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Biennial Conference**

**Bridging the Gaps in Tourism Knowledge and
Practice : The Future of Sustainable, Smart,
and Secure Tourism and Hospitality (Future
3Ss for Tourism)**

ABSTRACT BOOK



Latvijas
Investīciju un
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**VISIT
VALMIERA.**

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The Book of abstracts is finalised 16th September 2024. Slight changes to the conference program might be. The changes will be available on the website: <https://itsa2024.lv/program/>

Foreword

Dear participants of the ITSA 2024 and all readers of the Abstract Book!

We as the ITSA conference 2024 “Bridging the Gaps in Tourism Knowledge and Practice: The Future of Sustainable, Smart, and Secure Tourism and Hospitality (Future 3Ss for Tourism).” organisers and hosts would highlight future 3Ss for tourism development. Sustainable, smart and secure tourism development actions are the cornerstones of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and require all three to work together in harmony. Sustainability, smartness, and security are crucial for tourism destination planning and development. At the same time, security and sustainability are becoming important factors in tourist choices and preferences for where to travel. Smart technological solutions complement better managing sustainability and security.

The global relevance of the topic is reflected in the 71 abstracts received for this event. All these abstracts were reviewed by a panel of reviewers, who contributed the time to make suggestions for improving the abstracts. It was the responsibility of the authors to submit updated and revised abstracts after peer review, which can be found in this book. There are 41 abstracts, and four keynote speaker's theses at the conference and in this book of abstracts (30 participants did not register for the conference or cancelled their participation for various reasons, most frequently noting financial reasons and the time required to obtain visas). Both during the conference and in our daily work, we want to focus not only on responsible tourism, but also on responsible action by everyone, by taking a critical approach to development issues.

Participants range from very experienced researchers to young researchers at the beginning of their research journey. This conference also gave young researchers the opportunity to present to all conference participants as keynote speakers on smartness and technology in tourism by Ilona Beliatskaya and safety in tourism products by Zane Kudure. Professor Tiger Bihu Wu emphasizes cultural sustainability issues and cultural sedimentation into destination management. Professor Alastair M. Morrison, who is well known to many participants as the author of many tourism books and numerous publications, has put a lot of support into the preparation of the conference with a great deal of responsibility and is addressing the conference on sustainability in the context of urban tourism destination development.

We hope that the abstracts will inspire you to new research directions, and we wish the new research will transform into scientific publications and contribute to new knowledge in tourism studies.

By Agita Līviņa and Andris Klepers on behalf of the conference scientific committee

Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, Latvia

Remarks from ITSA

On behalf of the International Tourism Studies Association (ITSA), I would like to thank and congratulate all of the authors who have contributed abstracts for ITSA Riga 2024, the 10th Biennial Conference of our Association. As an author myself, I know how difficult it can be at times to compose good abstracts. In this volume, an excellent portfolio of abstracts is presented that address the main themes and sub-themes of ITSA Riga 2024. These abstracts are the bedrock for the outstanding research that is being presented in Riga and we are greatly impressed by the diversity of topics and the widespread geographic distribution of authors.

By:

Alastair M. Morrison, Ph.D.

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KEYNOTE THESIS

KEYNOTE THESIS

Green brings green: The power of sustainable destination branding in urban marketing and development

Alastair M. Morrison

Research Professor, School of Management and Marketing, University of Greenwich, United Kingdom

18 September 2024

Good morning everybody and welcome to the 10th ITSA Biennial Conference in Riga. I am very sorry that I cannot be there with you in person.

As you can see, there are five parts to my presentation.

Four recent books were consulted for preparing this presentation. Special inspiration and data were drawn from a co-authored book chapter with Prof. Andres Coca-Stefaniak at the University of Greenwich.

Is it green destination branding?

Some academics have written about green destination branding, citing cases including Costa Rica and New Zealand. However, is it accurate to use the term green destination branding?

Here are definitions of destination branding and city destination branding. To answer the question, it is better to broaden the term to sustainable destination branding as sustainability is not just about the environment.

In fact, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) says that a city must meet sustainable management, socio-economic, cultural (and social), and environmental criteria.

For the environmental sustainability criteria, cities must be following the Circular Economy framework – which is one of the main sub-themes of this conference.

Cities must also be following through on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and particularly SDG 11, Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. You can see that 6 expected outcomes are identified for SDG 11.

Some destination branding basics

Branding is actually quite complex to do and is just one part of the portfolio of destination management roles.

Here you can see the eight destination management roles – Leadership, Governance, and Coordination; Planning and Research; Product Development; Partnership and Team-Building; Stakeholder Relationships and Involvement; Visitor Management; Crisis Management; and Marketing, Branding, and Communications. Branding is a component of one of these roles – Marketing, Branding, and Communications. Just as companies have CSR, destinations must also embrace Destination Social Responsibility or DSR. Of course, they must also adhere to the principles of sustainability.

We said branding is quite complex and this procedural diagram displays this very well. There are four main steps in the destination brand development process – 1. Situation analysis; 2. Tourism sector stakeholder and resident consultation and inputs; 3. Unique selling proposition identification; 4. Destination brand development. Remember that “a brand is not (just) a slogan!”

Effective destination brands share certain characteristics. This slide identifies 11 of them. We have highlighted three characteristics that are particularly crucial in sustainable destination branding -- consistent with positioning; expresses the destination's personality; well accepted by all stakeholders.

Indicators and case cities for sustainable destination branding

In our work for preparing the Handbook on Sustainable Urban tourism, we conducted research on sustainability initiatives in cities and city tourism. What follows are the findings from that research.

In analyzing the data, we found eight common indicators of sustainable destination branding in cities as displayed in this diagram – green certification; incentives; memberships; networks; declarations; pledges and commitments; plans or strategies; visual identity.

To demonstrate these indicators, I have selected 6 cities where sustainable destination branding exists -- Cape Town, Copenhagen, Ljubljana, Singapore, Valencia, Vienna (Note: This is just a small selection; there are several other cities).

Cape Town, South Africa has become almost synonymous with the responsible tourism concept.

These are the contents of the Cape Town Declaration on Sustainable Tourism. Note the recommendations are not just about the environment.

Wonderful Copenhagen is a very progressive DMO and a bit of a trend-setter. Here, it assessed what was most important about the city to residents and visitors.

Copenhagen is a bikeable city according to residents and visitors.

The CopenPlay initiative in 2024 was a game-changing idea from a DMO.

Slovenia and its capital city, Ljubljana, have made huge strides in positioning themselves as sustainable tourism destinations. The awards won by Ljubljana are evidence that this strategy is being recognized in Europe and globally.

As you can see, Visit Ljubljana, the DMO, identifies 10 examples of sustainable tourism in the city.

You can probably recognize The Jewel attraction at Changi International Airport on the left. The SG Green Plan is perhaps one of the most ambitious among global cities.

Singapore is a recognized world leader in the biophilic design of buildings.

Spain is renowned for its smart cities and smart tourism, and Valencia is one of these cities.

Visit Valencia, the city DMO, developed a tourism carbon footprint calculation method.

There is a saying that, "Great places to live are also great places to visit" and Vienna is a brilliant example of this.

Vienna is a world leader in setting standards for green meetings. Here are some green meeting guidelines.

Tourism cities and quality of life

When Cristina Maxim and I were researching for our book, World Tourism Cities, we became keen to answer this question. We were a little surprised by the results – shown in the table in the following slide.

Conclusion – a high city tourism ranking does not deliver an equally high resident quality of life.

Branding action pyramid and sustainable destination branding success factors

We developed the Destination sustainability branding action pyramid with seven actions as its components.

Here are the descriptions with examples of these seven actions in the pyramid – planning; greening; certifying; incentivizing; partnering; co-creating; branding and communicating.

Cristina Maxim and myself in World Tourism Cities found 12 factors that contribute to successful sustainable tourism implementation in cities.

Here is another model of success factors – this one with six components – strategic planning; promotion; image; stakeholders; accessibility; technological developments.

Smartness is often mentioned as an element for promoting sustainability in cities. You can see from this diagram this is not just about smart technologies. Seven elements of smartness are identified.

What about wise tourism cities and warm (rather than cold) city marketing? These are two very insightful recommendations from Andres and G. Hospers, respectively.

This is my ADVICE model showing the 6 main stakeholders in city tourism.

Here is what each of the 6 stakeholders should be doing to ensure success in sustainable destination branding.

Conclusions

These are my three main conclusions for this presentation. Thanks so much for your attention! Hope you thoroughly enjoy all of the conference.

KEYNOTE THESIS

Smart cities start with communities: urban commons and sense of place

Ilona Beliatskaya

Estonian Business School, Estonia

Smart cities as social phenomena based on community-building practices. The widely acknowledged concepts of smart cities have been argued for their technocracy neglecting the interest of urban stakeholders (Kar et al., 2019). The complexity of smart cities grounds on multiple decision-makers who play an integral part in constituting this phenomenon. The diversity of urban stakeholders ranging from citizens to international travelers plays an important role in smart city development. The UN's SDG11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) calls for action to make cities more sustainable, inclusive, resilient, and safe. Initially proposed by Ostrom (1990), the framework of governing commons justifies the role of a collective decision-making process regarding shared urban resources. The commoning process in urban areas invites collaborative activity of bringing various stakeholders to co-create and co-produce the common services in urban areas (Foster and Laione, 2019). The network governance is effective in responding to complex issues such as climate change and environmental threats. It uses the social mechanism for coordinating and decision-making (Wang and Ran, 2021) and follows the bottom-up approach (Jacobs, 2015). The strategy of bottom-up governance allows citizens and communities to be proactive and actively contribute to managing common resources. This research aims to broaden a discussion on the potential of commons-induced or network governance in smart cities and how decision-making takes place within.

KEYNOTE THESIS

Cultural Sedimentation and Cultural Sustainability: From Place Writing to Destination Making

Prof. Tiger Bihu Wu

Professor & Director, The International Center for Recreation and Tourism Research, Peking University, China

The Topic presented in this Keynote speech aims to cover 2Ss for the conference, Sustainability and Smart. Prof. Wu has set a library on Experoutination, i.e. exploration and experience en route and at destination, or historical collections on travel, voyage, adventure, exploration all around the world. This library supports him in the thinking, research and creation process of ideas on cultural sustainability and digital humanity research, with artificial intelligence aided to make a destination more sustainable developed and managed. Under the umbrella of cultural sustainability, we bring new understanding to sustainability of tourism, because sustainable development have been more considered from natural ecological perspective before.

KEYNOTE THESIS

Safe and Secure Tourism: Perceptions, Priorities, Perspectives. Case Studies in Latvia

Zane Kudure

Lecturer, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences

As perceptions form the sense of safety and security, it shall be observed how a destination is perceived by tourists and how hospitality and tourism companies communicate safety and security issues. By analyzing cases in Latvia an insight will be given to the current priorities and perspectives of a safe and secure destination in Europe.

Zane Kudure is a lecturer at Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, Valmiera, Latvia. She teaches tourism product development and involves in projects related to regional tourism planning and development. Safety and security has always been an important and challenging topic when talking about tourism destination and product development, with different highlights changing over time. The latest updates of the topic will be shared at the ITSA2024.

ABSTRACTS

Circularity of tourism system in policy planning documents and industry assessment reports

Agita Livina, Dace Dance

Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, Latvia

Abstract

This study analyses policy planning documents and tourism industry performance reports from a systemic tourism perspective. The primary objective is to develop a survey for tourism system organizations to assess their maturity in terms of circularity and sustainability. The analysis involved reviewing the goals of the documents, identifying the context in which terms such as circularity, Green Deal, and sustainability are applied to tourism, and assessing whether any incentives, penalties, or consequences are indicated if goals are unmet or delayed. This analysis was conducted between March and June 2024, utilizing documents created by key stakeholders (European Union, national-level Latvia, and local tourism destination Enter Gauja) and employing a snowball method to trace relevant documents.

A European Agenda for Tourism 2030 (Council of the EU, 01.12.2022) identifies five priorities fields to make the tourism sector greener and more sustainable, resilient and digitalised: 1) Enabling policy framework and governance; 2) green transition; 3) digital transition; 4) resilience and inclusion; 5) skills and support for transition. The incentives are expressed as recommendations to the European Commission and the Member States in general terms. Circularity is emphasized in the agenda, which encourages greater adoption of circular solutions within the tourism ecosystem by establishing conducive conditions and enhancing incentives. Specific actions, such as reducing food waste and limiting single-use plastics, are highlighted, while other areas like mobility and biodiversity are mentioned more generally. The multi-annual work plan mentions circularity four times within the context of the Green Transition priority.

The Path towards Social Sustainability of tourism in the EU (the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU, Tourism ministers 31.10.2023.) urges the EU to promote a new, sustainable tourism model that is more environmentally friendly, digital, inclusive, resilient, and responsive to challenges.

Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030 (LR Saeima, 06.2010.) set up sustainable development goals and actions for next 20 years. Takeaway main points for tourism system are capital city Riga and international airport development, international railway Rail Baltica development and certification of sustainable food products. Performance indicators for the tourism system include the number of foreign tourists staying for more than four nights, the number of passengers served at Riga International Airport, and the number of passengers served at Riga's harbour. The strategy is aimed at fostering growth while embedding sustainability principles.

National industrial policy guidelines 2021 – 2027 (Latvia) highlight the need for climate-neutral and climate-resilient tourism development. The guidelines emphasize a "zero paper" policy, the development of key national tourism infrastructure, improved transport solutions, and the development of medical tourism.

Development Strategy of Gauja National Park (in Latvia) Tourism Cluster 2029 (Latvia, 2024) specifically outlines that the cooperation network of the most competitive, sustainable development and growth-oriented businessmen of sustainable tourism destination, who know how to find dialogue in competitive conditions to achieve greater common goals. One of five action fields is promoting sustainable development. The strategy includes specific achievable indicators that increase the implementation of circulation solutions, increase the quality of services, focus on the reduction of supply chains.

Conclusions

The closer a policy planning document is to the specific tourism destination, the more detailed its actions and objectives become. These documents call for proactive measures, new management models, and enhanced knowledge to achieve sustainability goals. However, the focus on circularity and the Green Deal within these documents is limited primarily to food waste, packaging, and transportation. Critical issues such as water management and energy use, which are central to the Green Deal objectives, receive minimal attention. These issues are more comprehensively addressed in circular economy manuals and projects.

Acknowledgment

This research is funded by the Latvian Council of Science project “Assessment of Resources and Processes for Implementing Circularity and the Green Deal in the Tourism System (CirToS), project No. lzp-2023/1-0478.

Crime and urban tourism: a bibliometric literature review

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¹Faculty of Arts & Humanities, University of Coimbra CEGOT - Centre of Studies in Geography and Spatial Planning, Portugal. ²CI&DEI, Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal, Portugal

Abstract

Among the fears tourists may perceive when traveling, the risk of becoming a victim of criminal activity is quite common. The study of crime has long been a recurring topic in social sciences and tourism. Urban locations tend to be more vulnerable to these dangers, especially in highly visited areas that have the potential to develop into crime hotspots. This work presents an updated bibliometric analysis focused on the research studies developed in crime and tourism, focusing on urban spaces.

The SCOPUS database was used to collect the data using a specific Boolean logic in a defined period (1978-2023). Following the processes of duplication detection, filtering, and screening, 150 publications were considered. The analysis was carried out in three phases, starting with a literature review on crime and urban tourism, followed by a performance analysis of journals and publications. The analysis was complemented by a scientific mapping using Vosviewer software, which included a co-occurrence keyword analysis and an overlay visualization. In addition, a more detailed analysis of publications focusing on urban spaces was carried out to further understand prominent themes and emerging trends.

Despite the heterogeneous findings collected across different scientific subjects, the results indicate significant potential for further research. Extending these studies could lead to the development of new theoretical frameworks and provide insights that could be valuable to both academia and industry.

Evaluating resident satisfaction in sustainable tourism destinations

Margrit Kärp, Kandela Õun, Tiina Viin

University of Tartu Pärnu College, Estonia

Abstract

Residents' satisfaction with tourism is crucial to the development of a sustainable tourist destination, and its constant monitoring is also required by sustainability certificates. Existing evaluation frameworks, however, rarely match destination specificity and often require adaptation to fit particular destinations (Sánchez del Río-Vázquez et al., 2019). The purpose of this study was to test the applicability of the existing frameworks in a resort town, which is located on a large area but boasts seasonal tourism primarily in the coastal part of the city centre. Titled as the summer capital of Estonia, Pärnu experiences high tourist numbers in the city centre and beach area during peak season, while its remote areas meet minimal activity. Recognised at the Silver level of the Green Destination certification program, the destination offers a unique case for studying resident satisfaction in a smaller, non-mass-tourism destination.

To propose an appropriate framework for the specific destination, the frameworks from Cottrell et al. (2013) and Mehdiabadi et al. (2021) were combined, and the context of the destination was considered. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to assess the factor distribution and the fit of the selected factors. The evaluation was based on data obtained from a survey among residents. The findings revealed that the frameworks for assessing residents' satisfaction are not directly transferable to multiple destinations but need to be adapted and modified to local conditions.

A customised framework is proposed to support and facilitate continuous assessment and monitoring of resident satisfaction in a specific destination. By aligning evaluation methods with the unique characteristics of a destination, this framework ensures resident satisfaction remains a priority in management of sustainable destination.

Tourism Impacts Analysis – case study Azores destination

Claudia Faias¹, Claudia Seabra¹, Maria Batista², Ana Caldeira¹

¹University of Coimbra, Portugal. ²University of Azores, Portugal

Abstract

Purpose | This study is based on the premise that the social impacts of tourism experienced by residents in difficult times can influence their support for tourism development. While the literature refers a series of recent studies on the perception of the tourist impact on residents there is a gap in the way in which the perception of residents in a time of crisis can influence their attitudes towards supporting tourism.

Design/methodology/approach | This work was based on the Analyze of the relations and correlations between the characteristics of the companies and the perception of tourism impacts.

Research limitations/implications | This is a preliminary study. Included micro, small and medium-sized companies in seven of the nine islands of the Azores.

Practical implications | After processing the collected data, it is intended to generate inputs for optimizing the management of tourism impacts and planning the tourist destination. Public and private entities and the Azores community will have information at their disposal that will allow them to create outputs that enhance the perception of quality of life and place attachment to tourists, residents, and stakeholders.

Originality/value | Contribute to the introduction of a sustainable tourism model for the Azores that considers the specificities and needs of residents, tourists, and stakeholders.

Developing and validating a scale measuring socially sustainable tourist behaviour

Jiawei Li, Alastair M. Morrison, J. Andres Coca-Stefaniak

University of Greenwich, United Kingdom

Abstract

This study reviews critically the concept of socially sustainable tourist behaviour and outlines the development and validation of the first measurement scale in this field. A comprehensive systematic literature review conducted as part of this research concluded that there is a major imbalance between environmental, social, and economic sustainability in the study of sustainable tourist behaviour, with over 80% of publications to date in this field focusing on environmental sustainability. Furthermore, there is a lack of consensus among scholars with regards to the factors that shape tourists' decisions concerning sustainability.

The research, carried out mainly in China, embraces the inherent subjectivity of tourist behaviour and adopts a mixed-methods approach to its study, which includes an expert panel study and a survey of 1,214 Chinese respondents. The analysis of the data involved a thematic analysis leading to the development of an item pool and a thematic proposition. This was then supplemented by a partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) analysis to validate the scale and evaluate the antecedents of socially sustainable tourist behaviour.

The outcome of this analysis yielded a 29-item socially sustainable tourist behaviour scale underpinned by contributory constructs, namely: 1) Sustainable travel information retrieval, 2) Supportive sustainable tourism practices, 3) Engagement, 4) Interaction, 5) Compliant behaviours, 6) Sustainable travel advocacy, 7) Sustainable travel influence, and 8) Ethical tourist practices. Collectivism, the desire to gain face, perceived consumer effectiveness, perception of responsibility, and subjective norms were found to significantly and positively impact socially sustainable behaviours among Chinese tourists. Moreover, the results suggested that younger travellers tend to behave in a more socially sustainable manner than older. Similarly, travellers with higher levels of educational attainment and those travelling more frequently also had the tendency to behave in more socially sustainable ways.

Beyond delivering a measurement scale for socially sustainable tourist behaviour, this research contributes to the sustainable management of tourism destinations, especially from the perspective of Chinese visitors. It delivers a new perspective on the pivotal factors influencing the adoption of sustainable behaviours among Chinese tourists and contributes to the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) in tourism.

Gamification marketing in tourism

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Abstract

GAMIFICATION MARKETING

To suit the theme of changes in travel behavior, I decided to present this new trend in tourism named “gamification marketing”.

Gamification involves integrating game mechanics into the professional world. It is used to encourage behavior by causing a feeling of satisfaction similar to that felt during a game. “This makes it possible to further engage the user who has the feeling of progress, as if they were reaching levels.”

This new way of consuming can be integrated at different levels in the process of consuming tourism products:

1.BEFORE: from the on-line booking

The visitor fun experience begins at home. The potential customer can have the feeling to contribute in building its own personal product by adding activities as they wish, choose from a wide range catalogue and even be involved in the price to buy. For example, the company Convios creates its “Name Your Own Price” price definition tool. Convios has created a “Name Your Own Price” tool. An Internet user wishing to reserve an entry ticket for a leisure park can request a reduction on their ticket. To do this, he slides a cursor on a gauge which indicates whether this reduction is possible or not. For an entry ticket set at 20 euros for example, he can ask to lower the price to 18 euros, the gauge remains green. On the other hand, when he wants to lower the price to 12 euros, it turns red. “When the request for a reduction is too great, we ask him to try again, until the price is acceptable to him and to us.”

2. DURING: the experience, the activity or the stay

The consumer will improve the activity while playing and being active. For instance, during a stay in a hotel or visiting a monument, the consumer will have the opportunity to collect badges or points every time is using his mobile phone. This can be use for booking new services, paying or solving challenges. Young generation and children can be the goal as they are constantly connected. They also can be more motivated in consuming products. The reward can be turned into discounts during their next visit or special offers. They will open new levels like playing a game.

3. AFTER: when the customer is back home

Professionals in tourism still need to interact with their customer. The play experience in a theme park for instance doesn't finish at the end of the visit. The integration of game mechanisms into marketing strategies, extends the experience beyond the day of visit and reinforce the feeling of belonging among the customers and continue the relationship. Traditional loyalty programs have been reinvented through gamification. A mobile application bringing together all of the user's customer data and, thanks to the gamification of the loyalty program, would regularly receive mini -games on their phone with rewards to win. This approach creates an emotional connection with the brand and encourages customers to continue interacting with it, even after their visit.

Illuminating the Dark Spots of Social Media Storms in Tourism

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Abstract

Customers have become more empowered to share their collective voices on various social media platforms, publicly approving or opposing various business practices. In this interconnected environment, tourism managers often realize that one of the main challenges is to understand, process, and decide whether and how to meet various stakeholder expectations on those platforms (Aral, Dellarocas, & Godes, 2013). Understanding how to manage and overcome such heated situations when critical masses of customers attack tourism companies on social media has become a topic of paramount importance (Grégoire, Salle, & Tripp, 2015). Indeed, when customers collectively and suddenly rise against companies, this might result in the generation of a Social Media Storm (SMS) (Rydén, Kottika, Hossain, Skare, & Morrison, 2020). The current paper examines the dynamics of a SMS in real-time from the perspectives of customers and tourism managers to: (a) identify possible misalignments between customers and managers as the SMS unfolds and potential pitfalls/dark spots for managers; (b) provide insights into the interrelationships between SMS, social capital, and customer trust. A vignette methodology was applied combined with an engaging role-playing simulating real-life conditions of a SMS (Sampson & Johannessen, 2020). The 116 participants (who played either the role of a customer or a manager) were executive education students who filled in reflective reports after participating in the SMS. These reports were analysed employing content analysis. The findings unveiled the fragility of customer trust, throughout the SMS and its connection with the tourism company's social capital. Even though it is assumed that trust along with a firm's social capital is reduced during a crisis, the results suggest that the customer responses may be attempts to test and confirm that the tourism companies can be trusted. By displaying the social and emotional double-loop dynamics of SMS, the current study showcases how internal and external stakeholders align meaning and interactions, proceeding to a co-creational process, explaining what this process includes, and how it happens. The research at hand promotes a dynamic SMS management in real-time by tourism companies, while at the same time it highlights the need for continuous social media monitoring and preparedness.

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Recreation and tourism in promoting social inclusion. A reflection of documented theory.

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Abstract

Recreation and Leisure is an essential part of human life and different forms of recreation are shaped naturally by individual interests but also by the surrounding social construction. Participating in recreational activities is a healthy alternative for positive behavior, which leads to opportunities for learning and living a balanced, productive life. The purpose of this reflection piece is to discuss the contributions of documented theory on how recreation can be used to promote social inclusion. Tourism is a connected element of recreation and leisure. Using the theory of human needs by Maslow, Doyal and Gough, the perception of engaging in recreation will be narrated. Recreational activities promote social inclusion. Social inclusion is theoretically defined as the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to participate in society, and secondly, it's a process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people, disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society. Recreation is expressions of excess energy, channeling it into socially acceptable activities that fulfil individual as well as societal needs; recreation also provides satisfaction and pleasure for the participant without compulsion. People engage in tourism for various reasons, recreating being one amongst many elements. There are many benefits that come from recreation, such as the development of character, self-identity, and understanding of a communal setting. Being able to engage in recreational activities that reflect personal preferences is another component of social inclusion that is absent for many individuals. The specific activities one prefers and enjoys may remain stable for many years or change quite frequently over time, therefore, sustaining tourism is vital and has benefits. The possibility of these benefits supports the broader recovery goals that define social inclusion. Through systematic reviewing of existing literature, the focus will outline the benefits, barriers to participation, and characteristics of recreational activities. Recreational activities can be performed for economic benefit, and this can be used as a strategy to deal with the challenges which are faced by the society; however, it should be pleasurable and may be self-imposed (Pigram, 2006). The "need to do something for recreation" is an essential element of human biology and psychology. Recreational activities are often done for enjoyment, amusement, or pleasure and are considered to be "fun". Social inclusion is the way in which talents and capabilities are developed and enhanced so that participants are given the opportunity to realize their potential. There is a need to link planning for recreation for society to benefit. It is in the expansion of choice by providing a broad range of opportunities for recreational use for satisfaction. A description of engaging in recreation will be discussed. Engaging in recreation is essential, it contributes to identifying strategies of dealing with challenges. Recreating provides a wide range of functional and aesthetically pleasing environment. In this paper essential ways of dealing with social challenges through recreational activities will be discussed. Descriptive analyses will be done, and various methods of engaging in recreational activities discussed. way of social inclusions.

Clustering of small businesses to create resilience in tourism destinations

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Abstract

In the dynamic realm of tourism, destinations grapple with fluctuating economic conditions, natural disasters, and the fickle nature of consumer preferences. The clustering of small businesses has emerged as a strategic solution to enhance resilience and sustainability within this volatile context. This article investigates the process of clustering—where geographically proximate firms offering complementary services unite to surmount challenges like limited resources and market competition. The exploration includes an analysis of the multifaceted benefits and potential drawbacks of clustering, insights from triumphant case studies, and the introduction of a novel model to foster effective business collaboration within tourism clusters.

A specific emphasis is placed on small businesses and social enterprises, underscoring their contribution to economic innovation and community development through sustainable tourism practices. Despite the numerous advantages of clustering, such as increased visibility, market access, and shared innovation, the article recognizes the inherent challenges: trust-building, cooperation, competitive dynamics, and resource allocation.

Showcasing learning from the Experience Mekong Collection in Southeast Asia, a curation of small responsible travel businesses and social enterprises in the six member countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam, and the Guangxi and Yuannan in PR China), the discussion accentuates the strategic importance of stakeholder engagement, transparent governance structures, and capacity building. The article argues for a model of collaboration that prioritizes trust, coordination, and shared resource utilization to transcend competitive barriers and resource limitations.

In conclusion, clustering represents a beacon of resilience and sustainability for small businesses in tourism destinations, offering a pathway to collective competitiveness and enhanced customer experiences. The synthesized model and highlighted case studies provide valuable frameworks for future research and practical applications in tourism management.

In conclusion, clustering represents a beacon of resilience and sustainability for small businesses in tourism destinations, offering a pathway to collective competitiveness and enhanced customer experiences. The synthesized model and highlighted case studies provide valuable frameworks for future research and practical applications in tourism management.

Keywords: Tourism Clustering, Small Business Resilience, Sustainable Tourism, Destination Management, Stakeholder Collaboration, Economic Resilience, Social Enterprises

Exploring the Impact of Workforce Sustainability Attributes on Employees' Intention to Stay in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry

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Abstract

The hospitality and tourism industry consistently faces problems with the retention of qualified personnel. This struggle leads to issues of high turnover and labor shortages. Given the demanding nature of this industry, workers often pay a high price emotionally and physically while the rewards are low for many positions. Recognizing the critical role of sustainability in business performance, particularly through fostering long-term relationships, this study adopts a sustainability lens. Specifically, using the concept of workforce sustainability, this study investigates the relationship between workforce-sustainable attributes and intention to stay in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Grounded in the social exchange theory which posits that people engage in and remain doing activities when benefits outweigh costs, this research seeks to answer the following research questions: What are hospitality and tourism workers' perceptions of their current work environment? Are workers' jobs and environment conducive to long-term, sustainable employment within their current organization and the industry overall? Based on the principles of sustainability, which areas would need to improve to increase retention? We measure workplace sustainability using the "Sustainable Workforce" scale, comprising eight sustainability principles: diversity, maturity, community, health and wellbeing, nurturing, value, equity, and connectivity. Intention to stay is assessed through two separate questions.

Data was collected from January to February 2024 using Prolific databases across multiple organizations within the hospitality and tourism industry to provide a comprehensive industry-wide perspective. The initial results indicate that in fact, sustainability principles do influence intention to stay working for a specific organization and the industry overall. However, further analysis must be performed to solidify the initial findings.

This study makes a theoretical contribution by extending our knowledge on the intention to stay utilizing principles of sustainability. Furthermore, this study seeks to provide practical recommendations on workplace best practices that would improve perception among workers. Through our understanding of sustainability principles and how these can influence employee retention, this study can inform the creation of new strategies to retain talent within the hospitality and tourism industry.

Blockchain-powered carbon tracking apps: A new frontier for low-carbon tourism

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Abstract

The increasing pressure on tourism to achieve sustainability goals and prevent environmental degradation necessitates transformative measures, including significant changes in travel behavior. Tourism scholars argue that the adoption of low-carbon behaviors has the potential to significantly reduce the environmental impacts of tourist activity (Becken, 2017; Fakfare & Wattanacharoensil, 2023).

This paper explores the potential of blockchain-powered carbon tracking apps to leverage recent advances in technology to develop new perspectives and open fresh possibilities for low-carbon tourism development. While the established carbon tracking apps show promise by offering personalized feedback and continuous monitoring of carbon footprint, research shows that customers can be deterred from using these apps due to data protection and security concerns (Hoffmann et al., 2022). Blockchain-powered carbon tracking technology circumvents this problem by offering advanced technological solutions, enhanced user control, anonymity, increased capacity, and better security (Prados-Castillo et al., 2023).

We propose a novel framework that combines regulatory, voluntary, and market-based measures, and leverages recent advances in blockchain-powered technologies as a means of promoting low-carbon behaviors. We turn to a combined TAM and TPB model (C-TAM-TPB) developed by Taylor and Todd (1995) as a backdrop to our discussion. Both TPB and TAM have been widely used in tourism as a comprehensive approach to understand and predict responsible or green consumption (Li et al., 2022; Tang et al., 2022). Yet the application of the modified C-TAM-TPB framework to explore green behavior adoption driven by carbon tracking technology remains very limited.

Grounded in C-TAM-TPB as a general model, this paper proposes that the adoption of blockchain-powered carbon tracking technology can be driven by personal innovativeness, financial and social incentives, government policy, security, and familiarity. While we believe that our framework has important applications in the domain of low-carbon tourism, it is by no means definitive or exhaustive, and requires further development.

This study focuses on tourist behavior, yet the implications are far-reaching and extend beyond any one industry. This paper enhances our understanding of the C-TAM-TPB in the context of low-carbon tourism. The findings can be used by other investigators as a guide for instrument development and validation. Subsequent testing of the model could determine which of the proposed factors are reliably important and generalizable to other contexts.

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Guests' readiness to embrace robots in 4- and 5-star hotels in South Africa

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Abstract

The current geo-political events have changed the hospitality landscape and highlighted the importance of technology. The hospitality industry is continually embracing new technological innovations such as artificial intelligence and robots in customer experiences (Tussyadiah, Zach & Wang, 2020; Murphy, Höfacker & Gretzel, 2017). With these advancements in technology in hotels, adopting technology and measuring hotel guests' reactions to new technology has become an essential consideration (Moradi, Moradi & Bayat, 2018; Parasuraman, 2000; Sun *et al.* 2020). This paper aimed to investigate hotel guests' views on their technological readiness and tendency to embrace robots in 4- and 5-star hotels (within the reception, housekeeping, food and beverages, and additional services departments) in a South African context. A quantitative research method was applied to collect primary data by means of an online questionnaire. Social media platforms were used to collect the data. A sample of n = 224 respondents was achieved after cleaning the data. Descriptive statistics and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) were used to analyse the data. Overall, the study's results indicated that hotel guests to 4- and 5-star hotels in South Africa portray positive feelings (*optimism and innovation*) towards technology use in hotels. Most hotel guests do not feel any discomfort in using high-tech products or services. In terms of insecurity, sampled guests considered it safe to do financial transactions online, but still prefer to talk to a person rather than a robot. Hotel management should continuously make efforts in understanding their guests' technological readiness when implementing new technologies that will fit the needs of the guests.

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Decision-Making Support in selecting small cities as Alternative tourism destinations: An Approach Based on the PROMETHEE Method

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Abstract

Research approach and objective: Mapping a city's characteristics based on the region's resources is the prior management activity for establishing a tourism destination. This article aimed to determine a potential development ranking of Alternative Tourism (AT) among cities in the microregion of Cariri in Brazil. This region is included in the Brazilian Tourism Map list. AT is endorsed due to its congruence with sustainability's social, cultural, and environmental values (Li et al., 2022). It is associated with modalities of sustainable, participatory, small-scale, locally owned and controlled tourism that has the potential to promote bottom-up local development (Prince & Ioannides, 2017). Areas affected by low economic and social conditions are named Low-Density Territories (LDTs). They are characterized by the duality between their weaknesses and endogenous capital with potential investment and dynamization, sometimes with little explored tourism potential.

Methodology: Analysis based on multi-criteria methods is gaining attention among managers. We combined secondary data that supports public policies with a multi-criteria technique to demonstrate that this blend can provide better decision-making support. It is a quantitative study with a multi-criteria methodology using a non-compensatory PROMETHEE II method. This method structures the problem by identifying alternatives and relevant criteria to obtain a ranking of cities in terms of their potential to develop Alternative Tourism. We analyzed LTDs of the Cariri microregion, located in Brazil's semi-arid region.

Findings: Cabaceiras City presented the highest potential to become an AT destination, as it had the highest positive and lowest negative flows, obtaining a net flow of 0.3449. It was followed by Boqueirão City, with a net flow of 0.1767. In contrast, Gurjão City had the worst net flow (negative, -0.4154). The cities of Taperoá and Monteiro also obtained negative net flows. The result indicated the following order of low-density cities' potential for the development of AT in the Cariri microregion: Cabaceiras, Boqueirão, Monteiro, Taperoá and Gurjão. However, based on overclassification values, only the first two cities have a suitable context for becoming Alternative Tourism destinations.

Implications: Results indicated a mismatch between the criteria for including cities in the Brazilian Tourism Map, as three cities presented negative values regarding the potential to develop tourism activities. This mismatch can generate public and private investments in regions that do not have minimum conditions as tourist destinations. Our study indicates a methodological path based on secondary data that municipal managers and entrepreneurs can use to improve Decision-Making Support for public and private investment in tourism at LDTs.

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Social value creation in tourism: How far can tourism push?

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Abstract

Research approach and objective: This research adopts Chim-Miki et al.'s (2023) society-centric tourism development approach, focusing on harnessing tourism activity to generate social value for communities, i.e., economic, sociocultural and environmental benefits to the host society. From this perspective, tourism development can foster sustainable destinations to visit and live, improving collective and individual benefits and minimising the host society's needs and problems. Recent trends in tourism literature emphasize examining tourism's impacts on quality of life, social dynamics, destination social responsibility (Agapito et al., 2023), and well-being (Dwyer, 2022). Different approaches produced various ways to monitor tourism's social effects. Our research has twofold objectives: 1) to integrate the different approaches to the social effects of tourism and their indicators from the perspective of tourism's social value; 2) to identify the evolution of social indicators literature to verify how far tourism pushes the social value creation.

Methodology: A systematic literature review on sustainable tourism assessment and competitiveness was conducted, analyzing 262 peer-reviewed articles to identify indicators and dimensions of tourism's social impact. Subsequently, guided by the core question: "What effect of tourism does each indicator measure?" Co-word content analysis was employed to identify co-occurrence patterns among indicators and group them into word families, revealing similar ideas within different subject areas presented in the texts. The analysis spanned three periods of competitiveness studies to identify the evolution of the literature.

Findings: The study identified 96 dimensions used to measure tourism's social impacts, grouped into seven-word families: Sociocultural atmosphere, Community identity, Cultural heritage, Community facilities, Community life, Empowerment, and Equity inclusion. These families cover three main aspects of tourism to host societies: intangible and tangible sociocultural aspects, the connection between culture and tourism, and the interface between tourism and society. The analysis showed that in the first period (1990-2003), the indicators were focused on socio-economic values; in the second period (2014-2016), the tendency was aggregate socio-environmental values; and in the third period (2017-actual) included sociocultural and socio-sustainability values.

Implications: The findings highlight that tourism's social effects extend beyond economic benefits to the host society, emphasizing social sustainability, including empowerment, equity, social regeneration, and circular economy principles. The study provides an updated and integrative framework for understanding social value creation in tourism and destination sustainability, contributing to building the society-centric tourism development approach. This framework can assist tourism managers in enhancing mechanisms to monitor tourism's effects and ensure value creation for the host society.

Keywords: Tourism impacts; Social value; Society-centric tourism development.

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Identifying the drivers of a circular economy in tourism: a modified total interpretive structural modeling (m-TISM) approach

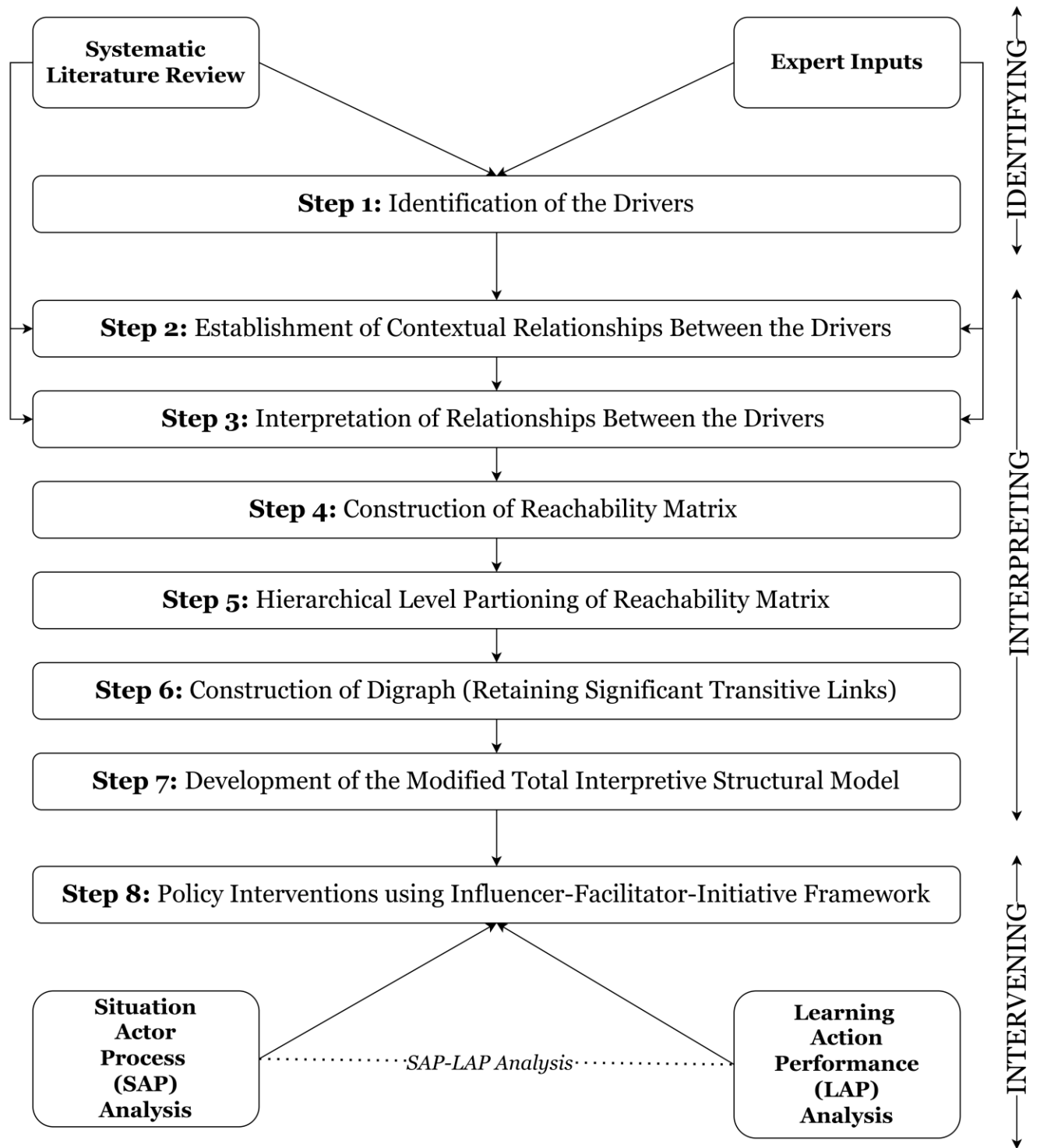
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Abstract

Limitless consumption of Mother Earth's limited resources presents a paradox exacerbated by the linear systems of today. The circular economy (CE) concept, emerging as humanity's sustainable coalescence with nature, has since permeated service sectors such as tourism and offers a pathway for sustainability (Boluk et al., 2019). While continued linearity will globally increase tourism-related greenhouse-gas emissions, energy, and water consumption by 131%, 154%, and 152% by 2050, respectively, a circular economy in tourism (CET) can potentially reduce them by 40% (United Nations Environment Programme, 2012; World Tourism Organization and United Nations Development Programme, 2017; Material Economics, 2019; Rey & Nizan, 2019). However, the CET discourse has taken a backseat for tourism researchers, lacking transitional pathways and expert consensus on practices (Boluk et al., 2019; Sørensen & Bærenholdt, 2020).

Against this backdrop, the study aims to analyze the drivers of a CET to strategise circularity integration in tourism. For this, it utilizes modified total interpretive structural modeling (m-TISM) and the Influencer-Facilitator-Initiative (IFI) framework based on a generalized situation-actor-process-learning-action-performance (SAP-LAP) inquiry (Sushil, 2009, 2017). Firstly, it identifies the drivers through a three-staged systematic literature review process and industry-academia expert consultation. Secondly, the m-TISM analysis of the selected drivers models their hierarchical structure and interactions. Finally, the IFI framework translates the theoretical analysis into actionable policy inputs. The methodology adopted is described step-by-step in the figure below:



The study's findings reveal the interconnectedness of circularity drivers in the tourism industry, helping identify critical areas for policy interventions. Future research can perform structured equation modelling (SEM) and factor analysis to valorize the findings. Societally, the study helps address the sustainable development goals (SDGs) 1,2,3,8,10 and 12. From a managerial perspective, it provides guidelines for businesses to transition towards more circular models. Lastly, it theoretically expands the CET discourse and sustains the scholarly conversation around circularity. In terms of

novelty, the study is among the first to synergize interpretive-argumentative methodologies in the CET context. It is relevant to tourism managers and researchers working at the interface of sustainability and public policy.

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Tourism industry perspectives in disaster management planning: Cases from Indonesia and Japan

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Abstract

Tourism is a highly volatile industry. Hospitality and tourism business should stay alert, monitor, prepare and plan for various external shocks (Hall, 2023). However, this is not an easy task because of at least three reasons: it is a challenging task to stay alert in a multi-threat environment amid substantial day-to-day operational concerns; it is not feasible to plan for every disaster as they are simply not predictable all the time; some businesses may not have the capacity to formulate contingency plans because of resource constraints (Hall, 2023). Prideaux et al. (2021) suggested a learning destination approach involving a broad range of communities working collaboratively to mitigate future crises. On the other hand, Hall (1999) said that integrated tourism planning may be regarded as an interactive or collaborative approach which requires participation and interaction between the various levels of an organization or unit of governance and between the responsible organization and the stakeholders in the planning process to realize horizontal and vertical partnerships within the planning process.

Japan and Indonesia, are countries prone to natural disasters amid both countries' emphasis on tourism. Indonesia is located at the junction of tectonic plates, circum-mediterranean and circum-pacific seismic zone, whereas Japan has history of great earthquakes. Both are listed as countries with the most active volcanoes in the world (Buchholz, 2023). This paper aims to explore the main concerns of tourism industry in both countries in regard to disaster management planning and to identify their roles in disaster management within the framework of collaboration with the governments.

The study used a multiple-case study approach, with two cities in Indonesia were chosen for the purposes of triangulation, where two cities were chosen for the purpose of literal replication and a third for the purpose of theoretical replication. Our previous study on the criteria for the realisation of public and private collaborations in tourism disaster management in terms of their priorities in Indonesia (Kausar et al., 2023) guides this research and variables to be examined. The study then uses a "lens" (or "keyhole") comparison approach by conducting semi-structured interviews in tourism and disaster management stakeholders in Japan with the purpose of using the data as a lens through which to view the cases of Indonesia. Data collection methods are semi-structured interviews with the tourism industry and focus group discussions with experts in Indonesia and semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders in Japan. Data analyses use thematic analyses to look for patterns in the meaning of the data and identify themes.

The study identifies differences in disaster awareness between Indonesian and Japanese tourism stakeholders. Better awareness towards disaster in Japan is the result of disaster education that has been conducted since early stage. Forms of public and private collaboration have been identified in both countries with sometimes differing perspectives and concerns due to policies, infrastructure and ecosystem for disaster management planning in general.

Barriers And Drivers for Being Sustainable: The Perspective of Latvian Tourism Organisations

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Abstract

Studies claim that entrepreneurs recognize the importance of sustainable tourism, as that would otherwise jeopardize the survival of the business (Chandralal, & Fernando, 2022) and there are entrepreneurs who are aware of the need to reduce the negative impact of the company on the environment to achieve sustainable development and ensure long-term financial growth. At the same time, sustainability faces various challenges, such as a lack of awareness among tourists and tourism service providers of sustainability, the absence of government policies and regulations to support sustainable tourism development, and inadequate infrastructure and resources, such as waste management systems and renewable energy sources (Tseng et al., 2018).

This study focuses on Latvian tourism organizations and explores how aware private tourism business owners, managers, and DMO representatives in Latvia are about sustainability issues, motivations, and barriers to engaging in pro-environmental management of their organizations and DMOs. The study relies on qualitative data collection and analysis methods. Data was collected by conducting online and on-site semi-structured individual interviews. Informants represented tourism SMEs (n=7) and DMOs (n=7). Other tourism service providers in Latvia represented other public state and local government organizations and NGOs (n=3).

Awareness of Latvian enterprises and DMOs of sustainability issues ranges from comprehensive to very limited. The motivation of entrepreneurs who think more or less consistently about reducing the environmental impacts of their business is largely linked to the economic benefits for the enterprise combined with pro-environmental values at a personal level. Only a few informants report their customers pressure them to act more sustainably. The main barriers to greater uptake of pro-environmental management actions in Latvian tourism SMEs are: poor awareness of sustainability, sustainability not being seen as a priority not believing that the own business, if sustainably organized, can make a difference unless the state pushes all other enterprises to be pro-environmental, lack of knowledge about possible solutions, cost of green technologies, inability to see the benefits for acting pro-environmentally, inability to introduce green solutions without increasing expenditures, the lack of simple solutions for small companies, complex procedures to receive environment certificates. Given that Latvia does not have an unencumbered, well-organized system of requirements that promote sustainable business and turn sustainable practices into a business advantage, SMEs are more likely to see barriers to introducing sustainability. Also, the external business environment influences the motivation of Latvian companies to consider sustainability a priority.

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Tourist experiences in urban settings – developing a tool for the tourism product development of a city destination.

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Abstract

Many cities take initiatives to enhance their tourism product in their efforts to increase tourism numbers and thus derive economic benefits. In developing its tourism product, a city seeks to identify features that make it distinctive and enhances its tourism competitiveness.

The paper proposes a research tool that destination managers can use for purposes of tourism product development. This involves the carrying out of place-meaning studies of selected places of a city destination. The studies assess the tourism experience of the place in relation to specific meanings that are associated with it.

For a better understanding of the tourist experience, the paper proposes the 'meaningful place' model. The model brings together two vital elements of the tourist experience namely 'place' and 'meaning'. Place refers to buildings, structures, spaces and other features that are tangible. 'Meaning' are the thoughts and ideas that are associated with the various buildings and urban spaces visited by the tourist.

In any city, there are places whose tourism potential is not utilised, or at best is used only partially. The tool involves the carrying out of place-meaning studies for (i) sites that are part of the tourism itinerary of the destination (ii) sites which have tourism potential but which, for whatever reason, are not yet visited by tourists. Each site is analysed by the researcher not only in terms of the physical aspects but also in relation to the various meanings that are associated with it. The on-site analysis is backed up with in-depth desk research to achieve a proper understanding of site meanings.

The meanings associated with place can be broadly categorised into; (A) history and narrative, (B) local life and local identity (C) appreciation of human achievements, (D) aesthetics and visual significance, (E) spirituality and religion, (F) appreciation of the natural world.

The paper includes examples of tool application at several places in European destinations.

The paper demonstrates the usefulness of place-meaning studies of tourism sites. At the macro level they are a useful aid for city authorities to develop tourism policy in relation to product development and branding. At a micro level, a place-meaning study enables the destination manager to determine the tourism potential of a place and to establish interventions that are required to render the site more attractive for visitors.

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Understanding changes in US market travel behavior towards Caribbean destinations

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Abstract

The research study examines changes in tastes and preferences of the US market for traveling to Caribbean destinations. Travel behavior post-pandemic requires examination to align destination policies to meet changing demand. Some 732 questionnaires were gathered from respondents who visited the Caribbean in the last 5 years. The respondents were asked about their expectations, perceptions, behaviors, and satisfaction. The main purpose of the visit was vacation only, with 73% of respondents with 35.9% of respondents staying in a large hotel with all-inclusive accommodation of more than 100 rooms.

The results showed that tourists were satisfied with Caribbean tourism destinations. Tourist satisfaction is generally high with the overall median of 4.00 and a mean value range from highest 3.95 to lowest 3.69. The highest mean value satisfaction is for the statement 'I am satisfied with the friendliness of accommodation staff'. This is followed by a mean value of 3.89, and this figure represents four satisfaction statements including restaurant cleanliness, accommodation cleanliness, friendliness of locals, and good quality landscapes and general environment. Groups' differences based on income and education were evident. A Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted on the perception variables using the highest level of education group categories. The highest mean rank of 456.41 was recorded for the variable 'I prefer to use a travel agent or tour operator to travel to the Caribbean', and this figure was followed by the next highest mean rank for the postgraduate degree group of 444.55 for the perception variable 'I visit a Caribbean destination because of its brand or image'. The results for the satisfaction variables and the highest education group categories showed the highest mean rank of 435.30 was recorded for the postgraduate degree group for the satisfaction variable 'I am satisfied with retail products', followed by a mean rank of 425.63 for the satisfaction variable 'I am satisfied with ground tour operators.'

The study on U.S. tourist preferences for Caribbean destinations post-pandemic reveals critical managerial insights that can enhance tourism strategies. Tourists show a strong preference for large, all-inclusive hotels and highly value cleanliness and friendly service, suggesting that investments in comprehensive packages and rigorous hygiene protocols are essential. Moreover, educated tourists, particularly those with postgraduate degrees, favor destinations with strong brand images and curated travel experiences, indicating the need for robust branding and strategic partnerships with travel agents. By focusing on these areas, Caribbean destinations can tailor their offerings to meet diverse tourist expectations, ensuring high satisfaction and a thriving tourism industry.

Glamping as a Bourgeoisie Fantasy: The Symbolic Meaning Behind Ritualized Scenes

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Abstract

Cultivating a luxurious ambiance and kindling a bourgeois fantasy of a high-quality lifestyle, glamping has increasingly been viewed a consumption ritual and gained unprecedented popularity among middle-class customers. The purpose of this study is to dig deeper into the composition of ritual scenes associated with glamping and the symbolic meaning inherent in them. Utilizing visual identification and textual mining on photos and text reviews obtained from travel social media, this study revealed three categories of ritual scenes in glamping: environmental, activity-related, and equipment-related, and four types of ritual symbolism: self-renewal, self-participation, self-display, and social connection. The findings highlight that glamping goes beyond simple enjoyment and leisure activity but becomes a “rite of passage” for customers to build a bourgeoisie-lifestyle identity and bolster their self-concept.

Between City Development and Dark Heritage: Future Scenarios of Urban Tourism in Riga

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Abstract

Riga is increasingly attracting tourists to the city's neighbourhood *Maskavas forstate*, which is home not only to one of the city's most popular tourist attractions - the Central Market, but also to Holocaust-related sites - the Riga Ghetto and the Latvian Holocaust Museum, the Horal Synagogue Memorial Site, and the former Riga Jewish Ghetto. Only in the last decade, tourism in Riga, both in terms of demand and supply, is unthinkable without sites related to the Holocaust. However, it should be noted that the darkest places in the dark tourism spectrum (Stone, 2006) are still associated with different and contradictory interpretations and meanings, and they also have strong ethical concerns related to tourism development. *Maskavas forstate*, now one of the city's less developed neighbourhoods, has been undergoing changes and spatial transformations in recent years due to the construction of the high-speed railway, and this district is also becoming more popular among residents. This city area will undergo significant changes in the future, as its place and importance will change in the urban structure and tourism. Given the current development processes and the complex nature of dark heritage, the question is, what will the impact of these changes be on dark heritage and dark tourism in the city?

The study aims to describe the future development of dark tourism sites based on an analysis of their development to date and the identification of future trends and influencing factors for urban and tourism development. The future scenario planning approach was used in this study. The development visions were described using scenario-building principles (Yeoman, 2012), including the situational analysis of Holocaust-related sites in the context of tourism development, identification of key factors and trends affecting tourism development, definition of challenges, creation of future visions, identification of unpredictable impact factors; and preparation of recommendations for stakeholders. As a result, three future scenarios for 2045 are proposed. The realistic scenario answers what will likely happen or how these places will develop. In addition, a pessimistic or unwanted vision and an optimistic or ideal vision of the future are also proposed.

The realistic future scenario takes into account the assumption that the Holocaust has become part of European and global memory. The interaction between the memories of residents and tourists will reduce the dissonant character of these places and strengthen the remembrance and memory of the victims of the Holocaust. In the current climate of uncertainty, several unpredictable factors will influence the development of dark tourism in one direction or the other, as reflected in the positive and negative visions of the future.

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Sense of place in film-tourism destination

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Abstract

More than ever, screens help to raise attractiveness of tourism destinations. Several destinations have been put on a map because film industry has used its resources in their stories, and the few lucky ones have become places of worship by devoted fans who wish to experience the film magic in real life.

As Chen, Hall and Prayag (2021, p 3–5) say, local people should be active participants in the making of places and ideal placemaking should come from residents' own focused effort. It is crucial to understand resident's relationships to place and how individuals and communities are responding to the externally produced place images and changes brought by the media and the tourism industry (Chen, Hall & Prayag, 2021, p 2). In Estonia, there are several humorous films (e.g. "Men Will Not Cry", "Here We Are", "Real Life of Johannes Pääsuke") that are loved but the locations of the sets are in remote areas hindering the use of their full potential. How to explain why those locations of beloved humorous films have not become popular places to visit among tourists and why locals do not commodify the opportunities given by storylines?

Sense of place and place attachment are often classified under the people-place relationships concepts (Erfani, 2022). It is common that tourists find locals' way of life so different that it is amusing to them. Humorous films often show controversies between locals and travellers, to make the audience laugh. The region satisfies the individual's need to belong, defines through its cultural value-scheme ways in which an individual may become honoured, and creates opportunities for self-realisation (Paasi, 1986). The aim of the paper is to understand if the fact that the films are humorous may have an effect how residents relate to the place itself.

A dynamic panel model for the relationship between environmental pollution and international tourism: evidence from Baltic states

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Abstract

The tourism industry is developing rapidly in the Baltic countries, which offer various attractions for international tourists throughout the year. This sector makes an important contribution to economic development in these countries. However, the positive impact on the economy is accompanied by an increase in the use of natural resources as well as environmental pollution, which can be a drawback in the conditions of an extremely competitive global market. On the other hand, tourism, when done responsibly, preserving and improving the environment, is a catalyzer for the development of local communities, decreasing unemployment and increasing the GDP of the host country. The purpose of this research paper is to investigate the possible relationship between environment and tourism in Baltic states, focusing on international tourism. Two dynamic econometric models are analyzed to evaluate this impact where CO₂ and fine particulate emissions PM_{2.5} are included as environmental variables, while the development of international tourism is represented through the inbound tourism expenditure and number of international visitors. GDP per capita and trade openness are included as control variables in both models. Our results evidence the causality between international tourism and environmental pollution in Baltic states. We recommend taking measures and drafting policies for the promotion of sustainable tourism. There are few studies that analyze the relationship between environmental pollution and international tourism in the Baltic states. This paper is an added value to the existing literature on this particularly critical issue.

Assesing the impact of Cocoa Pod Husk consumption on customers as new sustainable food practice in the hospitality industry

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Abstract

Cocoa Pod Husk (CPH) is the 80% of the whole cacao fruit. Only the cacao beans have been used for making chocolate which represents the 20%. For each ton of cacao beans produced, 10 tonnes of pod husks are discarded as waste which is usually improperly disposed in plantations causing diseases threatening, economical losses, environmental and ecological issues at larger proportions. However this biomass is mainly composed by carbohydrates, proteins, lipids, and secondary metabolites, such as alkaloids, flavonoids, and pectin. Particularly pectin, due to its characteristics such as gelling, thickening, and structural behavior, makes it a promising component for applications in different industries ranging from food to biomedicine. Cacao Pod Husk are a good source of dietary fiber and can be used as thickening agent replacing fat-based ingredients such as flour, corn starch, crackers, and other ingredients that are not healthy. Using CPH in the hospitality industry as main thickener in every dish makes it healthier, sustainable and it does not change the flavor and color. It's really important to add this new sustainable food practice in every food and beverage department in order to support the three dimensions of sustainability which are social, economic, and environmental. As the hospitality is a huge industry, using the CPH as main thickener would dramatically improve these three dimensions. Previous investigations have been done about the use of the Cocoa Pod Husk in other industries such as renewable energy source, biomedical, and others. This recent review will discuss about the positive customers perspective on the use of PCH in the hospitality industry. This research has a qualitative method and surveys and interviews as evaluation.

Key Priorities for South African Mothers During Family Vacations

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Abstract

South African mothers are the backbone of a family and are usually responsible for planning, arranging, preparing and facilitating family vacations. However, these mothers also have their own needs to be fulfilled during a family vacation, which, in essence, should be a time for relaxation. Mothers, with the support of their life partners, have the roles of caretaker, cook, entertainment coordinator, housekeeper, laundry attendant and medical assistant to fulfil, all the regular duties of running the house, just not in the comfort of their own home (Schänzel, 2016). This study specifically investigated mother's reasons for wanting to go on family vacations paired with what activities they prefer to participate in while on vacation. Secondly, this study focused on identifying mother's conflicting expectations and experiences while on a family vacation. Should destinations want to tap into the family vacation business, they should focus on the primary decision maker of family vacations, the mothers of the family, and attempt to satisfy their needs. This study followed an exploratory research design using a qualitative constructivist research approach. Purposive sampling was applied with semi-structured interviews with 17 married mothers in the Gauteng province of South Africa. The data was imported into the latest version of Atlas.ti, and generic qualitative thematic data analysis was conducted by doing two rounds of coding data, developing relevant themes and summarising the results as images for the reader. With this study, the researcher aimed to determine why mothers go on vacations with their families, their specific needs during a family vacation, and what their conflicting needs and experiences are during a family vacation. The mothers have reiterated that they mainly go on family vacations to spend quality time with close family members due to the fast-paced environment families face nowadays. In addition, mothers highlighted that even though they love spending time with their close family members, they also prefer a time of solitude where they will participate in activities that re-energise them personally, such as reading and sleeping. When mothers re-energise themselves, the importance of the partner becomes very evident who can entertain the children while the mother relaxes. Family vacation destinations should take note of these indicated needs and attempt to create opportunities where the rest of the family is entertained. At the same time, the mother can relax in peace and quiet without feeling any guilt. In this way, the primary decision-maker for family vacations will be positively influenced to make follow-up bookings for another relaxing vacation.

Smart tourism ecosystem: From connectivity to value co-creation

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Abstract

Purpose | Technological changes have always been essential for tourism and the developments that took place in the recent past, which initiated the concept of *smart*, are recognised as likely to cause a paradigm shift in tourism activity. The concept of a smart tourism ecosystem, in addition to integrating various components, processes, and actions in the design of a place, advocates specific outcomes through the virtuous convergence of technological resources, business environments, and value-inducing experiences. The main objective of this study is to highlight the crucial role of connectivity and co-creation in obtaining differentiating tourism experiences and, therefore, high added value, from the perspective of a smart tourism ecosystem.

Design/methodology/approach | A conceptual approach is proposed, through a literature review, highlighting the perspective of a smart tourism ecosystem, where technological innovation generates and renews the social arrangements translated into institutions responsible for integrating resources exchanged between different actors.

Findings | The suggested approach will have relevant implications at the management level, given the need to obtain differentiating factors, with the incorporation of added value for the stakeholders, capable of achieving and renewing market balances, using technology, and with a view to far-reaching results, likely to contribute to the competitiveness and sustainability of accommodation and destinations.

Research limitations/implications | The point is the construction of viable smart tourism ecosystems. The complexity of tourism makes it difficult to go beyond specific platforms or service innovations.

Practical implications | We are facing a virtuous system, where a systematic attitude towards innovation leads to the competitiveness and sustainability of the stakeholders, with the unavoidable role of connectivity and the consequent co-creation of value.

Originality/value | As tourism increasingly needs to generate experiences with high added value, the use of technology and the call for connectivity and co-creation of value for its design, communication, and facilitation appear strategically important. The approach contributes to the systematisation of the topic and implementing good practices.

Protection of tourists during travel as a key aspect in the field of tourism

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Abstract

In the 21st century, there is an increase in the importance and influence of tourism on the individual, society and the country. In addition, tourism performs important socio-economic, cultural-ecological, international and other functions.

Against this background, the number of internal and external threats to the safety of tourists is increasing, which are becoming more dangerous and less predictable. Natural and man-made hazards, such as environmental emergencies, epidemics and pandemics, constantly accompany tourists during their travels.

The sphere of tourism in Ukraine, as well as in the world tourism system in general, is increasingly becoming a target for national and international organized crime, which leads to theft of tourists' property, violence against them, as well as terrorist and extremist acts. The risks associated with the rapid spread of epidemics of dangerous diseases are a serious problem that is widespread both within Ukraine and beyond.

It should be noted that security and tourism are interconnected and complement each other. Tourism needs security. The Declaration on World Tourism adopted by the World Tourism Organization on September 27, 2001, which contains "practical recommendations on the role of tourism in promoting world peace", stated that the safety and protection of tourists should be a priority in every member country of the World Tourism Organization. tourist organization.

Any acts of terrorism, attacks, kidnappings, and threats against tourists and tourism industry workers, as well as intentional damage to tourist sites and cultural and historical heritage sites, must be dealt with in accordance with applicable law. On the other hand, intercultural interaction and personal friendships formed during tourist exchange play an important role in ensuring international (global) security, contribute to the creation of an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding in the world. It means that tourism is a key factor in international economic prosperity and the protection of basic human rights and freedoms.

Tourism faces two major tasks: first - guaranteeing the safety of travel and overcoming crisis situations at the present moment; the second task is to determine the path of tourism development in the future, which will reduce its vulnerability, increase sustainability and benefit the poorest local communities.

Tourism contributes to the provision of human security and contributes to the socio-economic development of countries and regions. One of the key features of ensuring the safety of tourism in the world is the effective management of the tourism industry, based on the principles of sustainable development and taking into account the need to understand changes and trends in the future in conditions of uncertainty.

The tourism industry and governments must learn to operate effectively under conditions of uncertainty, including crisis management and the intelligent use of mass information in times of difficulty. The center of management of the activities of governments and the tourism industry should be cooperation and solidarity between member states of the World Tourism Organization. It is important to understand that in crisis situations it is necessary to move from competition to partnership in order to jointly overcome difficulties.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN UKRAINE

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Abstract

Consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of their choices of products and services in line with environmental principles, which is reflected in their purchases and travels. Society's expectations regarding environmental conservation and protection are growing, posing a challenge to the international tourism sector to find ways to neutralize its negative impacts. Viewing international tourism both as a catalyst for economic growth and as a potential threat to the environment and local communities has prompted the adoption of the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to mitigate its adverse effects.

According to the international standard ISO 26000:2010, the social responsibility of an organization involves understanding the impact of its activities on society and the environment. This entails making responsible decisions that contribute to sustainable development, taking into account the expectations of stakeholders, complying with laws and international standards. This concept is integrated into management practices and becomes part of corporate culture, fostering positive interactions between the organization and its environment and society.

In global practice, the main directions of implementing corporate social responsibility in tourism include the rational use of natural, geographical, and cultural resources, the development of waste management programs, and minimizing environmental impact, landscape and biodiversity conservation, fair treatment of employees, partners, and clients, partnership with local communities, and the use of local products to promote the well-being of the local population, as well as the implementation of charitable and educational projects. Analysis of the best global practices shows that a well-thought-out and effective CSR policy allows tourism enterprises not only to contribute to social well-being and environmental stability but also to create additional competitive advantages that enhance business efficiency and resilience.

Implementing strategies for sustainable development in the tourism sector requires significant efforts and a long-term action plan. Ukrainian tourism enterprises, faced with the challenge of their own survival and post-war recovery, need to focus on three main directions of corporate social responsibility (CSR): responsibility towards employees, customers, partners, and the community, and environmental responsibility. Developing such a CSR policy will enable enterprises to enhance their image as responsible businesses caring for their employees, customers, partners, the environment, and the country.

In Ukrainian tourism business, the main approaches to implementing CSR principles have already been formed: participation in social and environmental events, development of CSR strategies or programs. However, this sector is characterized by a low level of social responsibility and a lack of mechanisms for monitoring and controlling CSR results. Problems include high costs of CSR measures, low social entrepreneurship culture, lack of recognition of the strategic advantages of socially responsible management, and reluctance to integrate social and environmental issues into business processes. Analysis of successful examples of implementing CSR strategies in tourism has identified promising directions such as improving customer service, ensuring the rights of employees, considering ethical principles, and compliance with international standards. Research in this area should focus on ensuring socially responsible entrepreneurship in the tourism industry through transparent and fair policies.

Repositioning Paradise: Investigating the LGBTQIA+ Inclusion in the Sustainable Development of Tourism in Mauritius

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Abstract

Mauritius, as a tourism destination, is often cited as a reference among Indian Ocean islands. Reports and reviews attribute this success to its well-researched and well-rehearsed marketing strategies (UNDP Report May 2023; UNWTO Report 2022). However, with the growing emphasis on inclusive and sustainable tourism practices globally, a critical question emerges: does the Mauritian tourism industry embrace these values in its approach?

While key stakeholders' in Mauritius express alignment with the United Nations SDGs, particularly SDG 5 promoting gender equality in tourism (United Nations, 2023), evidence suggests an exclusion of specific segments from decision-making processes. Specifically, the LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and allies) community, a significant contributor to the global tourism industry, remains absent from these key tourism discussions. Additionally, there is no mention of the LGBTQIA+ community which is also actively contributing to the success of the Mauritian tourism industry. Studies indicate that the LGBTQ+ market spends 33% more on travel than the rest of the general population, and it is a market worth \$230 billion annually (WTM Global Hub 2023). As a result, this segment represents a potential source of income for Mauritius, which is struggling with its traditional tourism offer represented by its routine USP – Sea, Sand and Sand.

Against this background, this study sought to investigate the LGBTQIA+ community's involvement and representativeness in tourism development in Mauritius. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative focus group discussions with quantitative surveys. Participants for the focus group discussions were recruited through a combination of purposive and snowball sampling, ensuring a diverse representation of the LGBTQIA+ community in Mauritius. This was sourced from the Young Queer Alliance group, one of the leading LGBTQIA+ non-governmental organizations in Mauritius. The discussions were structured around key themes like the representation of the LGBTQIA+ community in the Mauritian tourism industry, LGBTQIA+ contribution to the tourism industry, economic opportunities, perceived barriers, safety and security issues, collaborative approaches, and suggestions for improvement. To meet the quantitative aspect of the study, a questionnaire was designed for LGBTQIA+ residents of Mauritius. This would not only complement the qualitative findings but also bring statistical significance to the qualitative findings.

This research aspires to contribute to the field of sustainable tourism by amplifying the under-represented voices and contributions of the LGBTQIA+ community in Mauritius. The findings can inform tourism authorities in developing targeted marketing campaigns, implementing sensitivity training for tourism providers, and creating safe spaces for the LGBTQIA+ community. Additionally, the research can influence policy changes aimed at fostering legal protections and combating discrimination. Ultimately, the study serves as a platform for the LGBTQIA+ community to voice their concerns and contribute to their own inclusion and economic empowerment within the tourism landscape. While the findings will be just indicative, further research is necessary to validate certain assumptions. Future studies could replicate a similar approach in other island destinations that cater discreetly but actively to the LGBTQIA+ tourism market.

A Comprehensive Study on the Role of Wellness Concepts in Urban Tourism and Leisure Behavior

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Abstract

This study focuses on the influence of wellness concepts on urban integration in Changzhou City, Jiangsu Province. Employing a multidisciplinary research approach, the paper examines the dynamic relationship between health and urban tourism and leisure activities across five dimensions: environmental negative oxygen ion concentration, urban attributes, participation in tourism and leisure activities, exploration of tourism and leisure behaviors, and psychological resilience. Utilizing a wellness model, the study collected 327 field questionnaires and conducted air quality assessments at six locations in Changzhou City using the LD-FY300 negative oxygen ion detector. The research emphasizes the critical role of health in enhancing the quality of urban life. Key findings include:

1. A significant positive correlation between the concentration of negative air ions (NAI), temperature, and humidity levels across different urban environments. The average NAI concentration measured was 760 particles per cubic centimeter (pcs/cm³), indicating a standard conducive to human well-being.
2. Significant positive correlations were observed between urban attributes, participation in tourism and leisure activities, depth of exploration in these activities, and psychological resilience—all within the parameters of the whole person wellness model.

The study concluded that conducting scientific analysis of overall health allows us to investigate the environmental dimension by measuring negative oxygen ions (NAI) in ambient air. This approach also enables us to explore the integration of whole-person health models with tourism and leisure development, taking advantage of rich tourism resources and a good ecological environment, in order to better guide actual development.

Cultural Activism at Museums: Exploring the Public Perception

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Abstract

Cultural activism, characterized by the fusion of art, protest, and advocacy, has emerged as a potent force driving social change and shaping global discourse. In an era marked by socio-political upheavals and cultural revolutions, the intersection of art and activism has become a catalyst for raising awareness, challenging norms, and fostering dialogue. From street art murals to performative protests, cultural activists utilize creative mediums to amplify marginalized voices, challenge power structures, and catalyse collective action. In recent years, radical movements such as debt and prison abolition, climate activism, and extinction resistance have surged into mainstream discourse. Naturally, the art and cultural institutions, including museums, have not escaped scrutiny. Protests against how museums are funded, administered, and how they represent or fail to represent diverse identities have become increasingly common (Raicovich, 2021).

This study delves into the dynamic realm of cultural activism, aiming to unravel its intricacies, significance, and transformative power on a global scale. The goal of the research is to assess how these tragedies have affected public opinion and museum practices. This study emphasizes the crucial role museums play as forums for advocacy and public conversation, especially when it comes to tackling urgent global challenges like cultural representation, economic inequality, and climate change (Robertson, 2019). Through adopting well-established theories of power relations, social movements, and cultural creation, the study aims to provide a comprehensive explanation of the complex interactions that exist between activism, museums, and global socio-political environments.

Methodologically, this research employs a qualitative approach, drawing on secondary data collected from news websites and their associated social media platforms. By conducting sentiment analysis on public comments, we aim to understand how cultural activism is perceived and interpreted by different segments of society (Ebrahimi, Yazdavar, and Sheth, 2017). Through this methodology, we seek to uncover the nuanced dynamics of cultural activism.

In essence, the goal of this study is to significantly advance the conversation about global cultural activism by shedding light on its changing tactics, effects on museum operations, and changes in public opinion worldwide. It draws attention to important issues of how cultural institutions may promote global discourse, ignite action, and spark social change in a world that is becoming more interconnected and facing many difficulties. This investigation intends to provide practical insights for museum staff, legislators, and activists navigating the junction of art, activism, and global dynamics beyond the confines of academic discourse.

In conclusion, cultural activism is reshaping the landscape of museums worldwide. As public awareness of social and environmental issues grows, museums must navigate these complex dynamics carefully. By adopting ethical practices and engaging in meaningful conversations, museums can enhance their relevance and impact.

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Scoping the earliest signs of overtourism in the Baltic resorts

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Abstract

Tourism policymaking, destination management, and greening transformations (Abson et al., 2017) are highly complex processes influenced by myriad factors and circumstances, both internal to destinations and as externalities. The term "overtourism" has gained prominence in tourism research only within the last decade, despite academic studies on the negative impacts of tourism since the 1960s (Dodds and Butler 2019). The debate on overtourism has shifted towards exploring sustainable alternatives, highlighted in radical foresight by keywords such as de-growth and regenerative tourism (Milano 2019). Steering systems towards sustainable destination management through new economic models, fostering dialogue and networking, and challenging classic versus innovative, 'old' versus 'new', has a significant impact on the tourism industry and destinations alike. Grassroot-based degrowth agenda overflows with critique the paradigm of economic growth.

The carrying capacity in tourism has been elaborated on infrastructure, environmental and local/social domain. In the case of the coastal resorts of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, we deal with historical destinations, where sustainability as a balance of environmental, community and economic impacts is largely by default a part of the local tradition, with greater or lesser fluctuations during the up to two centuries of history of the Baltic tourism industry.

Concerns on carrying capacity have arisen there since 2000s mainly due to the situation where the historically established resort areas are overexploited without matching the developments with carrying capacity and visitor management, relevant infrastructure and optimal land use. In Pärnu and Jūrmala, earliest signs of overtourism, particularly in the case of summer festivals, have been expressed by local citizens, although it is not entirely evidenced-based. Cosmetic measures, such as a vehicle entry fee in Jūrmala, urban zoning with conservation and a soft memorandum on detailed planning and (large) hotel development, have been introduced. Starting with the new post-cluster-crisis (C19, energy, the war), there is an imperative to embark on sustainable destination management strategies for these historical resorts by advancing the latest theories and practices.

As tourism is predominantly composed of micro and SME entrepreneurship, many businesses lack the capacity to simultaneously address digitalization, sustainability, circular economy practices, and climate resilience. The optimal greening package must be carefully curated in terms of content, volume, and timing, with corresponding implementation strategies and capacity building. Social responsibility typically complements environmental efforts in the majority of Baltic cases.

Drawing from Murray et al. (2023) and Fletcher et al. (2019), principles of tourism degrowth suggest that current efforts in greening should focus on economic and activity diversification, mitigating seasonality, scheduling events, managing summer weekend influxes, fostering community initiatives for socialization, implementing smart city and urban planning measures, setting environmental permits and controls, and siting and quotas on licenced entrepreneurship. Despite the technocratic optimism surrounding green transformation, rethinking and de-commodifying tourism, leisure, and recreation remain somewhat naive prospects in the Baltic resorts.

Climate change as a game changer evokes new tourism geographies across Europe, with strong tourist flows in the Baltics provoking a long-term multitier macroregional agenda to address the negative impacts of mass summer tourism.

Sustainability Through Safety and Security: Building a Resilient Future

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Abstract

Despite the growing awareness and recognition of sustainability as a critical global imperative with direct impact on tourism development, the connection between safety, security, and sustainability remains underexplored. Tourism entrepreneurs acknowledge that the industry is currently weathering turbulent times, yet they tend to fall back on familiar practices rather than embracing innovative change. They intuitively understand sustainability to encompass environmental concerns. However, the broader concept of sustainability includes societal and economic dimensions as well, which directly relate to safety and security. But safety and security are among the basic principles of sustainable development of businesses or destinations. Evidence from all around the world is easily accessible. It can be concluded that only areas considered to be safe for travels and able to apply proper security measures can be resilient and develop in long term. Even there is regulation that requires integration and implementation of safety and security measures in tourism operations, among industry stakeholders is uncertainty on how to do it practically. Businesses have solid understanding about safety and security, still due to linguistic issues (both terms have same word in Latvian language) there are discussions and interpretations about it. Once explained in details industry representatives are able to distinguish differences but it requires extra effort and it can be assumed that training is faced by the same challenge. In interviews with tourism entrepreneurs, they claim that implementation of safety and security measures is often done intuitively and based on their individual know-how that does not represent comprehensive approach. Situation is especially alarming among micro entrepreneurs. Desk research indicates there are various initiatives towards promoting and addressing issues of sustainability and safety by industry, mainly led by industry associations, but further engagement with consumers and general population is needed. There is lack of overall comprehension, with all influencing and dependent factors. These are areas where trainings both on vocational level, professional level and higher education could be developed. In order to fill the gap research to identify needed knowledge and skills has been carried out. Article presents results and conclusions in a form of recommendation of tourism and hospitality educators, vocational trainers on areas with major knowledge gaps and possible areas to improve overall understanding of safety and security and the place of these crucial elements in the discussion of sustainability. Results are based on structured interviews with 12 industry representatives – tourism industry professionals in management or ownership positions with experience in human resource training and onboarding process. Acquired results have been approbated in an international group of industry professionals to minimize the level of local bias and identify the most important knowledge areas. To bridge this knowledge gap, stakeholders in sustainability—government agencies, businesses, community organizations, and educational institutions—need to emphasize the role of safety and security in creating sustainable societies. However, exactly businesses should take more responsibility in training and implementing knowledge in practices. This is area where higher education institutions and vocational training centers can provide their expertise.

Micromobility in tourism destinations

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Abstract

Integrating sustainable mobility practices into tourism destinations is a key element in the global effort to reduce the impact of climate change and promote flexible, environmentally friendly travel experiences. This study explores the multiple dimensions of sustainable mobility in tourism destinations, focusing on the use of innovative mobility, strategies to reduce carbon footprints, the role of connectivity in different regional contexts, and improvements to connectivity and the overall circularity of transport and mobility in tourism destinations.

Circularity in transportation refers to the design and operation of transportation systems that minimize waste, optimize resource use, and prioritize renewable energy source. Key elements in mobility in relation with Green Deal and circularity: electric vehicles, shared mobility and one of the biggest players in contributing to pollution: aviation.

The aim of research is to understand tourist needs in tourism destination, to analyze the current situation in a tourist destination in Gauja National Park in Latvia and Latvia overall, related to transportation and Green Deal and ultimately, this research aims to inform policymakers, industry stakeholders, and local communities on the imperative of prioritizing sustainable mobility practices to ensure the long-term viability and resilience of tourism destinations.

Latvia as a tourism destination can offer lot of nature and slow tourism in general, but on of significant elements is transport. Transportation is one of the most expensive and one of most polluting elements of tourism. Using key principals of circularity could lead to more sustainable environment, give more authentic experiences. In this research author plan to answer questions about the patterns of inclusive, connective, and sustainable transport at present and how existing tourism stakeholders view the Green Deal and sustainability in mobility and transportation.

Furthermore, the thesis delves into how people perceive mobility within the context of tourism. Mobility is not merely a means of transportation but also an integral aspect of the travel experience, influencing destination choices, itinerary planning, and overall satisfaction. By examining tourists' perceptions of mobility, destinations can tailor their offerings to meet evolving preferences and expectations.

Through an interdisciplinary approach that integrates environmental science, transportation and tourism management, this thesis contributes to a comprehensive understanding of sustainable mobility in tourism destination in Gauja National Park and Latvia in general.

Acknowledgment

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The Role of Technology in Transformative Tourism Experience Design

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Abstract

There is a noticeable recent shift in tourism research to focus on outcomes linked to sustainability, happiness, self-actualization, and self-fulfillment after tourism experiences (Chhabra, 2021). This has led to a change in thinking from a service economy to an experience economy perspective with a focus on staging unique and memorable high-value experiences for consumers. In this format, tourism service providers play an essential role in experience design (Chirakranont & Sakdiyakorn, 2022).

Extensive research has been conducted to describe and define the nature of the tourism context that leads to transformative experiences which make them the defining and most memorable component of the whole trip (Stienmetz et al., 2021). Moreover, tourism experiences have been characterized as orchestration of multiple processes including introspective, restorative, transformative, and cognitive components (Packer & Ballantyne, 2016).

Recent literature started to view transformative travel as a key strategic pillar to enhance the whole travel and tourism sector development where products and experiences can be designed to trigger inner awakening and transformation leading to self, community, and environmental benefits (Sheldon, 2020).

Transformative Experience Design (TED) is a concept emphasized by Gaggioli et al., (2016) that explores the intersection of technology and human experiences within the Human-Computer Interaction research. This concept proposes that technologies can be harnessed to create experiences with profound impacts that go beyond mere utility or entertainment purposes. Accordingly, TED involves emotional engagement, immersion, reflection, personalization, and positive outcomes (Gaggioli et al., 2016).

Virtual immersive environments research literature highlights its growing tourism applications as experiences design components for destinations (Tussyadiah et al., 2018), museums (Jung et al., 2016), heritage (Marasco et al., 2018), hotels (Bogicevic et al., 2019), and theme parks (Wei et al., 2019). Virtual technologies demonstrated positive cognitive (Kim et al., 2020) and affective (Flavián et al., 2021) impacts, which makes them highly relevant to study transformative experiences.

This conceptual review article aims to increase the understanding of service providers' role in transformative experiences and explore its current status in tourism research. It focuses especially on how transformative experiences development can be designed and facilitated for consumers. Firstly, it intends to provide an overview of the different meanings and perspectives linked to the concepts of transformative travel and transformative tourism experience in various scientific disciplines. Secondly, it examines and discusses the different triggers, outcomes, and barriers utilized to describe the phenomenon by tourism scholars.

Thirdly, it evaluates the role of technology in triggering transformative tourism experiences with a focus on immersive technologies aiming to identify the prerequisites of service providers to facilitate transformative tourism experiences with sustainable outcomes.

This article addresses the critical gap in transformative experience facilitators research who play an essential role to shape transformative experiences, foster tourists satisfaction, and improve destinations sustainability through

customized technology-based experience design for enhanced benefits to tourists, host communities, and destinations at both local and global levels.

AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL MODEL FOR AGRITOURISM

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Abstract

Agritourism has emerged as a niche tourism sector with significant potential to reshape, reinvent, rekindle, and revitalise domestic tourism in South Africa. Despite its promising prospects, domestic tourism in the country faces a myriad of challenges, including inadequate marketing and promotion, insufficient product development, and the limited availability and distribution of relevant information. Addressing these challenges necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the important attributes that would motivate potential agritourists, particularly those based in Gauteng, to visit agritourism farms. This study examines the agri-environmental literacy of potential agritourists and how it can help agritourism establishments attract a pro-environmental market. Additionally, it investigates psychological capital (PsyCap) to explore any connections between potential agritourists' agri-environmental literacy and important agritourism attributes. Agri-environmental literacy involves understanding sustainable farming practices, while Psychological Capital (PsyCap) pertains to the mental resources and positive state of agritourists, influencing their pro-environmental behavior and perceptions of agritourism.

This study aims to develop a model incorporating agri-environmental literacy and PsyCap for the agritourism sector. To achieve this, primary data were collected by the Bureau of Market Research (Unisa) through an online survey. An invitation was sent to panel members, resulting in data from 526 potential agritourists residing in Gauteng. The collected data were subjected to various statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, structural equation modelling (SEM), and mediation analysis, to test the validity of the conceptual model developed.

Descriptive statistics provided insights into the levels of agri-environmental literacy, PsyCap, and the important agritourism attributes among potential agritourists. These insights were crucial in understanding the target market's characteristics and preferences. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were employed to identify and validate the underlying constructs of agri-environmental literacy and PsyCap. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to test the hypothesised relationships between these constructs and the identified agritourism attributes. Mediation analysis further explored the indirect effects within the models.

The study tested and confirmed the model through SEM, identifying paths that can enhance product development and marketing strategies for agritourism, the significant role of agri-environmental literacy in shaping potential agritourists' attitudes and behaviours, thus offering valuable insights for targeting this market segment. The insights derived from the study provide actionable recommendations for enhancing domestic tourism development and effectively marketing agritourism in South Africa.

The study's findings underscore the importance of integrating agri-environmental literacy and PsyCap in the strategic planning and marketing of agritourism. Agri-environmental literacy, which encompasses knowledge and awareness about sustainable agricultural practices and environmental stewardship, was found to be a significant predictor of positive attitudes towards agritourism. Potential agritourists with higher levels of agri-environmental literacy are more likely to appreciate and seek out agritourism experiences that align with their values and interests. PsyCap, which includes components such as self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, and hope, further influences the likelihood of potential agritourists engaging in agritourism activities. By fostering these psychological attributes, agritourism providers can enhance the appeal of their offerings and encourage repeat visits.

The findings provide an operational model to help agritourism providers develop, manage, and market their offerings sustainably.

A guide to Tourists' Dietary Preferences and Requirements: Emerging Trends

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Abstract

Purpose

The purpose of this investigation is to gain insight into the changing food attitudes by analysing a special category of dietary needs – the tourist dietary preferences and requirements (DP&Rs). With a focus on four big markets (USA, UK, India, Australia), the aim is to identify an inclusive trend of DP&Rs and examine possible implications for consumer research. Paper argues that better understanding of DP&Rs could lead to new service strategies that would help modernise the service sector.

Design

Questionnaires were used to collect 660 valid responses. The exploratory-descriptive research design with an emphasis on the practice theory principles helped the study move away from exploring individual behaviour by offering to focus on social action rather than following the rational attitudinal approaches or nudge theories.

Findings

The study highlights significant trends in dietary preferences and requirements (DP&Rs) among respondents, emphasizing the influence of religion, allergies, and medical conditions. A large proportion of individuals avoid certain foods due to religious practices, allergies, or health conditions, with dietary preferences being significantly influenced by these factors as well as by country of residence. The prevalence of food allergies, particularly to common allergens like seafood, dairy, and nuts, underscores the need for careful dietary management. Additionally, many respondents adhere to medical diets for conditions such as diabetes and hypertension, with notable regional variations. Lifestyle diets, including high-protein, low-salt, and vegetarian options, are also widespread, reflecting diverse dietary behaviours influenced by health, ethical, and environmental considerations. The findings underscore the importance of the service industry, particularly in tourism and hospitality, to accommodate a wide range of dietary needs to improve customer satisfaction and ensure safety. Detailed assessment of tourists' DP&Rs helped identify demographic descriptors most likely to affect and predict DP&Rs. The truth about reality is constructed from interpretation and mapping of dietary trends and patterns, which in turn lead to policy discussions and change.

Practical implications

The study considers emerging challenges in food policy development and advocates for the creation of new dietary guidelines that could help businesses more adequately address tourists' needs.

Originality

This study is among the first to explore comprehensively the internal self-regulation practices such as DP&Rs in conjunction with institutional and policy voids and its implications on the tourism and service industry.

A SHIFT TO CIRCULAR FESTIVAL MANAGEMENT- A LITERATURE REVIEW AND LATVIAN PRACTICES

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Abstract

This paper investigates the application of circular economy (CE) principles to promote sustainable practices in festivals within the tourism sector. Employing a scoping review methodology, the paper synthesizes existing research and analyzes three Latvian case studies to identify collaborative models, drivers, and barriers affecting CE implementation. Additionally, the review explores policy instruments, such as incentives or regulations, that could encourage the adoption of CE-based sustainable practices in festivals and across the tourism and cultural and creative economy domains.

Existing literature and case studies reveal that festivals have a significant environmental impact, especially regarding waste generation and consumption of single-use plastics, energy, and water consumption. While some are adopting sustainable practices such as the promotion of reuse (deposit refund systems, recycling (waste on-site sorting), renewable energy use, and eco-friendly transportation, these efforts are influenced by factors like resource availability, organizer knowledge, and relevant government policies. The review also identifies various existing tools and methods for measuring the environmental impact of festivals. This review lays the groundwork for future research on achieving environmental optimization within the tourism sector through the lens of the CE framework. By focusing on festivals in urban areas, the review offers an in-depth exploration of sustainability challenges and potential solutions applicable across the broader tourism sector. The findings from this research can benefit researchers, policymakers, and tourism organizations seeking to implement circular economy practices for a more sustainable tourism industry.

Keywords Festivals, Sustainability, Circular Economy, Sustainable tourism practices

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Delineating the purpose of research methodology in a tourism higher education curriculum in South Africa

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Abstract

Tourism is a popular field of study, especially in developing economies where the industry is deemed a crucial part of economic development. Numerous higher education institutions (HEIs) offer curricula in this regard some of which are centred on the development of postgraduate students within which the module, Research Methodology, is considered obligatory. Constructive alignment is a relatively new approach to developing tourism curricula, especially within the postgraduate field. This approach is considered beneficial to the achievement of authentic learning which provides an environment in which students are empowered to take ownership of their own learning. For effective instructional design, it is vital that curricula are designed with clear outcomes, which are primarily developed at macro curriculum design level and omit the perspectives of lecturers at micro level that implement the curricula. This study sought to delineate the purpose of tourism research methodology curricula from the perspectives of lecturers in South Africa by means of a constructivist lens in order to promote discourse on the critical voice of the lecturer.

How to Finance Tourism and Recreation in National Parks: Systematic Review

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Abstract

When we discuss protecting nature, it encompasses more than just combating the use of plastic, reducing waste, and curbing overconsumption. It also involves, and indeed begins with, limiting the usage of certain areas. These areas restrict human activities and provide sufficient space for ecological systems to maintain a balanced state (Kurdoğlu, 2007, p. 60). This means that certain natural resources should be protected and preserved for the next generation and for nature itself. On the other hand, as Jane Carruthers mentioned in the context of South Africa, the creation of a national park is not a moral issue but rather a matter of recognizing that the viewing and studying of wildlife by white South Africans constituted a legitimate and economically viable form of land use, and that the state should provide land for this purpose (Carruthers, 1989, pp. 188, 189). Protected areas, particularly in the context of national parks have often been seen as places with limited use and conservative management. However, this perspective is not entirely accurate. Such areas have been used for education, science, and tourism as a broader and economically viable activity. Indigenous and local communities have also benefited from these areas, even engaging in hunting activities. Management practices have shown examples of flexibility in these contexts (Nelson, 1987, pp. 291, 292).

Management indicates that certain personal resources, goods and operations should be maintained and operational naturally incurring costs. These costs are primarily financed through public funds, which are limited, as it must be noted that citizens are the sole source of this money. At this point, Robert Davis raises an important issue: “*Assuming that society knows how much of limited public money it wants to assign to outdoor recreation development, the question is whether the agencies in charge of spending the funds can allocate them optimally?*” (Davis, 1963, p. 239). That quotation firstly emphasizes it is public money and decision-makers knows how that money should be used and secondly, can decision-makers use it optimally?

To ensure tourism and recreation in national parks are adequately funded and financially sustainable, methods for funding parks need to be critically examined and evaluated by academic researchers and professionals. To achieve this aim, in this study, we will systematically review the literature on funding national parks.

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Agrotourism in Rural Himalayas: Challenges and Opportunities from the local perspective

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Abstract

Agrotourism has become a significant socio-economic catalyst for rural development in Himalayan rural communities in India. At present, there is an increasing demand for apple orchard visits and eco-tourism activities in the valleys of Himachal Pradesh, which forms part of the great Himalaya range in India. It attracts around 16 million tourists each year, a number that surpasses twice the population of the state (Source: Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh, 2024). This surge in eco-tourism is highlighted by initiatives like the establishment of 72 forest rest houses and 22 eco-parks. In 2024, the Himachal Pradesh government allocated approximately USD 2 million for eco-tourism projects. These projects aim to boost sustainable tourism and preserve biodiversity through community involvement and innovative infrastructure (Source: modern campground article, 2024). When on one side, demand for agro-tourism is flourishing and tourists are happily enjoying the valleys, on the other side, several challenges have been identified for the locals. It would seem that if action is not taken on time, the pristine valleys of the Himalayas can go through the same phases as mismanaged destinations such as Manali have today lost their tourism appeal completely. With this as background, this small study attempts to investigate local's perception of agrotourism in various locations of Himachal Pradesh such as Jubbal, Kotkhai, Narkanda, Kangra, Kullu, and Bashkola. Employing a mixed-methods approach, data were gathered through surveys and interviews with local stakeholders, including farmers, farmstay owners and tourists. Results reveal a heightened interest in agritourism, driven by environmental awareness, demand for organic produce, and a desire for authentic rural experiences. Rural communities have great potential to diversify income streams and maintain traditional practices. Nonetheless, challenges such as insufficient infrastructure, an unfair share of the economic benefit, limited marketing strategies, and regulatory obstacles were identified. The study highlights the necessity for comprehensive policies and collaborative efforts to fortify the rural tourism framework, ensuring its alignment with sustainable development goals. Addressing these challenges can enable Himachal Pradesh to bolster its agricultural tourism sector, serving as a model for rural regions globally.

The Critical Overview of Sustainable and Green Solutions Implementation in Hotels in Latvia

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Abstract

The topic of sustainability becomes an irrevocable component of our everyday life for everyone, including business. Sustainability is a critical factor in the hospitality industry, significantly impacting the decision-making processes of both guests and hoteliers. However, the topic is inherently complex, reflecting the paradox of an industry that simultaneously contributes to environmental degradation while also striving to implement sustainable solutions. Hotels are increasingly implementing eco-friendly practices, encompassing energy-saving initiatives, water consumption, digital communication strategies, and paperless operations, all designed to improve their sustainability metrics. Within this framework, it is imperative to investigate the practical solutions provided by Latvian conference hotels to their clients, and to analyse how these practices not only positively affect the environment but also enhance the Return on Experience (ROE) for both guests and hotel operators. This study includes a comprehensive literature review, alongside the analysis of sustainability practices within conference hotels. Specifically, it includes a 15-case analysis of sustainability strategies across three guest chains, as well as an evaluation of best practice sustainability solutions employed by conference hotels in Latvia.