepts were discussed using graphical representation in the article, 'Contemporary challenges facing the development and management of culture tourism in Papua New Guinea' by Imbal (May 2010, p. 21). I have added two more stakeholders and modified the model to make it more meaningful. This is shown in Figure 3. There could be other stakeholders but six are identified here: host government, host business community, host community, visitors, NGOs and publicists.

**Figure 3: A stakeholder-relationship model of culture tourism**



The host government is responsible for planning, resourcing, regulating the industry and ensuring protection of hosts and visitors, and that public goods and services are provided for ease of tourism. The host business community brings the host community and the visitors together for profit. They provide profitable services that visitors need such as accommodation, transportation and leisure activities. The host community refers to the custodians of the cultural and other resources which serve as attractions for visitors. They use these resources to benefit themselves and their visitors. The host community is also responsible for the way culture is organized and presented for culture tourism, and the way culture tourism develops for the future (Imbal, May 2010).

The term 'visitor' in this case represents both tourists who spend at least one night in the destination and other visitors to the destination who may not overnight but do not stay for more than twelve months in the destination according to definitions of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The visitors make culture tourism viable; hence they must have a good time in the destination. They promote positive word-of-mouth advertising which brings in more tourists and creates more benefits, such as encouraging one's interest to conserve and promote their indigenous cultures.

The publicists comprise the mass media, individuals and organizations that market and promote culture tourism, including those that carry out awareness and education. Their role is important in getting the right message to all other stakeholders for positive action. They provide the information and education so that realistic goals are met. As an example, Divine Word University Tourism and Hospitality Management students visit nearby villages in Madang to conduct awareness on the advantages and disadvantages of culture tourism; this

helps communities to prepare themselves so they have realistic expectations to do with culture tourism.

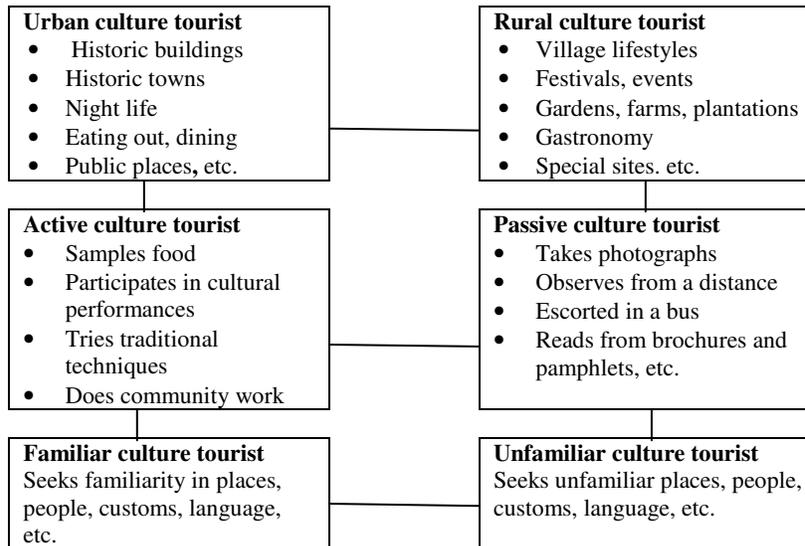
The non-government organizations (NGOs) sometimes have the capability and technical know-how to work with host communities and provide the needed skills training and basic services that host government authorities are unable to provide. The NGOs need access to financial and other resources including partners to be able to effectively carry out their stated objectives.

The dotted lines between the stakeholders on Figure 3 indicate that the stakeholders can communicate and work with each other to promote and benefit from culture tourism. For instance, the host business community facing increasing business costs can ask the host government to reduce taxation on specific investments within the industry to promote the benefits of culture tourism; an NGO that has a conservation project with a host community will request the publicist such as a university department to conduct awareness on the benefits of tourism to the host community which is in line with their project work.

The dotted circle in the centre of Figure 3 indicates that the stakeholders promote and benefit from culture tourism, and likewise culture tourism flourishes from the positive contributions of these stakeholders. As a demonstration, host governments benefit from tax revenue as a result of visitors' expenditure on business houses; in return, host governments spend money on roads and airports to have them in good condition so that visitors can be transported to the destination and tourism can flourish.

**An activity based model of culture tourism**

**Figure 4: An activity based model of culture tourism**



Smith (2003, p. 37) presented a typology of culture tourists in her book titled 'Issues in cultural tourism studies', which mentioned seven types of culture tourists: heritage tourist, arts tourist, creative tourist, urban cultural tourist, rural cultural tourist, indigenous cultural tourist and popular cultural tourist. As shown in Figure 4, I have identified what I consider to be six main forms of culture tourists based on activities undertaken by tourists.

An urban culture tourist would be interested in elements of culture in urban places such as historic buildings, cities, night life, eating out and dining. This includes historic and contemporary way of life of urban location which portrays an image of the culture of urban location. To give an example, an urban culture tourist could eat out and dine in a locally owned and designed restaurant serving local dishes, or the urban culture tourist could eat out at one of the fast food outlets in the city as commonly done by its people, to experience urban culture.

A rural culture tourist would be interested in aspects of culture in rural places such as the daily village lifestyle, village performances and methods of gardening. Again this can include historic and contemporary way of life of rural location which portrays an image of the culture of rural location. In the PNG village context, a mother breast-feeding her baby or carrying her baby in 'bilum' (string bag), village children in school or parents walking in the morning along the road with bush-knives to get to their food garden are aspects of rural culture which fascinates a rural culture tourist.

An active culture tourist would actively take part in experiencing the culture of a destination. This type of tourist would sample local food, try out a traditional technique by beating the 'kundu' drum (hollow wooden drum) or take part in 'sing-sing' (singing and dancing in traditional costumes). Those who work as volunteers in foreign places indicate an interest to understand the culture of the place through active learning, i.e. learning the culture of a place by working as a volunteer in that place.

A passive culture tourist can be said to enjoy cultural experiences of a place at a distance. This type of tourist would take pictures, observe from a distance and avoid actively seeking answers to understand meanings but prefer to read from written explanations such as brochures and pamphlets. Cultural experiences whereby interpretations are recorded and played through speakers are passive in nature.

The familiar culture tourist would seek in another place cultural experiences that are familiar or similar to one's own culture, like places, people, customs and language. This type of tourist may actually want to lower the incidence of inconveniences that could arise by way of interacting with an unfamiliar environment. Enjoying another place's cultural experiences that are similar to one's own culture increases the self confidence of that person.

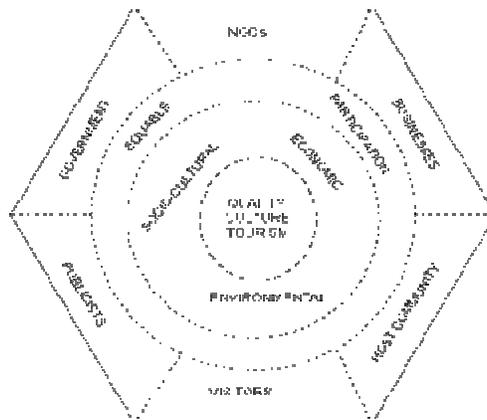
The unfamiliar culture tourist would seek in another place cultural experiences that are new and different from one's own culture, like places, people, customs and language. This type of tourist wants to avoid what is familiar and common and experience new cultures; the unfamiliar culture tourist may combine adventure with education.

The activity based model of culture tourism in Figure 4 shows three pairs of opposites. It is possible that the activities of culture tourists can occur in between two opposites, in this case, a culture tourist who is interested in historic buildings in a foreign city but is also interested in historic ruins in a rural setting in one location in one trip. This may be given a separate category, other times some of these categories may be insignificant, such as in reporting culture tourist numbers when there are insignificant numbers for the purpose of categorization based on specific cultural interest. Individual sites and facilities of cultural significance may keep their own records of tourist activities for their own benefit. It is also possible for these activities to overlap each other. To show this, an urban culture tourist who has an interest in the city's local restaurants that sell local dishes may be actively involved in sampling these delicious local dishes; a rural culture tourist who has an interest in old ruins might travel to unfamiliar place to visit historic ruins, this is indicated by the lines connecting the boxes in Figure 4.

#### An outcome model of culture tourism

Figure 5 shows an outcome model of culture tourism. The outcome focus of this model is on achieving quality culture tourism. On the outskirts of the circle are the six stakeholders identified as government, NGOs, businesses, host community, visitors and publicists. The basic explanations for these have been provided under the stakeholder-relationship model of culture tourism so I won't describe these here.

Figure 5: An outcome model of culture tourism



What is important is that each party or stakeholder identified in this model has to equally participate in terms of contributions and benefits achieved from quality culture tourism. This does not mean that each party has to contribute and benefit equally from quality culture tourism, what matters is that each party can play its role so that quality culture tourism can prevail. A case to demonstrate this would be that businesses, host community, visitors and to a certain extent the host government would benefit the most from quality culture tourism because they are directly involved and dependent on this activity. By comparison, the publicists and the NGOs may not benefit in any obvious and tangible way but they may be credited with good rapport and image.

When there is quality culture tourism, there are economic, socio-cultural and environmental benefits to all stakeholders. To demonstrate this, when there is quality culture tourism, it means that there is environmental quality, socio-cultural and economic needs are met. The visitors benefit through quality experiences because capacity is not breached to reduce environmental quality, socio-cultural assets are retained and maintained because of interest shown by visitors. The host community is able to retain and maintain its cultural assets and environmental quality because capacity has not been breached and visitors have shown concern in their actions. There are economic benefits for the host community to maintain this level of satisfaction. Businesses benefit economically and may be credited for encouraging quality in the conservation of environmental and socio-cultural assets, which is important to repeat business.

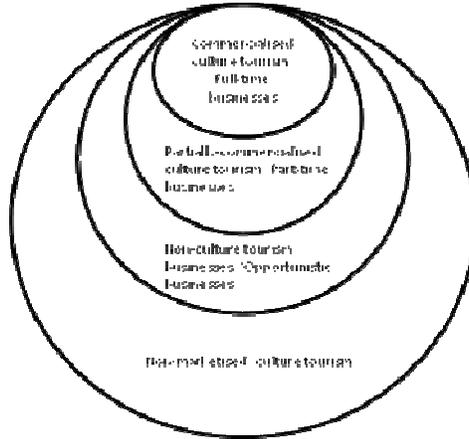
The government may be credited for creating a peaceful and safe environment for visitors, and economically benefits through taxation collected from tourism. This can improve its profile and destination image. By promoting and creating a positive atmosphere for quality culture tourism to prevail, publicists may be credited with acknowledgment and improves their future networking prospects. It brings satisfaction when publicists know that they have contributed to maintaining quality in the achievement of environmental, socio-cultural and economic benefits. Similarly, NGOs feel satisfaction when they have contributed to maintaining quality in the achievement of environmental quality, and socio-cultural and economic benefits to the host community, that may be in line with the objectives of their project work. This increases rapport and networking possibilities for future prospects and access to resources. The presence of quality culture tourism implies a self-motivated community with high self-esteem, and the image of a good stable government.

#### **A variable commercialization model of culture tourism**

Leiper (1995, pp. 134-137) discussed varying degrees of industrialization within the tourism industry. The benefits he proposed were of strategic and commercial interest to businesses and organization in general. Figure 6 shows a variable commercialization model of culture tourism. We know of instances of commercialized culture tourism. This is characterized by full-time businesses that make use of cultural aspects for commercial gain: museums, art galleries, cultural tour operators and wholesalers, hotels and hotel restaurants, other local

accommodation facilities and art sellers. These operate full-time and make this activity their livelihood. These entities target culture tourists as part of their business strategies. These are not many as compared to other three categories, as demonstrated by its size in Figure 6.

**Figure 6: A variable commercialization model of culture tourism**



Partially-commercialized culture tourism is characterized by part-time businesses: restaurants that open during peak seasons and attendants return to their normal duties during off-peak seasons, organized cultural events that are held on specific times and participants return to normal duties post-event, village traditional performances that are only held when a request is made and tourists are around, bed and breakfast facilities that are only rented out to guests when rooms are available, specific market days when visitors get to experience locals display their local produce, are examples of part-time commercial operations whereby the operators spend half or most of their time doing their other normal duties and only there to serve the needs of culture tourists and other visitors when the need arises. They have some appreciation for culture tourism and tourism in general where capacity is not breached. There are a number of such operations, particularly in the developing world where tourism is unpredictable and inconsistent.

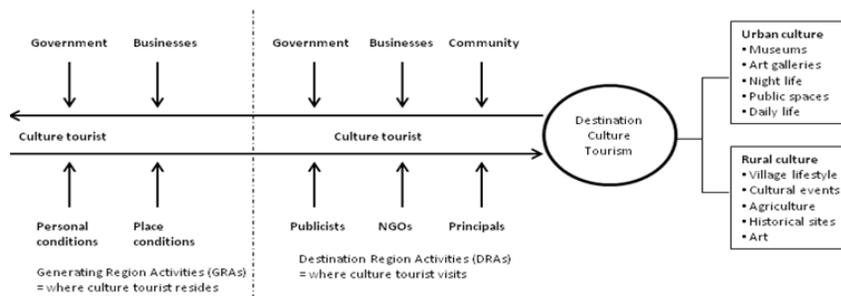
Non-culture tourism businesses are characterized by opportunistic businesses that don't depend on culture tourism or tourism in general for business viability. They do not target culture tourists or tourists in general as part of their business strategies. Tourists being there and buying from them is simply an opportunity that contributes to their income. By way of demonstrating, culture tourists may purchase camera batteries from an electronic retail store, insect repellent from a pharmacy, hiking boots from a shoe shop and bottled water from a grocery, these operators are not in the business of tourism. This comprises all other businesses that may benefit from culture tourist expenditure while the culture tourist is there in the destination but are not in the business of tourism.

Non-marketised culture tourism comprises all those aspects of culture that are experienced 'freely'. Most experiences of culture are simply there; culture, like God, is omnipresent: walking down a foreign street and seeing other people pass by, staring at the line of shops along the footpath, noticing someone walk out of their house and empty trash into the bin, admiring someone's flower garden, seeing people working in their farms, staring at the ocean and watching the fishermen return in their canoes, one does not pay for these experiences which speak something of the place's culture. It is a natural way of experiencing cultures in other places, whether thought provoking or not. One may simply accept that a price cannot be put on every aspect of culture.

**A distribution model of culture tourism**

The distribution model of culture tourism (Figure 7) shows when a culture tourist sets out on a trip and when a culture tourist is involved in destination culture tourism activities. The vertical dotted line separates the generating region activities (GRAs) from the destination region activities (DRAs). GRAs occur where the culture tourist resides. These are activities that contribute towards making possible for the culture tourist to travel from where he/she resides to the destination where he/she wants to enjoy cultural experiences. I've included four factors in the generating region that influence a potential culture tourist to set out on a cultural experience trip: government, businesses, personal conditions and place conditions. The generating government is influential in three ways, through the provision of infrastructure, politico-legal relations and information services. The generating government provides infrastructure such as information and communication technologies and transportation which enable the potential culture tourist to gather destination information and travel to the cultural destination. The generating government can also provide travel advice to its citizens wanting to travel to foreign countries so that its citizens travel to friendlier destinations that have good foreign relations with the generating government.

**Figure 7: A distribution model of culture tourism**



Businesses in the generating region specifically target tourists by performing activities such as, marketing and promoting cultural destinations, selling and booking travel packages and transporting tourists to their desired destination.

Personal conditions such as income, unoccupied time, daily work pressures, personal or professional interest, health, etc. influence the potential cultural tourist to take cultural trips. Place conditions such as politico-economic status, unsuitable weather patterns, resource pressures, daily lifestyle, cultural awareness, etc. influence the potential cultural tourist to take cultural trips.

In the cultural destination the top level government provides protective and development regulations and allows its agencies such as destination management organization (DMO) to implement decisions to promote growth of culture tourism in the destination. Destination businesses specifically target tourists and put together cultural experience packages and provide needed services such as accommodation and transportation by tourists and other travellers for profit.

The publicists promote and market the place as a desirable cultural destination. They also conduct awareness and education so that culture tourists and other visitors can visit the destination. Through their activities they try to create realistic expectations between the hosts and the visitors. The destination community hosts various cultural experiences for aspects of tourists' enjoyment so that tourists regard them as memorable.

The NGOs provide technical and other support to progress cultural benefits in the destination, while principals are other suppliers to the tourism industry that culture tourists make use of while in the destination, such as bus hires, health benefits providers, postal services, banking services, communication service providers, etc. In the destination the culture tourist enjoys culture tourism experiences from either urban and/or rural cultural activities. There is temporary travel (as indicated by two opposite arrows) when the culture tourist arrives in the destination, and after the cultural experiences returns to his/her place of origin. It is also important to remember that there are intermediary travel experiences and the role of intermediaries as the culture tourist transits to get to the destination and back to the place of origin.

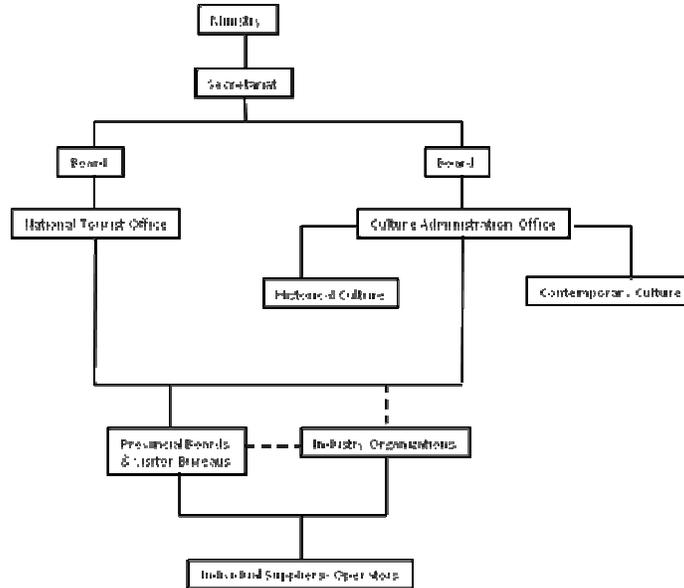
#### **A destination planning and communication model of culture tourism**

I present a destination planning and communication model of culture tourism in Figure 8. This is a simple model that may reflect situations in small nations. It is the case in Papua New Guinea and I have expanded the structure by adding two sections: industry organizations and individual suppliers/operators. I have modified some names from the original work by the Office of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture in PNG, to enable a universal application of this model.

In the case of PNG, the ministry under the PNG national government has a secretariat with a full-time chief executive officer and officers that oversee the work of the national tourist office and the culture administration office. The national tourist office and the culture administration office have separate boards comprised of members from the industry and experts with knowledge in this area that officers of the national tourist office and culture administration

office report to. The culture administration office is responsible for two areas: historical culture and contemporary culture.

**Figure 8: A destination planning and communication model of culture tourism**



The national tourist office is responsible mainly for the promotion of the country as a desirable tourist destination. Both the national tourist office and the culture administration office work and communicate with the provincial (state) boards and visitor bureaus who are on the ground, in each province (state) to liaise with the individual suppliers/operators of cultural experiences to get the national policy directives implemented. There are also tourism industry representative organizations that promote the interest of their members and they also benefit from and communicate with the national tourist office, the culture administration office and the provincial boards and visitor bureaus to pass on benefits to the individual suppliers/operators whom they represent.

### Conclusion

This paper has been an attempt to discuss and offer explanations of several models that can be applied in culture tourism and more broadly tourism contexts. I am aware that these models do not encompass all aspects of culture tourism or tourism studies, but they are useful for the purposes intended. There is always room for improvement and opportunities for others to build on these models. I hope that these models can find use in wherever they find meaning, and that it contributes not just to the human quest for knowledge but also inspiration.

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