
Book Review

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A Research Agenda for Tourism and Development

by: R. Sharpley and D. Harrison (Eds.)

Published 2019

by Elgar Research Agendas, xi + 239pp (Hbk.), £81.00

ISBN-13: 978-1-78811-240-6

The travel and tourism sector contributed about USD 8.8 trillion to the global combined gross domestic product (GDP), and created 319 million new jobs in 2018 (Reed, 2019). The total international tourist arrivals have increased 5% to 1.4 billion and the total international tourism exports grown to USD 1.7 trillion in 2018 (World Tourism Organization, 2019). The revenues from visitor spending (4.4% change) have grown faster than the world GDP (3.6% change). While these positive figures should be well celebrated, it is crucial to raise awareness of sustainability in this developing sector as highlighted by the authors in Chapter 1. As tourism is dynamic, it requires proper planning and governance to cope with the societal changes. Hence, this book stirs the intellectual gap identifications, arguments and research themes amongst the scholars.

Chapters 2 and 3 highlight the development of tourism sector from the policy and governance perspectives. The influence of ideologies, interests and values, redistribution of resources, problem structuring, knowledge needs for policy making, and the future tourism are some of the themes were discussed in Chapter 2. Policy may not work if it lacks enforcement and governance. Chapter 3 focuses on the state of governance research in tourism, dwells into the corporate management and political science theory. The author suggested three interesting research questions based on the tourism-development nexus:

- to what extent does the state still play a key role in directing tourism development
- how does the form of interaction between state and societal actors enable/constrain the implementation of tourism-development nexus projects and initiatives
- what is the historical relationship between tourism and the governance of national economic development planning in a given destination?

These research questions are inspiring and worthwhile for researchers to consider for future research.

Chapter 4 highlights the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in tourism projects sustainability, crafting policies, and its facilitation on conflict among stakeholders such as community members and government. The book also highlighted the essentials of research on the challenges encountered by the NGOs such as risk of

resources, critics of being lack of transparency, lack of commitment, and lack of practical and technical expertise in the field of operation. Interestingly, Chapter 5 dwells into travel philanthropy and development. The authors discuss its origins, impacts and assumptions in detailed. While studies on financial contributions of tourism businesses at host destination spurs, researchers argued that this practice should be stopped as it disrupts the mutual beneficial linkages between the local communities and their actual business practices.

Next, Chapter 6 provides an interesting overview of the linkage between tourism and poverty. The process to reduce poverty through tourism is explained in five different scenarios: coincidental poverty alleviation, supplementary poverty alleviation, policy-focused poverty alleviation, corporate social responsibility/strategic alleviation, and lastly culturally situated alleviation. Tourism can enhance the living quality of the host communities with proper assistance from the government, NGOs, and transnational tourism enterprises. This basis of Chapter 6 leads to the discussion on community-based tourism (CBT) in Chapter 7. This chapter explores the contribution of CBT to tourism development and importantly offers a critical review on CBT which eventually the 'One Health' concept is proposed. The concept is a human-animal-environment health model and it is crucial to address the socioeconomic stability between human and animal. A Mexican case study that emphasises the indigenous well-being is presented. CBT has huge potential in addressing the cultural change, health practices, economic and social empowerment, which in turn to change the landscape of tourism sector.

Chapters 8 and 9 focus on the commercialisation of the tourism sector. While Chapter 8 highlights the knowledge gaps in understanding the factors and motivations that drive tourism demand, Chapter 9 further escalates the understanding on mass tourism. A sequence of events that grow mass tourism include the Great Convergence, the Majorca Compound, the profound impact of low-cost carriers (LCCs), and the niche development of nautical tourism. Several statistics and figures were provided in support of the events described.

Finally, the last two chapters, draw the attention to the sustainability of tourism workforce and its impact on developed nations. The importance of human resource management and strategic management approaches that might lead to sustainable tourism workforce is reviewed in Chapter 10. Notably, challenges such as competitive and fair pay, lack of job engagement, creating customer service culture, etc. in the hospitality and tourism workforce have been long standing and waiting for better solutions. Thus, Chapter 11 brings up the idea of re-development of tourism sector in developed nations. Several development paradigms and examples of future research questions for tourism and (re)development are proposed. The chapter also proposes the use of Human Development Index as an indicator to conduct research on tourism and its impact on the nations. In addition, the chapter opposed to the research idea of solely focus on aggregate growth by ignoring the intended recipients of the benefits of tourism. Concluding, a more targeted research plan is crucial in order to address the issues of poverty and inequality in the attempt to develop the tourism sector in any nations.

Overall the book is highly recommended for Academics as it provides research agenda in different aspects of tourism and development. Essentially, the authors provide potential research ideas and interesting research questions, ranging from big picture to drill down specific research areas. Importantly, the United Nations SDGs shall not be neglected in the investigation of tourism and development. Academic attention shall focus on the relationship between tourism and development which subsequently benefits

the local community and tourism entrepreneurs and the nations at large. In general, the sequences of the chapters are well structured despite the slight glitch of Chapters 4 and 5 in terms of story flow.

References

- Reed, D. (2019) *Booming Global Travel And Tourism Is Driving Economies And Job Growth Despite U.S.-China Trade Strains*, Available at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/danielreed/2019/03/08/booming-global-travel-tourism-is-driving-economies-and-job-growth-despite-u-s-china-trade-strains/#357780722b85> (Accessed 6 February, 2020).
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