

What is Sustainability? Definitions vs. Interpretations

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Sustainability has become a buzz word in the global context. This concept paper discusses to how extend the concept of sustainability is fairly defined. The key objective of this study is to provide the most reasonable definition on sustainability. (1) Identifying the difference between definition and interpretation and (2) suggesting a definition for the term *definition* are the specific objectives of the study. The study used etymology descriptive method and its reliability was proved through historical records, language usage of Sri Lanka and social norms in Sri Lanka. Native language supports in identifying the inherited meaning of a word. Hence, in identifying the most reasonable definition for sustainability, the word *thirasāra* was described in depth using epistemology in the context of Sri Lankan heritage. The study found common definitions for sustainability privations its epistemological explanation. The methodology used in this study could conclude that *thirasāra* is uncover (*thira or isthira*) Ārya placing the natural law as the basis (*sāra*). This study suggests further epistemological investigations on the concept of sustainability based on native languages rather focusing an international language.

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