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Editorial

The global tourism and hospitality industry continues to show a remarkable performance with international tourist arrivals crossing the 1.2 billion tourists mark. While new destinations are emerging on the travel map of the world, the already established ones are firmly consolidating their positions with innovations and new product development. However, regardless of the rising performance graph, the industry is continuously faced with challenges that pose threats for its survival. The present day tourism industry is engaged in a fierce combat with several extraneous forces like global terrorism, climate issues, epidemics, frequent natural calamities, and other internal challenges related to human resource, innovations and competiveness, among others. While the shadow of such forces remains permanently cast upon the industry, at the ground level the sector is undeterred in its efforts to keep flourishing further.

With the aim of providing an international perspective on concerns being faced by the industry around the world, the present issue of Tourism Development Journal brings forth selected research from various countries covering a wide array of tourism and hospitality issues.

In the lead paper, Walter Jamieson and Michelle Jamieson present an elaborate case making suggestions to the destination management organizations for incorporating the aspect of 'interpretation' into the larger destination planning process, in order to enhance visitor experiences. Okpalaeke and Enemuo have taken up the case of hotel industry in Nigeria in the State of Imo, with the aim of exploring the incorporation of tourism research in the building a corporate image of hotels. They discover that research based in 'public relations' is significantly crucial for helping hotel mangers build a good image of their hotel property. Marco Martin's tangent of research is inclined towards the fast growing form of 'Gastronomy tourism'. His discussion touches upon the salient features of gastronomy tourism as a form of cultural tourism to add value to the cultural product of the destinations. The 'employability skills' required of hospitality students for intake into the industry have been identified in the study carried out by Nor Rabiatul Adawiyah Nor Azam and Asmahany Ramely. Their research results indicate that strong leadership skills, good communication skills and the ability to manage conflicts are the most demanded skills for employment into the 'culinary' filed of hospitality and that institutions imparting education in culinary arts should lay emphasis on developing these skills in students for their employment in the service industry. Antonios Maniatis provides an interesting perspective to travel and tourism by discussing tourism with respect to the 'right to pursuit of happiness' as one of the unalienable human rights, with special reference to Italian tourism law. Stanley Makindi and Urmilla Bob provide a case of 'Wildlife tourism' in Africa. Centred around Lake Nakuru National Park in Kenya, they have studied perception of local community towards wildlife tourism. The results indicate that largely local communities were happy with the conservation efforts of the park management, however they suggested that support should be sought for educational programmers, social amenities, employment and business opportunities for the community. Discussing about tourism in the South East Asian countries in increasingly competitive times, destinations around the world are continuously trying to survive and retain their appeal in the global tourist market, Walter and Michelle Jamieson suggest to destination planners and managers, a number of capacity building initiatives for effectively developing and managing responsible urban tourism destinations, particularly in the popular South East Asian countries. In the final paper Asmahany Ramely and Basri Rashid discuss the importance of organizing and hosting events at a destination especially to avoid the decline stage of the life cycle. They propose 'four point destination rejuvenation' principles for use of organized events in promoting and rejuvenating destinations at the declining stage, with the aim of increasing longevity of the destinations.

With this diverse selection of research on different aspects from different countries, it is hoped that an interesting reading will be provided through this issue of the journal to researchers and practitioners of tourism and hospitality and will also stimulate further research that can be pertinent to enhancing this service sector.

Sonia Khan
Chief Editor

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Contents

Interpretation and Tourism Destination Planning and Management

Walter Jamieson, Michelle Jamieson

Abstract

The travel industry in Southeast Asia as elsewhere in the world must continue to adapt to new challenges: rapidly growing tourism numbers, evolving traveler motivations and the changing business environment. Increasingly, visitors are looking for more authentic, local experiences and want to leave a destination having an insight into the local culture and values. To meet this demand, destination planning and management must move its focus away from the physical manifestations of culture and experiences, to intangible aspects of culture and experiences based on a strategy of interpretation. Interpretation is the act of bringing meaning to an item, area or destination, while storytelling is a well-planned, designed and developed interpretive technique for piecing together the history, the present and the potential future. The planning and management challenge is to ensure that interpretation is incorporated into the larger context of destination planning and development at all levels. This article discusses the need for a stronger relationship between destination planning and interpretation.

Keywords: Tourism Planning, Interpretation, Destination Planning, Destination Management, Experience Development

Introduction

Consumer tourism research clearly indicates that many traveler demographic segments seek experiences that are authentic, locally based, provide them with an opportunity for self-development and help them understand the cultural, natural, economic and political settings that they visit. These travelers - sometimes known as experiential travelers or creative travelers - are looking for more than a whirlwind trip to a large city or a few days on the beach, being more motivated by collecting experiences than physical goods (Fitzsimmons, 2017; Gale, 2004).

It is well understood that longer stays and repeat visits generate significant economic benefits for attractions and destinations. When these travelers return home, they are more likely to tell friends about their experiences on social media - one of the most effective promotional tools

(Biesiada, 2016). Attractions and destinations also benefit greatly from 'stay-cations' that have become highly popular with millennials, and other travelers, looking for short getaways, even in their home city or area (Lane, 2017). These travelers present an interesting demographic and an economic growth opportunity. For them, a dynamic and immersive environment at a site or destination is a major advantage. It must be recognized that travelers, while interested in learning, consider themselves to be on vacation, not in school, and are usually not interested in becoming experts, but still desire to learn something about the place they are visiting (Gale, 2004).

In developing economies in Southeast Asia, the focus of the authors' research and practice, it is recognized that destinations that respond to these travelers' preferences are in a position of advantage. Recent tourism and destination plans in Southeast Asia typically develop tourism products - now seen as experiences - largely related to tangible interventions. They often neglect the intangible ideas at the core of visitors' interests, and the nature, identity and structure of the destination (Tilkin, n/a). When reenactments, festivals and cultural events are presented, they often neglect to tell the story, or demonstrate the meaning or relevance of the presentations they portray.

Where there is interpretation, the task of interpretation is left to individual attractions (historic sites, museums, cultural villages, natural habitats etc.). In the Southeast Asian context, this interpretation is usually limited and, more often than not, does not make connections between the various dimensions of a destination or tell a comprehensive story. This article argues that tourism planners, destination managers and economic developers should recognize that professional interpretive design and planning can give a place (country or destination) a competitive edge, while also ensuring that visitors understand the place and respect its culture and nature.

If one of the objectives of destination planning and management is to ensure an engaged visitor, interpretation should be seen as an integral part of that planning and management (Interpret Europe, 2016). In addition, from a responsible tourism point of view, destinations and attractions have a societal obligation to ensure visitors leave with a higher level of knowledge and appreciation of that destination and its inhabitants (Moscardo, 2003). Through interpretation, visitors can be educated about the cultural, environmental and societal sensitivities of an area. This education can provide visitors with a sense of place and a feeling of connection to, and responsibility for, the area (Moscardo, 2003).

In this article, the nature of interpretation as it relates to tourism planning and development is explored and the interface between interpretation and planning and design is developed. This follows the authors' long-standing process of exploring the relationship between interpretation planning and the development process (Jamieson, 2001). It became evident early in this work that without effective interpretation and storytelling many historic districts, destinations, business development areas and other associated destinations were missing significant opportunities to increase the number of visitors and the subsequent economic development. Part of the practice that emanated from this insight, included resolving how to involve communities in the process (Jamieson, 1988).

This discussion of interpretation and tourism must be situated within the larger context of experience development, which is an essential part of destination planning and development. Increasingly, experience development is seen as an essential dimension of tourism and marketing strategies, but there is rarely discussion of how to develop these experiences, especially through interpretation.

Interpreters tend to come from the natural and heritage management fields, but are rarely involved in the larger tourism planning and development context. Similarly, planners do not see interpretation as an essential part of their mandate, creating a gap between planning, interpretation and meeting visitors' needs. Usually, dedicated interpreters have a mandate to accurately and comprehensively present a destination or attraction within a destination, while planners deal with a wider set of concerns including the role of tourism as a tool of economic development (WTTC, 2012). There is no thought to replace interpretive planners, but to demonstrate how those with specific knowledge of natural, cultural or living heritage can work with tourism planners to ensure a wide range of goals can be met through a thoughtful interpretive planning process. Tourism planners need to recognize that they play an essential role in providing platforms for interpretation, ensuring that spaces are conducive to storytelling, provide links between various sites and producedevelopment and design guidelines that support an overall interpretive theme for a destination (Jamieson, 2006).

Given the partnership approach being taken in many tourism situations, a range of engaged stakeholders is key to telling a destination's story. For example, within the private sector, accommodation providers have a responsibility to ensure they provide a starting point for the visitor to explore and understand an area, while tour companies and guidescan develop and deliver authentic and accurate stories about a destination or attraction. Local people are an important part of the overall tourism experience and need to be trained in interpretation and made aware of their essential role in creating an authentic experience. Governments have multiple responsibilities, in terms of developing themes and stories, ensuring their marketing and promotion supports this story development and ensuring that interpretive initiatives are directed to areas most in need of authentic and responsible tourism.

Research and Development Context

As noted, the development of the interpretive dimensions of destination management is the result of applied research that a team of professionals, including the authors, carried out over a number of years. A project on the planning and management of attractions in Thailand led to a consultancy exploring the role of interpretation in the overall destination tourism planning process. As part of that work, the team developed an interpretive planning manual and delivered a series of courses for public officials, planners and managers at the local level. *The Tourism Interpreta tion Planning and Management Manual* is referred to in this article and can be accessed at http://bit.ly/2ni5Hfy.

In addition, three case studies were carried out at various sites around Thailand examining prototypical situations. The first site was a development study center covering a large area from the mountains through agricultural lands to coastlines and the sea. This was created to research natural systems, specifically marine production, irrigation, agriculture and mangrove reforestation. The interpretation of this attraction is a combination of stories about the ecosystem. The second site is an ancient Hindu temple built on top of an extinct volcano as a shrine to the god Shiva. The site has a variety of interpretation techniques, integrating newer technologies such as an augmented reality mobile application. The third site is a museum, which recently carried out a renovation and used an outsourced company to design and produce the new interpretation techniques used. It is important to note that the museum, while using new techniques, is now having technical issues since the staff are not adequately trained in the new technologies. All three sites present challenges and opportunities: A lack of effective interpretation techniques and designs makes it difficult for visitors to understand central themes and stories.

- Personnel lack the necessary language and interpretation skills. Many are drawn from ecological or historical technical areas where visitor education and management are not a priority.
- There are limited resources for maintenance and training.
- There is confusion between attractions' interpretation and management objectives, resulting in a lack of clear vision for the overall management and interpretation of sites.
- In some of the more remote areas, where limited Internet access is available, Internet based interpretation techniques have been developed without consideration of connection reliability.

- ✶ Government regulations prevent certain sites from using the techniques best suited to the site or its visitors.
- ✶ Budgets frequently affect the ability of a site or destination to reach its full potential.

In the discussions and group work it was seen that these challenges could be overcome with better quality planning and management.

Defining Interpretation within the Tourism Planning Context

In the same way that translators interpret across languages, destinations and attractions can interpret their attributes to be meaningful across cultures. Interpretation is a useful tool for tourism destination management, and can be used to encourage respect and appropriate behavior from travelers and promote feelings of pride and awareness within a community (Moscardo, 2003).

Developing aninterpretation program puts destinations in control of the way they are presented and perceived. Interpretation not only makes travelers' visits richer, but also gives attractions, municipalities and communities a tool with which to manage and control tourism and travelers (Jamieson, 1998). A complete interpretive plan can also help regulate travelers. If, for example, there are places or ceremonies considered to be private or inappropriate for travelers, site managers have the right to decide which sites and activities are open to the public.

Defining interpretation is a difficult task, given the many perspectives on what interpretation can be. In 1871, John Muir began to discuss the development of nature conservation and first used the term 'interpretation' in this context. One of the most holistic definitions is from Freeman Tilden who, in his ground breaking *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957), envisaged quality heritage interpretation as having six principles:

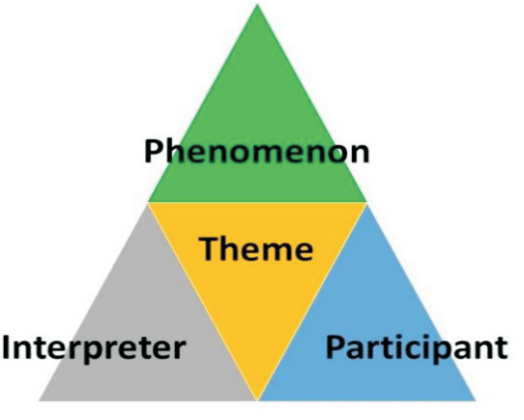
I. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
II. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
III. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical, or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
IV. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

V. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.

VI. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program (Tilden, 1957).

Interpretation can be represented by the interpretive triangle (Figure 1). The four basic qualities, shown in Figure 1 are: “to turn phenomena into experiences (phenomenon); to offer paths to deeper meaning (theme); to foster respect for all heritage (interpreter); and to provoke resonance in participants (participant)” (Ludwig, 2015, p.11).

Figure 1: Interpretive Triangle



Source: Figure adapted from Tilken, n/a, p.15 and Ludwig, 2015, p.11.

Interpretation is not just a glossy brochure, appropriate signage, and a well-edited video; it is the art of telling the story of an attraction. The “story” is a collection of selected facts and experiences which have an emotional and sensory meaning. All five senses can be used to enhance the visitor’s experience of the environment. For example, the audience may be directed to feel the cool marble of a temple floor, smell a distillery or market, and hear the cries of street vendors. Too often, the sense of sight is relied on exclusively when appreciating a new location, even though all senses are normally used in understanding an environment (Kim et al., 2015).

One measure of successful interpretation is the ability to turn everyday realities into interesting activities. In Thailand, an interpretive project run by the Thai Volunteer Service, developed experiences that highlights daily life in several villages. Travelers have the opportunity to participate in activities such as grinding corn, working the fields, picking fruit, catching crabs, or learning cooking techniques. In the villages participating in this project, there are no temples or archaeological sites to draw travelers, but the project has worked to develop other resources from the village, the experiences of daily life. There are emotions and reactions that travelers feel and experience when immersed in the daily life of a local village, quite different to visiting a poorly interpreted temple (Jamieson, 2006).

In order to interpret a destination and its attractions in a way visitors can relate to, it is important to determine who those visitors are. In fact, depending on how the interpretive program is planned, a destination or attraction is able to have an influence on the types of travelers it attracts. Knowing the type of visitor helps determine what kind of interpretive techniques will be used (Veverka, 1998).

When determined what interpretive techniques to use, national governments and commercial groups such as tour companies, may want to choose a highly symbolic or political theme at the expense of popular forms of cultural expression of locally defined importance. Ideally, to ensure representation, all stakeholders should be consulted and feelable to participate in the interpretive planning process.

Interpretation Planning and Design Process

An important aspect of the interpretive planning process is coordinating with private companies and government agencies that have a stake in using interpretation and storytelling as a way of positioning their products and services or encouraging economic development. Stakeholders can be national governments, cultural ornatural environment agencies, economic development experts etc. There is great value in tapping into the imagination and creativity of others. The nature of interpretive team composition is explored in *The Tourism Interpret ation Planning and Management Manual.*

Storytelling is a collective responsibility, given that each stakeholder brings a different perspective and set of objectives to the process. Storytelling is one of the oldest forms of communication and is an honored tradition for humans. People tell stories to share ideas, beliefs, values and traditions. It continues to be an effective communication tool, especially as it explainsthe significance, history and culture of a site or area. Stories should bring creative approaches to interpretation. They have the ability to inspire people to explore topics, themes, or cultural or historical events. Storytelling does not need to be in the form of words but can be created through pictures, objects, video or even hieroglyphs that connect the audience with the subject.

Typical interpretive planning includes a number of steps, as shown in Figure 2. It must be recognized that if innovation and creativity are to guide the interpretive planning and development process, there need to be opportunities for testing and prototyping - tourism planners and urban and city planners are familiar with this process (Jamieson, 1988). The ideal outcome is that interpretive planning concerns are being incorporated into the larger planning process. Due to space limitations of this article, the steps are identified and elaborated on in *The Tourism Interpretation Planning and Management Manual*.

Figure 2: Typical Interpretive Planning Process

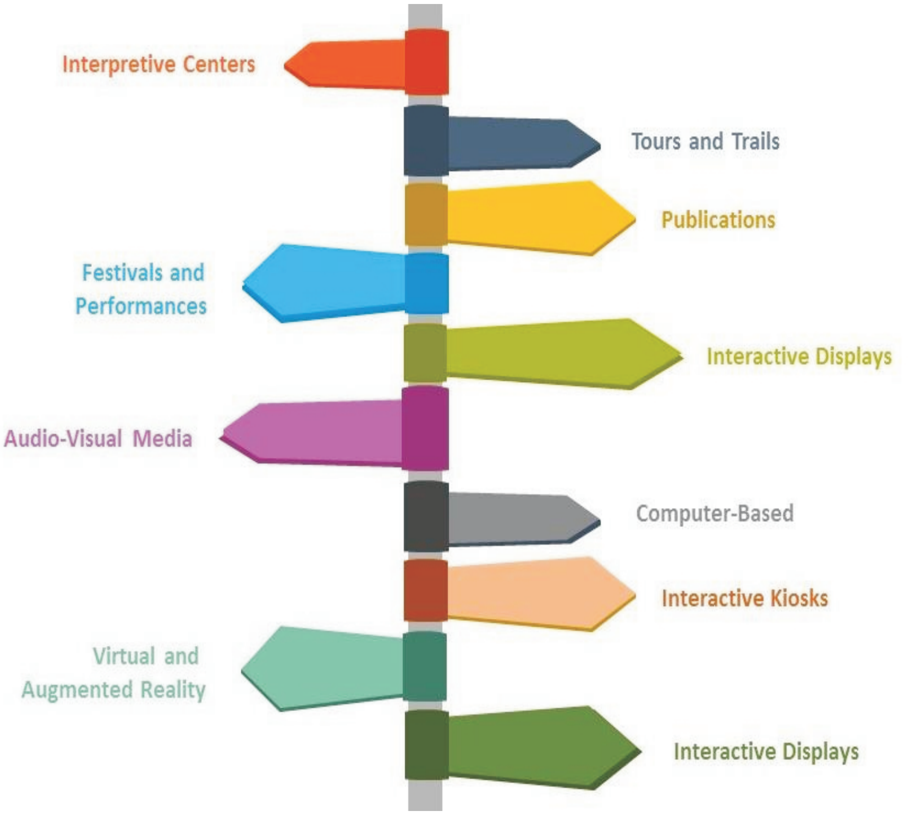
Source: Walter Jamieson

Essential to this process is developing metrics to measure success not only in terms of generating increased visitor numbers and revenue but in terms of meeting the overall goals of destinations and sites. This can be determined from a number of sources, including assessment of the accessibility of the physical attributes and stories of a destination or attraction. The assessment can include measuring the effectiveness in reaching people of different cultures and origins, not only in terms of language but also in terms of the necessary cultural, social and economic context. Finally, are the visitors able to emotionally connect with the story being told? Were they able to leave the site or destination with a deeper understanding of the theme that was identified by the destination or attraction?

Interpretation Possibilities

There are a range of ways the interpretive planner and the tourism planner can tell the story of a destination. Figure 3 shows a range of possibilities (not an exhaustive list) available to tourism and interpretive planners. These are fully explored in *The Tourism Interpret ation Planning and Management Manual*. The authors take an in-depth look into newer technology based techniques which are changing the way interpretation is being delivered. While more traditional techniques – interpretive centers, tours and trails, publications - are still very relevant in delivering information and telling the story of destinations and attractions, the opportunities for a fully immersive experience, through virtual and augmented reality along with some mobile-based applications, are key to developing interpretation that is relevant now and into the future.

Figure 3: Interpretive Techniques and Approaches



Each destination and attraction has a specific set of objectives and constraints. In order to effectively interpret a destination, the techniques used must complement and enhance the nature of that which is interpreted. There are many factors to consider when choosing the mix of interpretive techniques, which are more fully explored in *The Tourism Interpretation Planning and Management Manual*.

Interpretive Centers

There are many benefits of an interpretive center which concentrates themes and objectives in one place. In some cases, an interpretive center allows for the perfect combination of interpretive techniques to tell the story of the destination or attraction. An interpretive center may be combined with a museum or visitor information center, and distribute maps, guides and brochures for local accommodation and restaurants. It can house commercial ventures, retail space for tour operators, or a café. It can also serve as the starting point for a visit to a destination. Many destinations and attractions do not have the financial resources to develop an interpretive center. However, by looking beyond municipal and other public offices, a broad array of funding sources may be found. All the following techniques can be used in an interpretive center.

Festivals and Performances

Festivals and performances, with proper promotion, can be incentives for travelers to visit a destination. They present an opportunity for travelers to experience local culture and get a sense of the destination. Popular festivals around the world currently focus on food, music, clothing and dancing, all of which demonstrate different parts of a destinations' culture(s), and allow locals and travelers to gather to celebrate and enjoy the event. Tourism has, in some cases, inspired a revitalization of artistic traditions, because it produces demand and economic support for the arts.

Interactive Displays

Interactive displays are very effective in engaging visitors - children and adults alike. Giving visitors an opportunity to try their hand at a traditional instrument, board game, cooking skill or artistic technique often leaves them with a strong impression and connection to the place that they have visited. Interactive experiences can happen in a variety of areas and are relatively straightforward to implement.

Audio-Visual Media

The use of sound and images is a dramatic way to tell a story. Audio-visual presentations are seen as entertainment and have the ability to capture visitors' attention more effectively than reading. A film or slide show can serve as an introduction to a site or provide most of the interpretive display. It can be copied and distributed to tourists or education centers as a way of attracting more visitors to the site.

Computer-Based Interpretation

The main advantage of computer applications is that they offer a wide range of materials to the audience. Their large storage capacity allows users to access detailed interpretations if they are interested in a deeper analysis of a destination's story.

Interpretive Interactive Kiosks in the Community

An interactive kiosk is a computer terminal with specialized hardware and software that provides access to information and applications for communication, commerce, entertainment and education. Kiosks are used in many travel related areas, such as airports, hotels and even retail environments. They allow access to information, check-in and other interactive applications such as maps and video.

Virtual and Augmented Reality

While there are very few examples of virtual or augmented reality currently being used in interpretation in tourism situations, interpretation planners must begin to think about how they can provide insights and introductions to their sites. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are portals to other places and times (real or imagined), assisted by visual technologies. Any reality can be created and experienced. VR and AR provide different experiences, but what is key for a site or attraction is their ability to re-create, for example, a ruined temple or an entire village, that allows visitors to experience the past reality of the site or attraction.

Mobile-Based Applications

Traveler behavior shows that mobile devices are increasingly being put at the center of activities, whether it is to access information, communicate or share experiences on social media; people use their mobile devices almost constantly. A smartphone can be a vital tool in the overall interpretation plan of a destination or attraction, as the visitor, in almost all cases, already has the device and knows how to use it. Given this reality, the task is to develop applications or websites for information, interactions or even VR or AR experiences, to be facilitated through mobile devices. A mobile-based application can provide in-depth information, maps, audio tours, and much more. There are many examples of these technologies being used in places such as Britain and the United States, some of which are discussed in *TheTourism Interpretation Planning and Management Manual*.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to make the case for the incorporation of interpretation into the larger destination planning process. Incorporating interpretation into the overall process requires a mindset change on the part of destination planners to recognize that storytelling, the development of themes and use of a range of media is an essential part of the visitor's experience.

Putting into place interpretive strategies requires a partnership approach, where a range of stakeholders are responsible for the development of interpretive initiatives with the destination planner playing a strong coordinating role to ensure that interpretive strategies are not only incorporated but the necessary regulatory and infrastructure needs are established. This task is a complex one given that key players will be concerned with meeting numerous educational, preservation, financial, learning, behavioral and emotional objectives.

Within this partnership approach, the development of detailed themes and stories should be entrusted to specialists, who could be interpretive designers or content specialists such as historians, naturalists or ethnologists, from the private sector, academia or governmental organizations. This is important since interpretation can be consideredboth as aninterdisciplinaryscience and an art. It requirescommunication skills and approaches, a knowledge of marketingin order to better understand the visitor, an ability to communicate the attributes of a destination or attraction to audiences, business management and financial acumen, and a sound grasp of both tourism planning and media design principles.

The secret of successful interpretation is capturing the essence of a site, history, event, culture or resource. If there are a number of really interesting aspects of a destination or attraction, it is necessary to link them in a way that is memorable for the visitor. To focus efforts and avoid visitor overload, it is useful to organize information into selectedstorylines. These are the main messages that the visitors will hopefully carry away with them. Storylines are crucial to interpretation asthey give visitors clear threads to follow, rather than a series of disconnected facts. Some key aspects of a good storyline are going beyond mere description, to a level of detail appropriate for the audience, and linking tangible items to intangible ideas.

Although defining the significant themes and stories of a destination can be seen as the domain of specialists, residents must be incorporated into the overall storytelling process. This may require some capacity building, in order to make the residents the authentic heart of the story presentation of a destination or attraction. In some instances, special staff and volunteers can be engaged, with training in a range of interpretive concerns, and communication and language being essential.

Financial constraints and access to the necessary resources present significant challenges in many places in Southeast Asia. Public-private partnerships, as with many other areas of planning and development, are seen as essential instruments in achieving the goals of the many stakeholders in a destination. Increasingly the private sector has to adopt an important role in developing experiences working collaboratively with the private sector as well as nonprofits given the fact that for many private sector concerns their business model very much depends either directly or indirectly on high quality destinations and attractions. For example, suppliers such as IT companies can assist in the development of software and, where appropriate, provide hardware. This will often form part of their CSR activities, and having their support recognizedby various stakeholders can provide them with invaluable short and medium term benefits.

Very often those directly responsible for the planning and delivery of programs have little or no training, access to technical assistance or experience. Typically, managers and those responsible for developing interpretive programs should have experience in researching stories and themes, planning, the nature and effectiveness of various interpretive techniques and how to manage processes always with the understanding the specialist will carry out the detailed planning and design.

With modern technologies, interpretation can take new forms, in keeping with the ways travelers digest information. The ability of stories to extend far beyond the constraints of the destination's interpretative center allows for an extended traveler journey, that can start at home, continue at the destination and even when they return home.

Specialists in interpretation, working closely with destination planners and managers, can provide destinations or attractions with advantageswhile meeting responsible tourism objectives, telling authentic stories that involve all key stakeholders, especially local communities. Achieving this requirespeople to work together effectively and develop approaches that can be realistically incorporated into the destination and attraction management process.

The authors recognize the challenge of convincing traditional destination management professionals and public sector tourism officials to incorporate yet another dimension into their decision-making and implementation. However, very often those involved in the marketing and promotion of destinations and attractions will begin to appreciate that their primary responsibility is interpretation using different methods and approaches.

With an increasing customer emphasis on authenticity and unique experiences, hotels, retail operations and a range of service businesses need to effectively identify and communicate what makes their offerings unique. Interpretation offers the processes and techniques to accomplish their goals and provide a competitive advantage.

Incorporating interpretation into the destination and attraction development process requiresa willingness on the part ofstakeholders to work together. The challenge comes ever more significant in the development of the regional tourism and marketing strategies that the authors are presently exploring.

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Evaluation of Research Activities and Strategic Planning on the Corporate Image of Selected Hotels

Okpalaeke and Enemuo

Abstract

The study evaluated the role of research activities and strategic planning on the corporate image of selected hotels in Imo State. The population for the study was one hundred and ninety-eight (198) registered hotels, located within the three geo-political zones of Imo State. The sample size of 132 was drawn from the population. Specifically, the work ascertained the level of relationship between research activities and improved corporate image in hotels in Imo State, to determine the utilization of strategic planning in improving corporate image of hotels in Imo State. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses.The data was collected using questionnaire and interview; the data collected were analysed using frequency and mean distribution for the research questions while Pearson's correlation coefficient was used for testing the hypotheses. The findings indicate that a moderate relationship exists between research activities and corporate image of hotels. That is to say that the use of research activities in public relations has a significant impact on the corporate image of hotels although majority of the hotels limit this to the use of internet, emails and comment cards as well as public opinion studies. These greatly affect the image perceptions of hotel customers. A negative mild relationship exists between strategic planning and corporate image of hotels. This also means that there is a significant relationship between strategic planning and improving the corporate image of hotels. Based on the findings recommendations have been made.

***Keywords*:** Research, Strategic Planning, Corporate Image

Introduction

Public relations play a vital role in enhancing the image of an organisation. A company's image can affect its credibility and effectiveness in reaching key internal and external audiences such as clients, employees, and the media. Corporate image without doubt is one of the important assets of a business. Public relations as a function of management is receiving new attention and being modified and rectified in many organizations around the world to reflect the changing economic and social conditions.

It is argued that ‘corporate image’ is what comes to mind when travellers hear the name of a place, a hotel or a restaurant. Corporate image is the consumer’s response to the total offering and is explained as the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a public has of an organization. It is related to business name, architecture, variety of products or services, tradition, ideology, and to the impression of quality communicated by each person interacting with the organization’s clients (Sharma, 2015). Corporate image may be considered as a function of the accumulation of purchasing/consumption experience overtime. Sharma (2015) identified the basic components of corporate image as; customer’s perception of the goods or services offered by the organization, quality of company’s goods and services, willingness of a firm to stand behind its goods and services when something goes wrong, as well as how the firm deals with customers (whether pleasant, helpful, professional and so on).

The phrase ‘public relations’ has two words namely, ‘public’ and ‘relations’. ‘Public’ is a group of individuals having similar or common interests; an association of persons having the same interests, problems, circumstances, expectations and goals (Sharma, 2015). Public is varied and comes in many forms and sizes. It has multitude of wants and desires. Public has its likes and dislikes sometimes, very strong likes and dislikes. For the purpose of this study, ‘publics’ are customers, employees, suppliers, lenders, shareholders, special interest groups, government, opinion leaders, community and so on. Thus, public is any group of people who share common interests and have common problems.

The word ‘relations’ is the result of mutual understanding derived from the process of sharing of a common interest (Kalu, 2005). It is human wants that create a need to establish relations with each other. The wants of two individuals profoundly affect their relationship. Therefore, to understand any relationship one must understand the wants of those who are involved. By integrating these two elements ‘public’ and ‘relations’, one gets the term ‘public relations’ i.e. that in itself is a profession forming part and parcel of managerial function.

‘Public Relations’ is the degree of understanding and goodwill achieved between an individual, organisation or institution and its public. It is a management tool designed to favourably influence attitudes towards an organization, its products and its policies (Etzel, Walker and Stanton, 2001). The Institute of Public Relations, India, explains public relations practice as the planned and sustained efforts to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its public. It is a management tool designed to favourably influence attitudes towards an organization, its products and its policies. Thus, public relation is a planned effort and hence, a managerial function. It speaks of relationship between an organisation and its public and focuses its attention on evaluating public attitudes and opinions about an organisation's policies, procedures, and actions as they relate to the public. It has to do with steps taken by an organization to ensure that its policies, procedures and actions are in the public interest and that they are socially responsible. It is the development of rapport, goodwill, understanding and acceptance through a two way communication (Sharma, 2015).

Public relations can truly mean the difference between life and death for an organization or the difference between profitability and failure (Bowen 2009). Regardless it often remains an over-looked form of promotion. In most organizations, this promotional tool is typically a step child, relegated far behind personal selling, advertising and sales promotion. (Etzel, Walker and Stanton, 2001). Public relations must be placed high in the organisation hierarchy and must be practiced strategically if it is to be more effective and, thus, to be excellent (Dozier and Grunig quoted in Grunig et al. 1992). Scholars also outlined the components of public relations which typically encompass the following- research, strategic planning, publicity, community relations, government relations, internal/employee relations, investors' relations, stakeholders' relations, charitable causes and communication. These will be utilized for the purpose of this study.

Public relations is more than just media relations effort. It is more than just pitching stories to the media or mailing out press releases. Public relation is not just publicity, working with journalists, or community events. It is about building relationships from the bottom line to a hotel's balance sheet - its customers (Luciani, 2016). Public Relations is the process of communication with the group with whom the organisation is in existence and with whom the organisation functions. According to L'Etang (2008), Public relations involve the communication of ideas to facilitate change. Change entails the expression of opinions and discussions of ideas and policy options. Public relations entail the analysis of organizations which may impact on relationships of reputation.

Today's consumers respond to dialogue, relationships, interactions and honest communications. Businesses in any industry, including hospitality, need to implement and execute integrated marketing campaigns. In this respect public relations is taking the lead because public relations has always been about relationships with multiple audiences. The heart of public relations is not just to sell product, but to produce a favourable image of a company and improve it, if necessary (Okoli, 2012). Today's public is more demanding especially with the increasing size, dynamism and complexity of business, which widen the gap between operation and its public (Kalu 2005). No matter how qualitative and efficient hospitality products may be, it may remain ever unsold if it is in the bad records of its clientele. What management does on a broad scope and how its activities or accomplishments are presented to the public form the basis of its reputation and acceptance. An organization's reputation refers to value judgments among the public about an organization's qualities, formed over a long period, regarding its consistency, trustworthiness and reliability (Bennet and Rentschler, in Weiwei, 2007).

Career success may depend as much on how others perceive the organization as on its abilities (Jacobs 1999). Internal factors that affect a company's reputation include its ability to communicate, transparency, human values, treatment of employees, ability to innovate, CEO's reputation, adaptability to change, and handling of social and environmental issues. Among the external forces that impact corporate reputation are customers, print and broadcast media, financial analysts, shareholders, industry analysts, regulators and government (Lines, 2003). Reputation as assets that included quality of products and services, ability to innovate, value as long-term investment, financial stability, ability to attract, develop, retain talent; use of corporate assets, and quality of management (Marken 2002). Marken (2004) believed that reputation was built and managed on small daily actions. He explained that a reputation is built with each phone call, each email, each release, each decision and each action. Genasi (2001:9) also warned against seeing reputation management as anything but day-to-day business and insisted that "quality of communication has to be supported by quality of action." To Gwinavere (2016), reputation can account for a large portion of a company's market capitalization, and can be its most important long-term asset. It impacts an organization in a myriad of ways, including stock price, and the ability to attract and retain customers and employees. Corporate reputation is based on factors such as quality of products or services, earnings and business performance,stability and fairness as an employer,level of integrity in business practices,degree of honesty and openness, andinvolvement in local communities.Today, with distrust of the corporate world at an all-time high, corporate credibility is an over-riding factor. Whether they like it or not, companies today are at the mercy of public constituencies. That means there is growing recognition of the need to foster a good reputation by developing positive relationships with various publics.

Globally, public relations, ever since it was introduced in the overall hotel industry does not seem to be growing as desired. This has been hindered by certain factors which are either related to hotels, individuals or other environmental factors. Public relations is often not a main concern for hotels simply because most owners do not think they have the time or money to develop and execute an effective Public relations programme. They often advertise, but fail to appreciate the importance and the art of critical, clever communication tactics that underscore a brand's message, unique points-of-difference, and key attributes. Most hotels under-estimate the fact that actual guests are extremely valuable and must be nurtured and that hotel need to attract guests who appreciate it for what it has to offer. Hotels in Nigeria are believed to engage mostly in traditional advertising. They forget that when a customer sees an advertisement, he/she has it in mind that the company is trying to sell something. On the other hand, when a third party, such as the media, approves a product or service, the company gains much more credibility.

In view of the reviewed literature on public relations and its importance this study revolves around the following objectives

1. To ascertain the level of relationship between research activities and improved corporate image in hotels in Imo State
2. To determine the utilization of strategic planning in improving corporate image of hotels in Imo State.

Research questions

1. What is the extent of relationship between the use of research activities by hotels in Imo sate and in improvement in their corporate image?
2. What is the extent of relationship between the use of strategic planning and improvement of corporate image of hotels in Imo State?

Hypotheses

Ho_1 There is no significant relationship between employing research activities and improving corporate image of hotels in Imo State.

Ho_2 There is no significant relationship between the use of strategic planning and improving corporate image of hotels in Imo State.

Methodology

This study is a correlation study which tries to find out the degree of relationship between two variables X and Y. The survey method is adopt ed which involves the use of questionnaire and interview. The study was conducted in Imo State of Nigeria. Imo State is one of the 36 States of Nigeria and lies in the south east of Nigeria with Owerri as its capital and largest city. Located in the South-eastern Geo-political zone of Nigeria, it occupies the area between the lower River Niger and the upper and middle Imo River. According to Imo state Tourism board, the total number of registered hotels in Imo state is one hundred and ninety-eight (198) located within the three geo-political zones of the state; Owerri, Orlu and Okigwe. Owerri zone have the highest number of registered hotels numbering one hundred and twenty-three (123), Orlu zone have fifty-seven (57) registered hotels while Okigwe zone

have only eighteen (18) registered hotels. The total population of the respondents comprises of all the staff and customers of these hotels.
Since the population is known, Taro Yemen's formula was used to determine the sample size.

A survey carried out in the 132 selected hotels showed that the total number of staff of these purposively selected hotels is 3064. Taro Yamane formula was also used to determine the sample size of the respondents. A total of 354 staff of the hotels was selected for this study. Sample size for the customers was determined using proportion method since the population is unknown. Twenty customers who were chosen randomly from two hotels that are among the selected hotels were interviewed with a particular interview question. Thirteen (13) out of the twenty customers responded in the same positive manner. This shows that approximately 350 customers were selected for the study. Cluster or area sampling and probability purposive technique sampling were used for the study. Questionnaire and interview schedule were used to generate data for the study. The questionnaire was delivered to the staff of the hotels with the help of six research assistants who worked as a team in pairs in the three different geographical zones of Owerri, Orlu and Okigwe. Frequency and mean distribution were used to analyse the research questions while Pearson's correlation coefficient was used for testing the hypotheses.

Findings and Discussion

Research question 1: What is the extent of relationship between the use of research activities by hotels in Imo State and improving their corporate image?

Table 1. Different research methods in public relations that have an impact on the corporate image of hotels

S/N	Research methods	SA	A	D	SD	NA	Mean Score	Remarks
1.	**Survey**	9	42	81	54	159	2.10	Not accepted
2.	**Use of questionnaire**	39	0	31	73	202	1.84	Not accepted
3.	**In-depth interview**	178	45	19	27	76	3.64	**Accepted**
4.	**Use of emails or comment cards**	118	84	76	37	30	3.65	**Accepted**
5.	**News scanning**	0	14	46	23	262	1.46	Not accepted
6.	**Internet**	201	100	11	17	16	4.31	**Accepted**
7.	**Books, journals, industry and trade associates**	60	69	11	98	107	2.64	Not accepted
8.	**Public opinion studies**	88	114	74	42	27	3.56	**Accepted**
9.	**Media coverage**	70	90	93	39	53	3.25	**Accepted**
10.	**Focus groups**	3	7	41	78	216	1.56	Not accepted
11.	**Case studies**	0	4	0	29	312	1.12	Not accepted
12.	**Participant observation**	13	35	82	129	86	2.30	Not accepted

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= strongly disagree, NA=Not applicable, n=345

Table 1 shows the mean responses of respondents A on the different research activities used by hotels for their public relations practice. The analysis shows that the research activity with the highest mean (4.31) is the use of internet with 201 respondents indicating Strongly agree , i.e. that internet facilities used by their hotels affect their corporate image, 100 respondents indicated they agree, while 11 and 17 respondents indicated they disagree and strongly disagree respectively. 16 respondents indicated that it is not applicable to their hotel. The rest of the research activities which include the use of emails or comment cards with a mean of 3.65, a mean of 3.64 for in-debt interview, 3.56 for public opinion studies and 3.25 for media coverage where accepted to have impact on the corporate image of these hotels. The use of survey with a mean of 2.10, use of questionnaire (1.84) and news scanning (1.46) were not accepted. Others include, use of books, journals, industry and trade associates (2.64), Focus groups (1.56), case studies (1.12) and participant observation (2.30) were equally not accepted.

The table indicates that most hotels in Imo State use few research activities like the internet, emails, media coverage, in-depth interview and public opinion studies to boost their corporate image while majority neglect the rest listed in the table.

Table 2: Different research methods in public relations that have an impact on customers' image perception of hotels

S/N	Research methods	Highly affected	Affected	Slightly affected	Not affected	NA	Mean Score	Remarks
1.	Survey	26	49	72	14	189	2.17	Not accepted
2.	Use of questionnaire	17	22	15	72	203	1.61	Not accepted
3.	In-deph interview	0	13	4	183	150	1.66	Not accepted
4.	Use of emails or comment cards	146	98	53	15	38	3.85	**Accepted**
5.	News scanning	0	7	17	196	130	1.72	Not accepted
6.	Internet	172	69	72	21	16	4.03	**Accepted**
7.	Books, journals, industry and trade associates	0	47	62	76	165	1.97	Not accepted
8.	Public opinion studies	112	91	7	73	67	3.31	**Accepted**

9.	Media coverage	2	18	15	51	264	1.41	Not accepted
10.	Focus groups	0	0	11	121	218	1.41	Not accepted
11.	Case studies	0	0	0	15	335	1.04	Not accepted
12.	Participant observation.	0	0	4	32	314	1.11	Not accepted

NA= Not Applicable, n=350

Table 2 shows the different research methods adopted by hotels in public relations practices that have an impact on customer's image perception of hotels. The mean responses of respondents B shows that survey with a mean score of 2.17, use of questionnaire (1.61), in-debt interview (1.66), news scanning (1.72), use of books, journals, industry and trade associates (1.97), media coverage (1.41), focus groups (1.41), use of case study (1.04) and participant observation (1.11) were not accepted. Majority of the respondents indicated that these activities either did not affect them or that they were not applicable in the hotels they patronized. On the other hand, use of internet had the highest accepted mean score where 172 respondents indicated that their image perceptions were highly affected, 69 indicated that they were affected,72 slightly affected, 21 not affected while 16 respondents ticked 'not applicable'. Use of emails and comment cards has an acceptable mean of 3.85 where 146 respondents were highly affected, 98 were affected, 53 were slightly affected, 15 were not affected while 38 ticked 'not applicable'. Furthermore, public opinion studies had an accepted mean score of 3.31where 112 respondents indicated that they were highly affected. 91,7, 73 and 87 respondents chose the options of 'affected', 'slightly affected', 'not affected' and 'not applicable' respectively.

Hence Table 2 suggests that not all the research activities employed by these hotels had an impact on the image perception of their customers. The limited research activities used by hotels have a positive impact on customers' perception emails, internet and public opinion studies.

Research question 2: What is the extent of relationship between the use of strategic planning and improving corporate image of hotels in Imo State?

Table 3: Use of effective strategic planning in public relations to impact on the corporate image of hotels

S/N	Information	SA	A	D	SD	NA	Mean Score	Remarks
1.	Planning is used by your establishment to set organisational goals and determine objectives to boost your organisational image.	297	45	2	1	0	4.85	**Accepted**
2.	Your establishment use effective planning to decide the	178	81	10	9	67	3.85	**Accepted**

	outcome of research which is used to check the opinion of the public.							
3.	Your hotel engages in strategic planning to reduce problems within and outside your establishment.	245	70	15	11	4	4.57	**Accepted**
4.	Planning is used by your hotel establishment to plan and execute a programme of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.	300	16	11	2	16	4.69	**Accepted**

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= strongly disagree, NA=Not applicable, n=345

Table 3 shows the mean responses of respondents A. Their responses show that majority strongly agreed that their hotels use strategic planning as a strategy in public relations. A mean score of 4.85 shows that hotels use strategic planning to set organisational goals and determine objectives to boost their organisational image. A mean score of 3.85 shows that hotels use effective planning to decide the outcome of research which is used to check the opinion of the public. Furthermore, a mean score of 4.57 shows that hotels engage in strategic planning to reduce problems within and outside their establishments. A mean score of 4.69 shows that planning is used by hotel establishments to plan and execute a programme of action to earn public understanding and acceptance. The entire mean responses attained an acceptable mean level and therefore were accepted.

Table 4 shows that all the mean responses of the respondents were not accepted. Use of planning by the hotel establishment to set organisational goals and determine objectives have a mean score of 2.54, use of effective planning in research to check the opinion of the public (2.39), use of strategic planning to reduce problems within and outside the hotel establishment (1.96) while the use of planning by the hotel establishment to plan and execute a programme of action to earn public understanding and acceptance have a mean of 2.15 all of which were not accepted.

Table 4: Use of effective strategic planning in public relations to impact on customers' perception of the image of hotels

S/N	**Information**	**Highly affected**	**Affected**	**Slightly affected**	**Not affected**	**NA**	**Mean Score**	**Remarks**
1.	Use of planning by the hotel establishment to set organisation	51	73	27	62	137	2.54	Not accepted

	al goals and determine objectives.							
2.	Effective planning in research to check the opinion of the public.	9	53	93	106	89	2.39	Not accepte d
3.	Use of strategic planning to reduce problems within and outside the hotel establishme nt.	22	38	53	29	20 8	1.96	Not accepte d
4.	Use of planning by the hotel establishme nt to plan and execute a programme of action to earn public understandi ng and acceptance.	51	26	23	74	17 6	2.15	Not accepte d

NA=Not applicable, n=350.

The implication of the table above is that adequate planning seems to not be the concern of customers since majority of the respondents indicated that it did not affect them while others indicated that it was not applicable to them.

Hypothesis 1(Ho1): There is no significant relationship between employing research activities and improving the corporate image of hotels in Imo State.

Table 5:Rrelationship between employing research activities and improving the corporate image of hotels in Imo State.

Correlation	S1	C1
S1	1	0.73**
C1	0.73**	1

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01level (2-tailed)*
S1=Staff mean responses, C1= customers' mean responses

For hypothesis Ho_1, table 5 shows that there is a moderate significant relationship between the research activities employed by hotels and improvement of the hotel's image in the perception of the customer with a correlation of 0.73.

The null hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between employing research activities and improving corporate image of hotels in Imo State was rejected. This means that research activities in public relations have a significant relationship with improving the corporate image of hotels.

Hypothesis 2 (Ho_2): There is no significant relationship between the use of strategic planning and improvement in corporate image of hotels in Imo State.

Table 6 : Relationship between the use of strategic planning and improving the corporate image of hotels in Imo State.

Correlation	S2	C2
S2	1	-0.084
C2	-0.084	1

S2=Staff mean responses, C2= customers' mean responses

Hypothesis 2 shows that there is an inverse relationship between the use of strategic planning and corporate image of hotels with a correlation of (-0.084). This means that strategic planning has negative mild correlation with customer's image perception of hotels in Imo state. The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between the uses of strategic planning and improving corporate image of hotels in Imo State was therefore rejected.

Hence the following results is arrived at:

1. A moderate relationship exists between research activities and corporate image of hotels. That is to say that the use of research activities in public relations significantly impacts the corporate image of hotels, although majority of the hotels limited this to the use of internet, emails and comment cards as well as public opinion studies. These greatly affected the image perceptions of hotel customers.
2. A mild negative relationship exists between strategic planning and corporate image of hotels. This also means that there is a significant relationship between strategic planning and improving the corporate image of hotels.

Conclusion and Implications

The study evaluated the role of research activities and strategic planning on the corporate image of selected hotel in Imo State. Corporate image is what comes to mind when travellers hear the name of a place, a hotel or a restaurant. The results indicated that a moderate relationship exists between research activities and corporate image of hotels. This entails that the use of research activities in public relations have a significant impact on the corporate image of hotels although majority of the hotels limit this to the use of internet, emails and comment cards as well as public opinion studies. These greatly affect the image perceptions of hotel customers. A negative mild relationship exists between strategic planning and corporate image of hotels. In view of the results it is suggested that hotels should create public relations departments strictly designed and structured to handle issues relating to hotels and their public. A public relations practitioner should be employed to manage that department. The duty of the practitioner should be to monitor the public's perception and opinion, improve the image of the hotel and communicate with its public by erecting a good central information source. Hotels should in their best capacity endeavour to employ majority of the public relations practices identified in this study so as to bridge communication gaps. The findings of this study should be made available to hotel practitioners to enlighten them about public relations practices that they can adopt to boost their organisational image.

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Status and Potential of Gastronomy as a Cultural Tourism Attraction

Marco Martins

Abstract

In the last years, there has been a consolidation of gastronomy as the main motive to carrying out a trip. Bearing this in mind, this paper leans upon the role played by gastronomy as a cultural tourist product in terms of competiveness and differentiation. Tourists and gastronomic tourists in particular are today more experienced and informed. Gastronomic tourists have more disposable income and more leisure time to travel and they are curious to learn about the origin, legends and stories about food. These tourists are also demanding, connoisseurs and are very well informed. The purpose of this study is to understand the importance that gastronomy as a tourist product, has on creation of a differentiated image of any destination based on culinary delights. The paper also analyses the trends of gastronomic tourism.

Keywords**:** Gastronomic Tourism, Tourist Product, Cultural Tourism

Introduction

According to Martins (2015) tourism is regarded as a 'fantasy selling industry' enticing people on their dreams, hopes, beliefs, expectations and imaginaries, which are in turn transformed into consumable commodities, or experiences. Among other things that are created and sold as a tourism product, in the recent past, gastronomy has emerged as one unique niche product to sell to tourist and attract tourist who wish to relish different cuisines of different places. Hence the quest for gastronomic experiences has become very important for tourists, with the tourism industry working at supplying unqe gastronomic product to deliver this experience. With a growing segment for gastronomic tourism, it is believed that in the coming future gastronomy is bound to play an increasingly important in determining the competitiveness of any given destination.

Tourism nowadays has become paradoxical, because although the processes tending to an increasing globalization have intensified, on the contrary a demand for local products has also increased. The local product is regarded as more authentic and is believed to represent the 'identity' of a country, community or an ethnic group.

One can say that gastronomy as a tourism product is one of the components under the umbrella concept of cultural tourism that covers a wide range of related activities, such as historical tourism, tourism focusing on the fine arts, museums tourism, religious tourism, industrial tourism, gastronomic tourism, wine tourism, etc. (Moira, 2009). The evolution of new tourist tastes and practices point out to a growing complexification and diversification of the products existent in this market. In a time in which people are searching for identity traces that characterize and distinguish themselves, the union between tourism and gastronomy can be strategic, as together their combination and value is bound to be higher than the valence of each one considered individually.

Cultural Tourism and the Gastronomic Niche

To define cultural tourism is extremely difficult, as indeed acknowledged by many researchers.. This difficulty is understandable due to the proliferation of the definitions of culture, of tourism and of those derived from the articulation of both definitions. According to Ashworth (1995), the relation between tourism and culture can materialize itself in three major forms (by degree of descending intensity).

- The first one verifies itself in the relation established between tourism and art, concretized in the so called 'art tourism'. Here, culture embodies all its original and even popular meaning. In this relation, culture can be used as much as an attraction at a tourist practice, being the art seen as one more element in the vast package of tourist services supplied to the visitors/ tourists.
- The second establishes itself in the relation between tourism and the monumental patrimony. Culture assumes here a wider dimension, incorporating in addition to the tourist practices the built historical heritage. In this definition is underlined the idea of an inheritance transferred from one generation to another. Heritage is seen as part of the society's cultural tradition. Which in tourist terms it is manifested in a *mix* of preserved buildings, of morphological and landscape models of conserved parts, as well as of places associated to historical personalities and events.
- The third establishes itself between tourism and a specific place – like tourism in a specific place (ethnic tourism). The tourist attraction is understood as the place taken as a whole, closely associated to the so-called 'sense of a place' (gastronomy, folklore, exoticism, etc.).

This relationship suggest to a broader meaning of culture in comparison to the previous one, expressing the tendency of the concept culture to extend itself to all kinds of manifestations and uses.

The cultural tourist is viewed as comprising all visits motivated in its whole or partly by interest in the historical, artistic and scientific supply *(stricto sensu*), but also, with interest in the way of life of a community, the peculiarities of a region, group or institution (*lato sensu*) (Silbelberg, 1995). This is why one can say that the role of culture is multi-faceted, i.e. culture being simultaneously a resource, an attraction, a product, an experience and an outcome.

Hence, cultural tourism has become an 'umbrella concept', covering a wide range of related activities, such as historical tourism, tourism focusing on the fine arts, museums tourism, religious tourism, industrial tourism, gastronomic tourism, wine tourism, etc. (Moira, 2009).

Recognizing gastronomy as a cultural element and the importance of the gastronomic experience, the Canadian Tourism Commission (2002), suggests that gastronomy and cuisine are elements to add to the cultural touristic experience.

Scarpato (2002) sees gastronomy as a 'medium of cultural tourism' and as an important resource for destinations seeking to develop new quality tourism products and experiences. Many tourists consider partaking local food as a way to accrue knowledge on local food, as well as on local food-ways and culture (Chang, et al., 2010; Kim, *et al.*, 2009). Gastronomy is then an experience of participation in another culture and, of relationship with people and places with a strong sense of their own identity. Santisch (2004) and Hjalager (2003) observe that during holidays, eating and drinking a particular local food and beverage respectively, means sharing the local food culture.

Gastronomic Tourism

In recent years, Gastronomic Tourism has grown considerably and has become one of the most dynamic and creative products in the tourism market. Increasingly more people are travelling motivated by the gastronomy of a region. Therefore food is no more a mere complement in the trip, but a primordial element in the selection process of a tourist destination (López-Guzmán *et al.,* 2012). Both destinations and tourism companies are aware of the importance of gastronomy in order to diversify tourism and stimulate local, regional and national economic development. Furthermore, "Food Tourism includes in its discourse, ethical and sustainable values based on the territory, the landscape, the sea, local culture, local products, authenticity, which is something it has in common with current trends of cultural consumption" (WTO, 2012). In Europe, the primary demand for food and wine travel represents 600.000 trips each year. The secondary demand is estimated at 20 million annual trips. According to tourism experts, the prospects are optimistic and the expected growth for this niche product will be between 7% and 12% per year (WTO, 2012).

According to Mitchell and Hall (2003) food tourism is associated with a trip away from the usual place of residence, motivated in its whole, or partly, for the interest in food and beverage, and/or in eating or drinking. According to Hall and Sharples (2003) food tourism is an experiential trip to a gastronomic region, for recreational or entertainment purposes, which includes visits to primary and secondary producers of food, gastronomic festivals, food fairs, events, farmers' markets, cooking shows and demonstrations, tastings of quality food products or any tourism activity related to food.
Consequently it relates with the organization and promotion of festivals and events of food and wines, contemplating visits to primary and secondary producers, participation in gastronomic festivals, and the demand of restaurants or specific places where food tasting and all the inherent experimentation is the main reason for those who travel.

Keeping views of authors like Quan and Wang (2004) and Mitchell and Hall (2003) in mind, one can say that the experience of food consumption in tourism can be analysed from two points of view, regardless of tourists motivation. That is, on one hand it is possible to ascertain the influx of tourists motivated for the contact with the local, regional or destination country gastronomy, which presupposes the existence of a gastronomic tourism (*food tourism*); on the other hand, one can determine if tourists eat and drink because they are away from their usual place of residence, and need to meet the basic needs in order to merely be physically able to visit other attractions. Thus there is a confrontation between the primary motivation *versus* the secondary or complementary motivation.

The first refers to the relation of the food consumption experience with the main tourist motivation; the second for the relation of the food consumption experience as a support for the satisfaction of one's main motivation.

In the last few years, as the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS) Cultural Tourism Project advances, there has been a growing valorisation of the destination's intangible elements, such as, 'environment', 'gastronomy', 'linguistic diversity', among others. These elements are considered important in the valorisation of the destination's attraction, uniqueness and specificity (Richards, 2007). Hence, it is not surprising to find a growing number of studies highlighting the importance of gastronomy and specifically what is called "**gastronomic identity"** of destinations as a relevant cultural element in their success. The consumption of food and wine has come to be perceived as a relevant factor in the development of a region, as well as a factor that propitiates the local ingredients valorisation (Quan & Wang, 2004). A(2008) point out, 25% of the tourists' expenses are in food, it can be concluded that gastronomic tourism has deep socioeconomic importance.

According to the WTO Global Report on Food Tourism (2012) it is estimated that the weight of gastronomy in tourism revenue at a destinations is very significant, i.e. around 30%, and that destinations still have a large margin to work at this regard. Such a significant contribution should be recognized by the destination's marketing and management organizations, as well, as by the tourist industry to develop initiatives that can give an increased value to gastronomic heritage. In contemporary times, gastronomic tourist experiences constitute as a participation experience in another culture, making gastronomic tourism an important segment of cultural tourism.

Future Perceived Trends in Gastronomic T ourism

Demographic, environmental, socio-economic and cultural changes have always resulted in several changes in tourist demand. These have also inevitably led to a supply adjustment at the destination product providers' end as well. Overtime, the constant evolution of society has created new profiles of tourists and has led to the development of new forms of tourism. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that the players present in each niche tourist market segment, keep abreast of adapting their products specifically for the particular markets in order to attract them, else, the long term long survival of tourism businesses may become difficult.

In this regard the players present in the gastronomic tourist niche market are not an exception. By reviewing and analysing the existing studies and literature on gastronomic tourism, like Convigton Travel (2015), Skift (2017), World Food Travel Association (2016), The Culinary Travel Guide (2015), OECD (2014), OECD (2016) and UNWTO (2012), the following can be predicted about gastronomic tourism :

Demand for gastronomy – The demand for gastronomic tourism will rise. Consumers will become increasingly open to the idea of sharing resources, being more experimental and seeking authentic experiences when travelling. This will create a demand for an 'elite food' catalysed by the influence of television shows on cokkery like 'Master Chef' among others.

Growth of food and beverage itineraries – The travel industry will likel branc out into creating unique travel itineraries based on gastronomy delights that would link local areas with authentic food and beverage products.

Growth of creative industries and cities - There is already an increasing focus on cultural tourism and the promotion of distinctive local products and experiences, including food and events. The number of cities included in the UNESCO's creative cities network on account of gastronomic products, is believed to take a big leap in the coming years. E.g like cities of Belém and Florianópolis (Brazil), Parma (Italy), Bergen (Norway), Denia and Burgos (Spain), among others (UNESCO, n.a.).that have already achieved fame on account of gastronomy.

Culinary combined with storytelling – Gastronomy gives tourists an insight into cultural, social and even climatic issues pertinent to agriculture. As food habits are different from culture to culture, one can get a better understanding of the values and customs of the local communities through gastronomy. Around the world, chefs are now days a actively practicing storytelling by using hyper-local ingredients' to make a dish that can only be made in that way and in that place. Destinations tell their story trough local culinary specialities. As food tells the story about the place, there will be an increasing trend of incorporating the component of gastronomic tourism in travel itineraries.

Use of technology in gastronomical tourism – The prime purpose of technology is to give customers more personalized experiences, and the information they want at the right time. It is believed that to further the astronomical experience at destinations the use of technology for table booking at eating outlets will be facilitated through mobile-friendly technology.

Growth of integrated gastronomy networks – Gastronomical tourism will aim at creating all inclusive networks of all food and beverage related component sectors including as today can include producers, farmers, ranchers, fisherman, chefs, restaurateurs, public managers, academics, hoteliers, etc. These networks will help to manage the entire gastronomic supply at any destination.

Growth of Peer to peer dining experiences – A newcomer to the scene. Gastronomic tourists are being hard-pressed to find a more authentic experience than eating a meal cooked by local in their own home. Most popular services in peer to peer dining experiences include EatWith, Feastly, MealSharing, among other, which are all likely to grow.

Hence the above point out to certain future trends of gastronomic tourism, suggesting that the segment of gastronomic tourism will become quite dominant in the coming times as a new niche market leading to the growth of this new form of tourism that will be capitalized upon by destinations to enhance their uniqueness and product differentiation in an ever increasing competitive market.

Final Considerations

According to the WTO Global Report on Food Tourism (WTO, 2012), the prospects for gastronomy tourism are optimistic and the expected growth for this segment will be between 7% and 12% per year. Today, the weight of gastronomy in tourism revenue in destinations is very significant, around 30% (WTO, 2012). This numbers are perhaps one of the reasons that explain the growing importance of gastronomic tourism over the last few decades. This growing importance can also be verified analysing the number of papers and journals that exclusively deal with this thematic.

Analysing the literature one can conclude that future tourists will desirer new experiences, luxury, culture and authenticity. The tourists will wish to further experience the ethnicity of the destination through an interest in local cuisines of destinations. However it will remain a challenge for destinations to supply a heterogeneous food product in times of globalisation were gastronomic tourism is slowly becoming homogeneous through availability of multiple cuisines at each and every place. New innovations within the gastronomic tourism are likely to grow, like personalized customization in the gastronomy sector.

Through the discussion in the paper it can be concluded that gastronomic tourism is understood as a trip away from the usual place of residence, motivated in its whole or partly for the interest in food and beverage, and/or in eating or drinking (Mitchell e Hall, 2003). This form of tourism is a prime niche segment of the 'umbrella' of 'cultural tourism'. However the concept being at nascent stage, there is still the lack of studies on the aspect that requires further investigation and discussion as a separate thematic area.

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The Effectiveness of Employability Skills in Hospitality Education

Nor Rabiatul Adawiyah Nor Azam and Asmahany Ramely

Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of employability skills in hospitality education. The research presented here is the result of a descriptive study on the use a commercial facility to evaluate graduate students' performances in the various areas of the culinary arts curriculum. One hundred and twenty supervisors in three to five star ranking hotels were identified as the population interest. According to the supervisors, the employability skills needed to be successful in the industry are, strong leadership skill, good communication skill and the ability to manage conflict.

Keywords: Employability Skill, Leadership Skill, Communication Skill, Conflict Management, Hospitality Education

Introduction

The growth of graduate culinary management has witnessed a rapid increase in the higher education sector over the past few years. This is largely due to the increase in popularity of culinary art television Programmemes and channels such as Master Chef, Food Show and Food Network which have portrayed the profession of a 'cook' as very appealing and rewarding. Programmemes that feature celebrity cooks, both local and international, contribute to the same allure as well. Bannock, (1997) explained that in television, food sponsors make up 35% of all the commercials and the restaurant industry alone spent $1.5 billion in 2000 in terms advertising. In total, the food industry spent $2.1 billion on television advertising in 2001. Pool and Sewell (2007) stated that food is also an increasingly important segment category for programming. The Food Network was developed with this significant connection between food and television in mind. Today's culinary students often develop perceptions about a culinary career in the media. The increase in the number of food related programmemes on television and on the web has helped to popularize the chef profession and has increased the awareness about culinary education.

Bannock (1997) explained that the first Culinary Arts higher education programmeme for professionals was offered immediately following World War II. It was not until the late 1960s and the early 1970s that Culinary Arts education programmememes were widely offered in vocational educational institutions and higher education institutions around the country. In Malaysia, most of the higher learning intuitions, colleges, and universities currently offer a culinary art programme to meet the increasing demands of the service industry. Zahari, Jalis, Zulfifly, Radzi and Othman (2009) argued that based on the growth of culinary diversities and its development in the world today, there will be a promising need for well-trained, dedicated chefs, administrators and managers in all service areas including hotels, food service, food manufacturers, catering, food media as well as other hospitality and tourism-related fields. Jasmi, Zakaria and Abdul Wahab (2010) noted that the Culinary Arts curriculum aims to equip learners with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead rewarding lives and develop careers in broad culinary, food service, food manufacturing and hospitality industries where professional culinary knowledge and skills are required. It will help to prepare students for careers in the culinary arts, food service, food manufacturing and hospitality industries by developing their capacity to contribute and lead the professional and strategic directions of their organizations.

Students entering the field of culinary training have perceptions and expectations of what they should be taught to be successful and how well their culinary school meets their needs. Employed graduates may have different perceptions of the value of the education that the school's educational processes have delivered. At the same time, the industry is constantly evaluating the graduate performance in the workplace. Similarly, the industry forms perceptions on how well the educational system has prepared the students for their positions as cooks and chefs (Muller, VanLeeuwen, Mandabach, & Harrington , 2007).

It is not uncommon for politicians and industry to complain about the lack of skills of the graduates. Research by the Community Based Instruction (CBI) showed that almost one-third of employers (30%) have problems with current graduates' employability skills such as their ability to work as a team as well as their communication and problem solving skills. Employers are also disappointed with the graduates' attitude about work (25%) level of self-management (33%), business awareness (44%) and foreign language skills (49%). A recent study found that the lack of proper secondary education, language and communication skills have created serious issues about the graduates' performance in the industry. Successful graduates need to develop problem-solving skills, customer service management, service management, teamwork and people skills. It is also interesting that a large number of culinary school graduates eventually leave the industry. One wonders if there is a mismatch between the students' perceptions about culinary education, school curriculum and industrial needs (Hofstrand, 1996). According to

Ladkin (2008) employers question the success of higher education programmes in developing employability skills for these graduates.

'Employability skills' are skills that are basic and generic in nature, but are very valuable in assisting every person entering the workforce. Some people refer to employability skills as the "core skills," "key skills," transferable skills," "general skills," "non-technical skills," and/or "soft skills" (Hofstrand, 1996; Robinson, 2006). In line with this key issue, this paper attempts to determine the effectiveness of the employability skills and competencies taught in the hospitality educational institutions on graduate performance in the workplace. The main objective of this study is to establish how important employability skills and performance competencies are for the industry.

Background

Employability Skill

Employability skills are skills that are basic in nature, but very valuable in assisting every person entering the workforce. Some people refer to employability skills as *"core skills," "key skills, "transferable skills," "general skills," "non-technical skills,"* and *"soft skills*" (Robinson, 2006). According to Tibrewala (2010) employability skills are defined as transferable core skill groups that represent essential functional and enabling knowledge as well as the skills and attitudes required by the 21st century workplace necessary for career success at all levels of employment and all levels of education. Russell and Neale (2010) indicate that leadership skills, communication skills and conflict management skills are some of the employability skills desired by employers. *"Employability is having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful"* (Pool and Sewell, 2007, p 280). Bannock (1997) identified it as a set of achievements skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations which benefit themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy (Breiter & Clements, 1996).

According to The World Bank report in 2008, the employability skills should be reassessed periodically to keep pace with changes and trends in order to avoid passing out-dated knowledge and competencies onto students. Bloom and Saeki (2005) indicated that working skills should be updated to meet students' needs in the changing workplace. Yammarino (2002) has emphasized that employers had questioned the improvement of the education curricula in developing employability skills of the graduates. The significance of these studies within the curriculum should be reviewed to adequately develop students employability skills since these employability skills are the main demands of the job market.

Leadership Skill

Leadership is defined as the process of persuasion or example by which an individual or leadership team induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader and his or her followers (Gersh, 2016). According to Northouse (2004) leadership is a process whereby an individual influence a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Some writers believe that leadership influence is based on an inborn gift that the leaders possessed (Bass and Stogdill, 1990), while others believe that leadership influence is based on learnable skills or styles that leaders employ in different situations. The skill approach to leadership stated that knowledge and abilities are major attributes of effective leadership (Yammarino, 2002).

Collins (2002) described that a leader is one or more people who select, equip, train, and influence one or more followers who have diverse gifts, abilities, and skills and focuses the followers' efforts to the organization's mission and objectives causing the followers to willingly and enthusiastically utilize their spiritual, emotional, and physical energy into a concerted, coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives.

Communication Skill

Effective communication is the lubricant that allows organizations to smoothly and productively operate (Hooff & Ridder, 2004). Hooff and Ridder in the same year further contend that "the payoff for effective communication in hotels and restaurants is that managers and employees who develop strong communication skills are usually strong performers on the job" (Hooff & Ridder, 2004: 126). Employers are looking for employees who are good communicators. Communication skills, which include listening skills, prominently top the list of qualities employers seek for entry-level jobs including executive and blue-collar positions as well (Yorke, 2002).

Communication skills include oral communication skills, written communication skills, listening skills, face-to-face communication skills and the ability to resolve conflicts positively (Hooff & Ridder, 2004). Dianna (2005 :251) defined oral communication as "the ability to present information verbally to others either one-to-one or in groups" and she defined written communication as "effective transfer of written information, whether formally or informally". According to Brunetto and Farr-Wharton (2004), both written and oral communication skills are intended to promote mutual understanding among two or more people. In the hospitality industry, managers are constantly communicating. Communication skills are used for leading, interviewing, recruiting, training, coaching, motivating, evaluating, counselling, interacting with guests, and for many other functions of an active manager (Dervin, 1993).

Conflict Management

Conflict management is an employability skill that requires effective communication skills. Conflict management is the ability to resolve conflicts between oneself and others, or the ability to resolve conflicts between other people (Evers, Frese & Cooper, 2000). Conflicts within the organization are inevitable and happen in the case of disagreement over workloads, problems in communication, individual difference in needs, wants, goals, opinions, preferences, behaviours as well as in the case of disagreement between employees and employer. Conflict management enhances learning and group outcome effectiveness or performance in an organizational setting (Rahim & Magner, 1995).

Conflict management strategies should be designed to enhance organizational learning (Chung, 2000). It is expected that organizational learning will lead to long-term effectiveness. In order to attain this objective, conflict management strategies should be designed to enhance critical and innovative thinking to learn the process of diagnosis and intervention in the right problems. Resolving conflicts requires good communication skills (Wood & King, 2002). Resolving conflicts or providing feedbacks to others is an important function of every manager. A manager who is bad with feedback oftens creates unintended conflicts within the organization. Most employees like to hear good news. Managers who communicate acceptable behaviours clearly and positively reinforce them can reduce conflicts since "their employees do the right things more often than not" (Wood & King, 2002: 197)

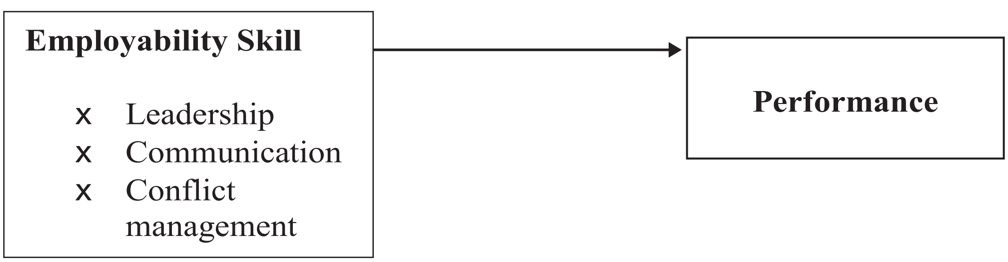
Performance in Industry

Van Lerberghe, Adams, & Ferrinho, (2003) affirmed that performance is the ultimate decisive factor in the assessment of organizations and it is a complex construct that reflects the factors used by decision-makers to assess the performance of an organization. Employee performance is a crucial component of service in the hospitality industry which is based on the competitive and people oriented business environment (Yang, 2010). Graduate employability is an important aspect of higher education industry in managing the performance of the student in the industry. It evaluates the success and ability of the particular institution in producing work-ready graduates. Employability has been used as a performance indicator for higher education institutions (Smith, McKnight, & Naylor, 2000). Barrie (2004) reported that employers are looking for work force that has the ability to think, learn and adapt. All these are attributes must be available in the overall performance of the student. If higher education is to meet the needs of the economy and the individual, it must seek actively to develop the skill and knowledge to meet the industry's performance.

Harvey (2001) added that he had developed a set of generic level learning outcomes templates which specify the levels that students should attain in the four areas which are knowledge and understanding, key skills, cognitive skills and subject-specific skills. Furthermore, Barrie (2004) indicated that the generic graduate attributes will directly relate to the graduate outcomes to employability. Apart from its contribution towards matching the curricula and the industry's demands, the 'employability skills' is an important marketing tool that will equip graduates with better 'employability skills' which would be of immediate value to them performing well in the industry

Figure 1: A Study Framework of The Effectiveness of Employability skills in Hospitality Education

Independent variables **Dependent variables**



In view of the reviewed literature, the following hypthesis are developed for the study.

H1: There is a positive relationship between graduates' employability skills and graduates' employee performance.
H1a: There is a positive relationship between graduates' leadership skills and graduates' employee performance.
H1b: There is a positive relationship between graduates' communication skills and graduates' employee performance.

H1c: There is a positive relationship between graduates' conflict management skills and graduates' employee performance.

Methodology

The population of the study consisted of supervisors from three, four and five star ratings hotels. The respondents were Human Resource Managers and Departmental Managers in the selected hotels. The sample size for this study is based on the sample size table proposed by Smith (1983), where, if the population is 100 (n= 100), the sample size would be 81 (at 95% confidence level), in relation to respondents who were selected using a convenience sampling method. A total of 120 questionnaires were collected. The data collected using the questionnaire survey were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Findings and Discussion

In the current study, the hypotheses were tested using multiple regressions. Hypothesis 1a was tested to analyse the importance of the level of employability skills attributes in the hospitality industry performance. To be precise, this study aimed at appraising how important the attribution of leadership skill attributed to graduate employees performance is. The finding shows that leadership skill is significant with performance in the industry (β = 0.252, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis H1a is supported. The behaviour of graduate leader is the most important predictor of the high level of organizational performance. Brown and Fritz (1993) indicated that today's students need better leadership preparation to succeed in the workplace.

Table 1: Multiple regressions predicting student eployability skill to job performance

	Beta	Sig	t-value	Findings
Leadership	0.252	0.005	2.070	Supported
Communication	0.458	0.000	3.854	Supported
Conflict Management	0.490	0.000	5.448	Supported

The H1b hypothesis required an investigation on how significant the relationship between communication skill and employee performance is. It has been proven that communication skill is significant (β =.0458, $p<0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis H1b is supported. This finding is similar with Ahmed, Raheem & Jamal (2003) who asserted that employers enjoyed better satisfaction when graduate students have greater communication skills because good communication skill will lead to higher job performance.

H1c hypothesis on the other hand, was analysed to evaluate the relationship between the predictors comprised of the graduates' conflict management ability and the criterion which represent graduates' employee performance. In particular, the researcher expected to evaluate how significant conflict management independently predicted performance management. Multiple regressions was conducted and the results were tabulated.

The findings evidently show that conflict management skill (β =0.490, $p <0.05$) has the highest impact on performance management. Therefore, it can be claimed that conflict management significantly influences performance management; the analysis generated positive results in addressing the research questions and hypothesis accordingly. Conflict management is an employability skill that requires effective communication skills. Conflict management is the ability to resolve conflicts between oneself and others, and/or the ability to resolve conflicts between other people (Evers, Rush & Berdrow, 1998). Resolving conflicts require good communication skills (Wood & King, 2002).

Conclusion

The analysis outcomes demonstrated that employability skills turned to be the most influential factor to draw the performance in the hospitality industry. These skills include leadership, the ability to communicate and conflict management. The results of this study would have significant implications for the educational institutions. In the world of education today, graduates employability skills are becoming significantly valued as an indicator for the ability to perform in the workforce. For that reason, educational institutions need to understand that in order to produce more employable graduates and to boost up their skills, the current curriculum needs to be reviewed. The current curriculum needed to be strengthened with additional skills subjects compared to the application of theory subject. It is considered as one of the best solution that needs to be considered by the institutions of higher learning. Other than that, working experience has turned out to be another crucial factor in any educational and professional development. In line with this statement, the function of practical training has become more important in the career development of students in the hospitality industry. On the other hand, a practical training programme can be an important part of a culinary student's education which it can provide important insights into the "real world" of the service industry.

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The Right to Pursuit of Happiness and Italian Tourism Law

Antonios Maniatis

Abstract

The right to pursuit of happiness was recognized as one of the unalienable human rights, along with the rights to life and freedom, in the 1776 Declaration of Independence of the United States of America. The Italian philosopher Gaetano Filangeri had introduced the concept of ''right to happiness'' in his work ''The Science of Legislation'' and Benjamin Franklin, the father of the Declaration, was inspired by that concept. Furthermore, the right was incorporated as a scope in the first fundamental text of the French Revolution but was omitted in the ulterior Constitutions. The doctrine has recently manifested a particular interest for the recognition of this right, as a right implicitly formulated in current Constitutions, like the Italian one, but the existence and the utility of this right remain a controversial matter. Besides, the Italian legal order has made some important steps forward as for the regulation of tourism. This is the case of the adoption of a Tourism Code, by imitating France, although the Constitutional Tribunal judged many articles as unconstitutional. Another similar development consists in the transformation of the Ministry on Culture into a single Ministry on Cultural Goods and Activities and Tourism. However, crucial rights relevant to Tourism Law, such as the right to tourism and to hospitality, are not explicitly consecrated in the Constitution, like the right to pursuit of happiness.

Keywords: Declaration of Independence, Constitutional Rights, Italy, Right to Pursuit of Happiness, Right to Vacations, Tourism Code, Tourism Law

Introduction

Italy is not considered merely as a possible tourism destination but as a tourism dream in the framework of international tourism. If other destinations, such as the ones in Asia, are growing very quickly, the Mayor of Venice has declared that everybody would like to visit his own region (Jamieson & Jamieson, 2016). The prestige of Italy is multiplicated on account of its people, as tourists (Vainopoulos & Mercier, 2009) .

It goes without saying that Italy has got a very important tradition of tourism and more widely of leisure activities. As a matter of fact, it would be useful to proceed to a research on the Italian law on tourism. We suppose that

Italian Law, particularly on Tourism, has some mysterious aspects. At first, it could be useful to investigate a question that is not fully incorporated into Tourism Law but has to do with human rights. It consists in the existence of the human right to pursuit of happiness. After that, it would be useful to present the profile of Italian Tourism Law with a special reference to the right to tourism.

Historical Antecedent to the Right to Pursuit of Happiness

The right to 'pursuit of happiness' is endowed with an important historical background. Indeed, it emerged within the American Declaration of Independence, of 4th July 1776. According to this revolutionary text of the 13 independent United States of America: "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness"*. It is not very widely known that Benjamin Franklin, the father of the Declaration, did not stand fast to the advice of philosopher John Locke to introduce into the Declaration the ''right to property'' but he sent in Italy his emissaries to contact the Neapolitan jurist, philosopher and patriot Gaetano Filangeri. This intellectual had introduced the concept of ''right to happiness'' in his work ''The Science of Legislation''. Franklin was inspired by that concept (Rotondo, 2013). Happiness as an unalienable right is a part of the Italian cultural and legal tradition. Indeed, in the years of 1700 a project of Constitution of the Great Duchy of Toscana established the 'right of happiness'.

Furthermore, the right to pursuit of happiness is also included in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. This text of 26th August 1789 is directly influenced by Thomas Jefferson, the primary author of the American Declaration, who was at the time in France, serving as a diplomat, and worked closely with General Lafayette in composing a Bill of Rights for France. This first fundamental text of French Revolution recognizes the rights of men to property, liberty and life. It makes also reference to the objective of the ''happiness of all''. Despite the lack of explicit mention of slavery in the Declaration, slave uprisings in the Haitian Revolution took inspiration from its words. In 1793, due to the rebellion of slaves in Haiti, a part of the French revolutionists adopted the policy of abolition of slavery. It is to point out that the Declaration constitutes the point of reference of the French institutions, mainly in the Constitutions of 1852, 1946 and 1958. The Preamble of the current Constitution makes an explicit reference to it whilst even the Constitutional Council tends to invoke it. The right to pursuit of happiness, being present in the above-mentioned declarations, was omitted in the Constitutions of the era that was inaugurated by them.

The Question of a Constitutional Right to Pursuit of Happiness

The subject of happiness is not merely juridical but has to do mainly with other sciences, such as psychology, and social enquiry. The Italian doctrine has recently taken an approach to question whether people are endowed with a right to pursuit to happiness or not. The great intellectual, Umberto Eco, made an all-time classic comment, on the matter, in 2014 (Eco, 2014). He formulated the opinion that the literature on happiness is enormous, from Epicurus and perhaps before him and on, but he believes that nobody knows what happiness consists. He cannot admit that it is about a permanent status for common people. The question is that happiness, conceived as an absolute fullness, is a transitory situation, episodic and brief, like a moment in the course of an excursion in the countryside. Furthermore, the idea of happiness evokes always a personal happiness and hardly ever the one of the entire human species.

As far as the juridical science is concerned, it seems rather divided on this ''forgotten'' human right. Although the right was recognized in Declarations and not in ulterior formal Constitutions, it is not regarded as strange in both vocabulary and principles of Constitutional Law (Gemma, 2008).

It is logical to look for a legal back in Article 2a of the Italian Constitution, according to which: "*The Republic recognizes and guarantees the inviolable rights of the person, both as an individual and in the social groups where human personality is expressed*". This disposition is endowed with a content quite similar to the question of recognition of new human rights. Various rights have been deduced from sectors of doctrine and jurisprudence in Italian legal order, beyond the explicitly consecrated in constitutional dispositions.

The right to pursuit of happiness may be deduced from the Constitution, via the recourse to either the teleological interpretation or the systematic one. It constitutes the *ratio* of all the other constitutional rights, being considered as a system, and from this *ratio* would be possible to deduce this right, being transversal to the other ones. It is connected with the phenomenon of multiplication of constitutional rights of various nature, in the process of interpretation of the fundamental charter. From the explicit provision of one or more constitutional rights it is possible to deduce rights that are implicitly formulated, because either these rights are the prerequisites of the explicitly consecrated rights (for instance, the right to life is not mentioned in the Italian Constitution whilst it is previewed in other Constitutions) or simply result from the mentioned rights (like the right to the environment in correlation with the right to heath, being mentioned in Article

32 of the same Constitution). On account of these data, it is obvious that the right to pursuit of happiness is not just another right, beyond the classical ones. It is in a logical relation not with some single rights but with the entire constellation of the constitutional rights.

According to another approach, the right on the matter may be deduced by Article 3, according to which (Rotondo, 2013):

"*All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinion, personal and social conditions. It is the duty of the Republic to remove those obstacles of an economic or social nature which constrain the freedom and equality of citizens, thereby impeding the full development of the human person and the effective participation of all workers in the political, economic and social organization of the country*".

The right to happiness seems to be the mother of all rights. In case that a person is a victim of discrimination, is treated as a 'B Class' citizen, is submitted to violence for what he is, for his own status, is deprived of an assured income, he cannot feel happy.

Besides, there is the opinion that this right is the fundament for constitutional pretensions that cannot be based on other rights, being explicitly consecrated in the Constitution (Gemma, 2008). These pretensions are related to the acts or omissions of other persons, mainly in public domain of life. For instance, they are disconnected from the disappointment of a fan, provoked by the defeat of the team that he supports.

The human needs, mainly of psychological order, may be translated as versions of the constitutional interest in happiness. An example has to do with the area of family relationships and to events related to these. As for the behavior of parents towards the children, exist behaviors, being absolutely unrecognized by norms and judicial decisions, of persons that tend to place their children in conflict to the other spouse or that cause suffering of children without justifying reason. Moreover, the existence of a right to pursuit of happiness should not be regarded as the legal victory of individualism but can be correlated to the symmetrical phenomenon of the fundamental duties of citizens. Indeed, it is in full harmony with the concept of solidarity of private individuals (Gemma, 2008).

However, this right is not fully admitted within the juridical science. For instance, a part of the Italian doctrine signalizes as for the hypothetical new rights that there is the danger of an absolute approach to the type of the constitutional right to vacations, without defining its material limits (Ferro, 2014). In the framework of this controversy, the doctrine makes reference to a "privilege" ruling the "new rights". As these rights have not managed to be a part of the positive law so far, they cannot be placed in the more severe field of norms that rule the traditional rights, being explicitly consecrated in the Constitution.

The Right to Vacations

The right to vacations, let alone to peaceful ones, may be regarded as one of the various specific versions of the hypothetical "right to happiness" or "to serenity". Nevertheless, the civil jurisprudence of the Italian Supreme Court is not friendly to such a development. The tribunal, in its decision n. 26972 of 11th November 2008 denied the existence of a right to happiness, in the framework of a case having to do with claims on recovery of material damage. This right was eloquently considered as ''wholly imaginary''. If a part of the doctrine, invoking the judicial negativism, considers that positive law is quite satisfactory to back any civil law pretensions in case of damage, the tourism law cases included, it does not stop in this point but also adds that the right of pursuit to happiness is merely a fiction.

Italian Tourism Law and the Fundamental Right to Tourism

As far as the Italian law on tourism is concerned, it is endowed with a rather unique tradition in a global setting. Tourism Law is a relatively new, specific branch of juridical science (Maniatis, 2015a). However, Italian Tourism Law is quite old, if not the oldest case of Tourism Law worldwide (Franceschelli, 2011). The first attempt to present the content of this branch by the doctrine is located in the edition of the volume "The Tourism Law" (in the se nse of Law and not of mere rules of ''Legislation'') of the author Bortolo Belotti, in 1919. This book of 660 pages, rather forgotten and hardly localized in libraries till a few years ago, is included among the first steps for the creation of Tourism Law in Italy. The other steps have included the adoption of the first law on tourism, in 1910, the establishment of the Italian National Organization on tourism ("ENIT", as it is called, to date) in 1919, and the founding of the Italian Touring Club, in 1894. Italy is to such a pitch a pioneer country in the regulation of leisure activities that it became the first State to develop the juridical doctrine on sports. The term ''Sports Law'' (not ''Sports Legislation'', according to the above-mentioned remarks) emerged in 1933 whilst Massimo Severo Giannini made a reference in 1949 to the ''sports legal orders'' in the framework of the ''Gazette of Sports Law''' which was inaugurated then.

Italy has imitated France, which in 2006 adopted a Tourism Code, in the framework of a very important tendency to State codification of various branches of law. If France became the first State worldwide to create a unique legal text on the dispositions on tourism, severe criticism has been raised as it is about a Code on tourism institutions rather than a Code on tourist's rights (Delpech, 2011). Italy became the second State to put a Tourism Code into force, in 2011, but this text has not recognized the existence of a ''right to vacations'', at all (Ferro, 2014). In a similar way, within Italian Constitutional Law there is no autonomous fundamental right to vacations.

The doctrine does not have the tendency to wonder directly whether there is a constitutional right to tourism or not. Not only is this right deprived of an explicit constitutional consecration but it is also rather disconnected from the general human right to 'recreation'. It merely poses the question of a wider similar right of human beings to vacations, which indicates an embarrassment on an institution like tourism, being relatively marginal in the level of formal Constitution. More concretely, article 117 of the Constitution, put into force on 1st January 1948, attributed to Regions endowed with an ordinary status the legislative competence in numerous fields, such as "tourism and hotels industry'' (Majo, 2011). However, based on the 2001 referendum, a revolutionary change has occurred in this article. In the framework of its new formulation, first of all the fields belonging to the exclusive competence of the State have been registered. Afterwards, there are the fields of the concurrent competence of the State and of the Regions, in which the lawmaking faculty belongs to Regions, with the exception of the definition of fundamental principles, which is reserved to the State. At last, the legislative faculty on any other matters which is not explicitly reserved in the power of the State belongs to Regions. In conclusion, each of the Regions is endowed with the exclusive legislative faculty in all fields that are not included in the list of the State competence. For instance, this is the case of the set to regulate ''tourism and hotels industry'', which has been omitted.

It is to point out that the regulation of article 117 is problematic in technical terms and has caused disputes before the Constitutional Court (Algostino, 2016). Furthermore, it may be regarded as a kind of constitutional marginalization of the sensitive case of tourism, as no more explicit reference to it remains!

Regardless, as tourism constitutes a complex matter, not all of its aspects are submitted to the exclusive competence of Regions. As a result, there are some fields that have to do with concurrent or exclusive legislative competence of the State. These are about

- The economic activities, so the discipline of companies and of tourism professions,
- Tax normativity, which remains in the exclusive State field,

- Consumers' protection, submitted to the Single Text on Consumption Code (Legislative Decree 206/2005), as for the consumer's protection in general, and to Legislative Decree 79/2011, as for the tourism packages,
- Freedom of movement and expatriation,
- Health and physical well-being,
- Protection of cultural and landscape goods,
- Protection of the environment.

Furthermore, it is to signalize that Article 2 of the Tourism Code, on the legislative intervention of the State, is in clear contrast to the content of Article 117 of the Constitution. On the basis of the recourse of numerous Regions, on 5th April 2012 the Constitutional Court, in its decision n. 80, declared these dispositions as unconstitutional, along with the dispositions of other 18 Articles of the same text (Castoldi, 2016).

Besides, it is quite indicative of the question of the ambiguity of the consecration of the human right to tourism that in virtue of L. 135/2001 was introduced the ''Bill of tourist's rights'', formulated by the (existent in that era) Ministry on Industry, Commerce and Craft in at least 4 languages but this text has no binding character (Majo, 2011).

The Ministry on Cultural Goods and Activities and Tourism has enacted the role of Tourism Ministry from 2013 and on, when the Office for the Tourism Policies was transferred from the Presidency of the Cabinet to the specialized Ministry on Cultural Goods and Activities. It is about a serious development given that the phenomenon of tourism is not a "neutral" one, to be included in a general structure like the above-mentioned of the Presidency of the government, particularly for one of the so-called "archeological countries" of the world, along with Greece and Egypt. It is useful to combine cultural goods, mainly heritage, and museums with the movement of tourism and the infrastructure of hospitality. The Office was very soon "promoted" to a Tourism Directorate General. However, it is to clarify that Italy acquired a Ministry on Tourism for the first time in 1959. The post-war period was characterized by a very intense legislative activity in the matter of tourism that led to the foundation of the Ministry on Tourism and Spectacle (Majo, 2011). Nevertheless, a 1993 referendum abrogated the 1959 law on this Ministry, which was suppressed (Degrassi & Franceschelli, 2010).

Discussion

The question of "new rights" to recognize in an indirect way, namely without any incorporation into the positive law, constitutes an all-time classic topic in the comparative Constitutional Law. For instance, the Greek Constitution has a norm that is identical to the above-mentioned Article 2a of the Italian Constitution. However, the disposition of Article 25 par. 1a has not generated a great tendency to establish modern rights, particularly as far as jurisprudence is concerned. Even the major part of the doctrine has been reluctant to make use of this legal tool for this purpose. Perhaps, this tendency is currently attributed to the new development having to do with the explicit addition of the double fundamental principle of "social rule of law" in the same paragraph, following the model of the German Constitution. Therefore, attempts to find a constitutional back for unrecognized rights are likely to make use, inter alia, of the mainstreaming basis consisting on the Welfare State submitted to norms. In a similar way, it is to signalize that par. 1b of Article 25 has a comparable content with the above-mentioned Article 3 of the Italian Constitution. The Greek jurisprudence prefers any specialized explicit dispositions to the general constitutional dispositions. However, as far as the principle of sustainability is concerned, the Council of State introduced it in 90s but after its consecration in article 24 par. 1 of the Constitution, through the 2001 revision, the tribunal has demonstrated a tendency of judicial self-restraint, by avoiding making reference to this sample of positive law! Perhaps, judges do not find it indispensable to make use of a disposition that is well established and known. The principle of sustainability fits in with the widely recognized in international law and is endorsed by an overwhelming proportion of countries right to the environment (Boyd, 2013). More than fifty years ago, the concept of a human right to healthy environment was viewed as a novel, even radical, idea. Anyway, the modern concept on tourism submits it to the principle of sustainability, independently of the question of explicit consecration of both these phenomena in Constitutions. The right to tourism is still marginal, unlike the right to cultural heritage which has gained a constitutional status and needs correlation to the modern principle of sustainable development (Maniatis, 2015b).

As for the right to pursuit of happiness, it is about an autonomous and genuine right, which however cannot be regarded as the mother of all others, at least against the classical general rights of life and freedom. It is also to signalize that freedom is not merely a civil right but also one of the emblematic fundamental principles in actual Constitutions. Furthermore, it is to put emphasis on the fact that the right to pursuit of happiness was not the first to be declared but the third, along with the above-mentioned civil rights. So, it is obvious that in the American Declaration of Independence, the pursuit of happiness is not the primordial right but one of the unalienable rights of major importance. It is obvious that human beings are in constant search of their personal happiness, that is by nature associated with the fundamental principle of citizens' solidarity towards either the other private individuals or the State as the representative of public interest. Hence, the right to pursuit of happiness remains an unrecognized "new right", along with various other mainstreaming rights relevant to Tourism Law, such as the general right to recreation. This right, exemplified by vacations and weekends, may be regarded as a complex right including inter alia the following major sub categories:

- The rights to culture (right to culture, right to education) and
- The rights to human motion (right to sports, rights to tourism and to hospitality)

In a similar way, the right to pursuit of happiness is a very general right, including the above-mentioned versions of the right to recreation, as happiness is achieved particularly through recreation activities.

Conclusion

The present study confirms that Italian Tourism Law has a very great tradition and importance and some rather unknown links with ‘’forgotten’’ institutions like the unalienable fundamental right to pursuit of happiness, with a background in Italian history. Besides, as for the Italian Tourism Law itself, the right to tourism, just like the similar right to vacations, remains paradoxically marginal. Even the tourism and the hotels industry appeared and then fully disappeared, in terms of explicit consecration, from the Italian Constitution. The State has tried to regulate this branch of the market (for instance by adopting the best practice of a Tourism Code, creating a single Ministry on Cultural Goods and Activities and Tourism…) but the allocation of competencies between the State and the Regions constitutes still a controversial matter, exemplified by the crisis of the 2016 referendum.

However, the Italian legal order remains one of the most important national legal orders to study worldwide, as the correspondent country itself is one of the hardcore tourism destinations and archeological countries.

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Perceptions of Local Communities towards Wildlife-Based Tourism: The Case of Lake Nakuru National Park, Kenya

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Abstract

Wildlife-based tourism is one of the most successful export industries in Kenya contributing greatly to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It remains a major tool for enhancing socio-economic development particularly in marginal areas where few other opportunities exist. However, the breakdown of infrastructure and environmental degradation in wildlife conservation areas, the decline in global economy and security issues have created tourism crises that has negatively impacted conservation, tourism priorities and the livelihoods of local communities living adjacent to national parks. The study focussed on Lake Nakuru National Park with a total of 100 community respondents living adjacent to the park being interviewed. A major emphasis was on identifying the factors influencing the attitudes of local people towards wildlife conservation and tourism and their relationship with the park management. Several demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the local people that include age, gender, occupation, educational level and location, amongst others, were found to significantly influence the attitudes of the local people towards the park. The general findings of the study suggest that although local people appreciate the role of national parks in conserving wildlife and its value in sustaining the tourism industry, there is some evidence of resentment towards some management activities and the park regulators. Negative attitudes were attributed to perceived problems of living next to the park such as harassment by the park regulators, conflicts with wildlife and lack of compensation for damages and losses incurred. Widespread support for the park was associated with perceived benefits to the local populations such as support for educational programmes, social amenities, employment and business opportunities. It is therefore imperative to priotise conservation approaches that enhance wildlife-tourism components, improve local people's livelihoods and foster positive attitudes of local communities to conserve.

***Keywords*:** Wildlife-Based Tourism, Conservation, National Park, Kenya

Introduction

In the recent past, wildlife-related tourism has received a more prominent position on the national agenda in Kenya. Wildlifie conservation areas have been a major avenue for tourism activities with ecotourism emerging as a key sector of linking the demands and interests of local communities with the tourism industry (Ogutu, 2006). However, there still remains a range of challenges and issues that need to be addressed that include the inequitable distribution and access to benefits by the local communities as well as the negative impacts of tourism. There is therefore a great deal of emphasis on local management and on minimising the physical, social and cultural impacts of tourism.

The government and conservationists have tried strategies ranging from establishing and promoting sustainable conservation initiatives that provide long-term protection to willdlife without compromising the livelihoods and conservation attitudes of the local people (KWS, 2004). The approach taken to wildlife management is conservation through the creation of protected areas (Adams and Hulme, 2001), a model introduced by colonial authorities in the nineteenth century. This model excludes the local people living adjacent to the conservation areas who are generally poor from consumptive uses of the resources therein compromising their livelihoods and willingness to support conservation efforts. In an effort to directly participate in conservation and tourism activities in view of earning greater incomes, the local people have organised themselves in collaboration with other partners such as tour companies as well as lodge and hotel operators to create income generating activities through providing camping concessions and exclusive camp sites, ecolodges for tourists, guiding tours, and supplies and services to lodges.

National parks remain a key strategy for conserving wildlife. However, conservation often involves constraining people's lives and activities. The protest and negative perceptions against conservation means that not all is well. The need to demonstrate that wildlife conservation can contribute to livelihoods and local economic development was therefore imperative in order to enlist the support of the local people in conservation. Thus, understanding which factors influence local people's attitudes towards conservation is critical for prioritizing conservation initiatives premised on the needs of the people as much as the wildlife.

From past studies, it is assumed that local communities and their livelihood practices contribute much of the principle threats to wildlife (Hughes and Flintan, 2001). Nevertheless, this conclusion does not provide insight into the underlying factors motivating these local people into carrying out these activities. It is therefore important to identify and monitor the factors that have limited the overall success of wildlife conservation strategies and what kinds of incentives would motivate local communities to collaborate with conservation authorities and maintain their enthusiasm throughout. Mburu (2002) contend that such a conservation strategy entails an establishment of a conservation framework that identifies the underlying factors causing threats to biodiversity, promotes collaborative relationships between conservation officers and local people, and provides incentives that foster the attitudes of the local communities to conserve.

Taking the case of Lake Nakuru National Park, this study assessed the perceptions of local communities towards the conservation initiatives and their relationship with the park staff and tourists. In focus is the critical issue highlighted by Coupe *et al.* (2002) regarding why wildlife conservation efforts have been disappointing in Kenya with the local people becoming less enthusiastic than expected and resenting the systems that seek to conserve it.

Background

Wildlife Conservation is often seen as a government sector activity in Kenya confined to protected areas, mainly national parks and reserves. Damania and Hatch (2004 cited in Bob *et al.*, 2008: 30) state that the majority of species classified as ‘threatened’, ‘endangered’ or ‘vulnerable’ by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) are found in government controlled parks and legally protected areas in developing countries. Western *et al.* (1994) assert that the establishment of protected areas, mainly national parks and game reserves, has helped protect and sustain some wildlife threatened with extinction. However, Muruthi (2005) observes that in certain cases, the perception still lingers that the protectionism system of conservation has alienated local people who traditionally depended on these resources from accessing them.

According to Wells (1994) the response of local communities towards any proposed or implementing conservation regime is influenced by many interacting factors, including their individual attributes, their cultural background, their social and economic setting and the governmental policies in place. The critical role played by local communities in the management of protected areas has been broadly acknowledged by the conservation community (Adams and Hulme, 2001; Barrow and Murphree, 2001; Phillips, 2003; Western *et al.*, 1994), with the recognition that local communities must be involved, and their needs and aspirations considered if wildife conservation is to succeed.

With more than 75% of Kenya's wildlife ranging outside the government managed parks and reserves, wildlife wreak havoc on farms and ranches near the parks. This requires the wildlife conservation authorities to strengthen protection of the local people, lievestock and crops from attacks from wildlife. To mitigate the human-wildlife conflicts certain conservation policies have been enlisted that have elicited antagonistic feelings and negative attitudes towards wildlife conservation in the local people who once were stewards of the wildlife (Conover, 2002) potentially compromising the future of conservation (Wang *et al.,* 2006).

Methodology

Lake Nakuru National Park is situated in Nakuru county approximately 164 kilometres from Nairobi, on the edge of the densely populated town of Nakuru at grid reference 0°19'- 0°24'S 36°04'-36°07 E. It covers an area of 188 square kilometres lying at an altitude of 1759 meters above sea level with 27% of the park comprising the Lake Nakuru waters. The Park is a protected area, placed under protected areas management category II (IUCN, 1992). It supports a large number of African plain animal species like Rothschild giraffes, lions, leopards, hyenas, cheetahs, wild dogs, baboons, waterbucks, warthogs, buffaloes and impalas and large sized pythons that inhabit the dense woodlands, and can often be seen crossing the roads or dangling from trees. The park is an island since it is completely fenced with a chain link and an electric fence providing a perimeter buffer zone that protects it from poaching and encroachment by settlements as well as to minimise the impacts of urban and agricultural development in the immediate catchment. However, the park is threatened by human activities both from within and outside the area. About 200 000 tourists, both local and foreign visit the park each year (KWS, 2004).

Questionnaires formed the primary means through which data was collected. In total, one hundred (100) respondents were sampled from the local communities (at the household level) living adjacent to the park and selected on the basis of being within a distance of one kilometre from the park boundary. Conceptually, these were the local people directly affected by the park or whose activities directly impacted on the park. The unit of analysis was the individual household, with the head of the household (male or female), or a delegate representative responding to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was pre-tested among thirty local community members who were not included in the sampling frame. As a result modifications on several questions were made to clear up ambiguities and to make some questions more relevant to local situations and conditions.

Using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the data was summarised in tables and key trends discussed with reference to other related studies. Where multiple responses were elicited on open-ended questions, data is presented as percentage of respondents giving each response, and may sum to over 100%. Conclusions and recommendations pertaining to the research were generated based on the results of the analysis.

Findings and Discussion

Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics

The gender distribution of the respondents indicates that there were more female respondents (51%) than males (49%). This may be explained by the fact that many a times men are engaged away from home in other employment or productive activities. Traditionally men are the most influential members in Kenyan rural families, and they are regarded as the heads of households and women or children head households only if the husband/ father is absent (Baral and Heinen, 2007; PRA, 1999). However, Coupe *et al.* (2002) and Lim (2008) assert that women are sometimes even marginalised in participation in conservation activities and interventions, for example, through inequitable distribution of benefits from tourism initiatives. The dominant age group was 36-45 years and majority (95%) had obtained formal education. This implies that the younger generation appear to have more opportunities in the conservation sector. Similarly, the KWS has aligned itself with younger people because it perceives them as having greater support for its wildlife management policies than older people (Campbell *et al.*, 2000).

The respondents showed to be more established in the area with the majority reporting to have lived there for more than 25 years. Vorkin and Riese (2001) point out that place attachment involve care and concern for the place and may be an important factor in explaining community involvement in environmental conservation. Majority of the community respondents indicated that they were involved in multiple occupations as summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Occupation of community respondents (multiple responses - in %)

Occupation	Percentage Response (n=100)
Formal unemployed	21.0
Labourer	16.0
Domestic	24.0
Business	35.0
Civil Servant	10.0
Mixed Farming	76.0
Pensioner	9.0
Mining	1.0

A study by Coupe *et al.* (2002) on livelihood strategies for park-adjacent communities in Kenya linked conservation incentives to tourism-related business activities like firewood and charcoal sales to the camps and selling of curios, crafts and cultural artefacts to tourists as well as working as tour guides. Leasing of land to private organisations for tourism ventures also brings income to the community members. Where there is a low level of opportunities for engagement coupled with lack of economic incentive for conservation, local people may not support conservation initiatives (Gichohi, 2003) and may engage in unsustainable alternative livelihoods that may impact negatively on the national park.

Resource use and management

Majority (98%) of the respondents reported that they were not consulted or involved in the decision to establish the national park provoking social tensions and conflicts which often undermine and hamper success in achieving conservation objectives. According to Adams and Hulme (2001), Okech (2002), Scheyvens (2000) and Sindiga (1999), the involvement of the local people in the management activities of parks is fundamental to the conservation of wildlife for, if the local communities are alienated, they will not support conservation efforts and conflicts are likely to escalate. Table 2 indicate the reasons for involving the local people in the management of the park.

Table 2: Reasons why the local community should be involved in the management of the park (multiple responses - in %)

Why involved	Percentage Response (n=100)
Better understanding of the local resources	68.0
Cultural and religious attachment	23.0
Dependency on local natural resources	53.0
Improve relations with the park authorities	77.0

More than half the respondents resided within a distance of 400 metres from the park boundary. Proximity to the park determines the interactions of the local people with wildlife, park staff and tourists. Location of residence of the local communities from the park was found to be significantly associated with the attitudes of local people towards the park (χ^2=48.1, p = 0.001). Those closer to the park (76%) were more negative towards the park while those further from the park boundaries (24%) were more positive. This may be explained by the fact that local people living closer to park boundaries depended more on resources from the park for their livelihoods and had strong negative attitudes towards conservation efforts, probably because there was increased control from park staff that led to restrictions on access. Similarly, those close to the park boundaries harbour negative attitudes because of the problem associated with damage to property, crops and loss of livestock from wild animals (Hulme and Infield, 2001).

A significant number of the community respondents indicated a need for access to the park for certain resource uses like grazing (60.4%), water use during times of drought (48.5%) and wood collection (81.5%), religious and cultural activities (15%), cultivation (22%), recreation (42%) and food gathering (13%). Mulder and Coppolillo (2005) observe that selective extractive use is justified on the utilitarian rationale for conservation, particularly in relation to resources that are abundant. However, the communities are rarely allowed any access to the park. To access the park they must observe certain conditions as set out by the park management which include recreation during park promotional days and at the peripheries of the park (27%), guided educational tours (41%), regulated water use only during times of drought (4%) and as domestic tourists on payment of the required gate fee (39%).

The respondents indicated that they had claims over certain resources in the park associated with damage of property (29%), loss of livestock (33%), destruction of farm crops (45%) and injuries from wildlife attacks (50%); none of which have been settled or compensated for. Restrictive access to and lack of compensation for resource claims increase conflicts between the local population and the park management, which impact on the local people's attitudes toward wildlife and tourists (Conover, 2002; Kangwana and Ole Mako, 2001; Western, 1995). Where people living next to parks face economic costs due to the park, they should be fully compensated. The conventional compensatory strategies include revenue sharing (Barrow and Murphree, 2001) and community outreach activities such as construction of schools, hospitals, cattle dips and water supply (KWS, 1992; Mulder and Coppolillo, 2005).

The results indicate that the overall state of wildlife was under pressure (66.7% indicated threatened) before the introduction of the park with a substantial number of respondents (45%) attributing the threats to the activities of the local communities. These include illegal encroachment (27%) and wildlife poaching (36%). Others supported the view that the introduction of the park had positively changed the state of local biodiversity because conflicts with wildlife had reduced (56%). There was more favourable attitudes toward conservation as evidenced by a decrease on the incidences of encroachment into the park (27%), a better understanding of the importance of the park to the local and national economy (19%), decrease in poaching incidences (14%) and a marked interest in wildlife conservation activities

(23%). The majority of the community respondents supported strict protection of wildlife under certain situations. These include when there is an outbreak of disease or injury to wildlife (40%), when there is a threat to the wildlife habitat (44%), increased poaching incidences (56%), increased human-wildlife conflicts (66%) and when a species of wildlife is categorised as threatened or endangered (81%).

Majority of the respondents were in agreement that in order to reconcile the conflicting interests of the local people and wildlife conservation, it is imperative to develop structures that improve the livelihoods of the local communitities as well as ensure the sustainability of the resource base (Table 3).

Table 3: Ways in which the park management can improve the livelihoods of the local people without compromising the state of willdife (multiple responses - in %)

Response	Percentage Response (n=100)
Development of local infrastructure	91.0
Sharing of revenue collected with the locals	79.0
Give the community part of the PA to manage	24.0
Compensating losses caused by wildlife	77.0
Fencing some areas to avoid conflicts	55.0
Involving the locals in the PA management	94.0

The community respondents felt local people can contribute towards promoting the conservation of wildlife through community policing (91%), domestic tourism (66%), sustainable resource use lifestyles (57%), enhancing indigenous conservation systems (49%) and tolerating wildlife in private lands (20%). These results indicate that the local communities understand that collaborating with the park authorities will enhance the conservation of wildlife and improve their relationship with the conservation authorities. By engaging in tourism-related economic opportunities, the communities expose themselves to the benefits accruing from the presence of tourists and conservation activities in the area.

Relationships with and attitudes towards conservation authorities

Majority of the community respondents indicated that the park administrative staff had visited their villages to educate villagers (13%), help with village development projects (4%), carry out research (5%), assess wildlife damage (9%), patrol (77%) and to drive the wildlife back to the park (37%). The overal impression is that there is some community-oriented outreach with many of the visits focussed on the welfare of wildlife. This compares with a study by Weladji *et al.* (2003) that reported that park staff visited the villages only during patrols or to arrest suspected poachers and hardly to educate local people. Table 4 shows that the local communities and the park staff relationship was wanting.

Table 4: Relationship between the community and park staff (in %)

Nature of relationship	Percentage Response (n=100)
Very good	1.0
Good	18.0
Satisfactory	6.0
Poor	47.0
Very poor	28.0
Total	100

Positive experiences (benefits) of living next to the park as reported by the respondents were opportunity to see and know a variety of wildlife (72%) and at times get firewood (2%). Other benefits mentioned include business opportunities (15%), interaction with tourists (10%) and access to social amenities (5%). Negative experiences (problems) of living next to the park were cited as restrictive access to and use of the natural resources (66%), loss of land and livelihoods (24%), damage of property and crops by wildlife (93%), threat to people's safety (91%), disease transmission from wildlife to livestock (88%) and harassment from the park staff (61%). The negative relationship with the park staff is possibly because the key stakeholder in the conservation process is Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), who is generally considered by the local communities to be supporting wildlife at the expense of people's livelihoods, for instance, the non-compensatory policy for wildlife predation or crop damage (Campbell *et al.*, 2000; Coupe *et al.*, 2002; Weladji *et al.,* 2003; and Wang *et al.,* 2005). Similar sentments are reported in Baral and Heinen (2007) and Coupe *et al.* (2002) who maintain that those who suffer from wildlife damage without compensation are more likely to have unfavourable attitudes towards conservation agents leading to killing of the animals that invade their farms. Other respondents recorded that the park authority has distanced itself from the community (72%) and at times are hostile to the local people. The findings reinforce the observation by Kangwana (1993) cited in Bonner, 1993: 227) that local people living adjacent to parks are not antagonistic to wildlife but negative about the park systems and the conservationists.

Pertaining government policies on wildlife conservation, majority of the community respondents indicated that 35% are inadequate and unfair to the local people but biased towards the welfare of wildlife and foreign tourists

(58%). A similar study by Weladji *et al.* (2003) in Cameroon found out that the respondents had reservations on the wildlife policy because their present interests were not met and that the policy benefited mostly foreigners. Western (1992) also observes that wildlife management policies have a tradition of managing animals rather than people. Nine percent of the respondents recorded that the institutional and policy framework enhanced tolerance of wildlife in private lands. However, 36% of the respondents stated that the policies and institutions are good if effectively implemented, while 36% indicated that they need to be revised.

Attitudes towards tourists

Overall, the majority of the tourists (67%) visiting the park were non-African foreigners. In relation to attitudes towards tourists visiting the area, 23% of the respondents indicated that they are excited by tourists visiting the area, while 73% reported that tourists are taken for granted. Three percent and 4% stated that there was annoyance (misgivings on tourism) and antagonism (openly displayed irritations) towards tourists, respectively. These results reinforce the irritation index of five stages of the social impacts of tourism presented by Lea (1993) which illustrates an increasing disillusion to host society, beginning with initial euphoria, then apathy, increasing irritation, outright antagonism and, finally, a stage when cherished values are forgotten and the environment destroyed by mass tourism. On perceived problems associated with tourism activities in the area, 23% mentioned that it had created a dependency syndrome among the local people for handouts, 24% reported erosion of their indigenous cultural values, 21% cited misconduct by some tourists as having a bad influence on the youth, while 26% complained that there was much focus directed towards tourism developments that favour tourists while neglecting the needs of the local people. There is an expanding literature that documents the negative impacts of tourism in Kenya that include presumed degradation of the quality of the wildlife parks (Okech, 2007; Sindiga and Kanunah, 1999); cultural erosion and social impacts like prostitution, drug peddling, scant dressing and alcoholism (KWS, 1994; Sindiga 1995); uneven distribution of tourism benefits, poor employment opportunities for the local people; and foreign ownership and management of tourism enterprises leading to local resentment (Bonner, 1993; KWS, 1994; Sindiga and Kanunah, 1999).

Conclusion and Implications

The findings of this study imply that local people are concerned about how they should be more involved in the management of the park and how they can improve their livelihoods from benefits accruing from the park. It is therefore important for all the stakeholders in conservation practice to enhance the development of structures that improve the livelihoods of the local communitities and foster their attidudes towards conservation as well as sustain the resource base. Several demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the local people were found to influence their attitudes towards the park and related activities. Improved socio-economic conditions can resolve resource use conflicts and foster conservation attitudes of the local people. It is important to recognise that local communities have legitimate rights to certain resources and forced protection is a short-term solution. Similarly, conservation policies that do not take into account the interests of the local people were found to elicit antagonistic relations and negative attitudes among the local communities towards the park. There is thereore need to increase local people's access to benefits from the park and/ or more involvement in park management in order to enhance their support for conservation and sustainability of the park. Resource use conflicts may not be resolved if the socio-economic characteristics and management circumstances within the communities are not appropriately dealt with. Thus, increasing regulated local people's access to resources may enhance their support and promote the sustainability of the park. Against this background, this study recommends that the underlying factors motivating local people to undertake unsustainable exploitation activities of natural resources in the protected areas should be thoroughly assessed and adequate efforts made to find ways of how they can be encouraged to adopt alternative strategies. More conservation and toruism-related opportunities should be enhanced that promote for direct employment of the local people and other associated business activities such as selling curios, artifacts or cultural exhibitions to tourists. Similarly, both the local people and the tourists must be inducted on their interaction and social-cultural impacts of tourism activities.

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Developing the Capacity of Southeast Asian Urban Tourism Destination Planners and Managers

Walter Jamieson and Michelle Jamieson

Abstract

Those responsible for urban tourism destination planning and management in Southeast Asia as elsewhere face significant challenges given the complexity of dealing with a full range of structural, political, economic, governance and capacity issues. The complexity is in part due to the reality that tourism planners and managers work within a larger policy and operational context where the needs, concerns, directions, strategies and issues of the overall urban area must be addressed. While many urban areas have grown in terms of population and economic activity, the overall technical, human, legislative and regulatory capacity of these areas to manage and plan for themselves has not expanded accordingly. This is equally true of urban areas' tourism destination planners and managers, especially those dealing with the consequences of the significant growth of tourism in many destinations, the substantial impacts of the increased level of visitation and the overall regulatory and planning systems.

The 10 Southeast Asian countries, which make up the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), recognize the need to increase the capacity of major stakeholders in the areas of hotel management, food and beverage services, and travel related activities through the Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals. While this initiative to improve the capacity of selected stakeholders is an important and essential direction for the region, the overall skill, knowledge and capacity sets of those responsible for the planning and management process have yet to be comprehensively addressed. Increased capacity will be achieved when destination planners and managers are trained and educated, with a focus on a number of fields of inquiry and practice: planning and design; managing stakeholders in an inclusive manner; managing the change process to ensure that innovation and creativity are fostered and supported; and creative experience design that meets the need of a range of visitors. This article defines the nature of the capacity building initiatives that will allow destination planners and managers to effectively develop and manage responsible tourism destinations.

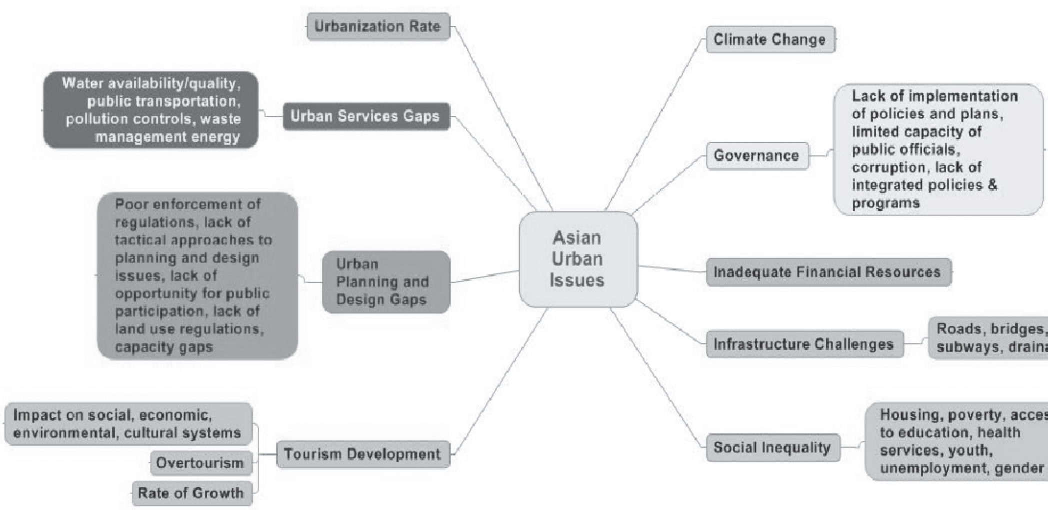
Keywords: Tourism Planning, Destination Planning, Governance, Management, Tourism Issues, Change Management

Introduction

It is difficult to generalize about Southeast Asian urban areas given that Southeast Asian countries vary significantly in size, governance approaches and levels of development. Accordingly, this variation affects the tourism destination planning and management process. Research, that for the first time maps urban expansion across East-Southeast Asia, has shown that the population of cities in the areas studied grew at an average rate of 2.8% annually, in contrast to urban land that had an average growth of 2.0% annually (IOP, 2015).

While urbanization was at one time associated with positive growth and transformation, the rapid rate at which cities are now growing is not sustainable. The overall issues facing Asian cities are summarized in Figure 1. Many of these issues were explored at HABITAT III in 2016 which produced the New Urban Agenda (UN, 2016).

Figure 1: Overall Asian Urban Issues



Source: Adapted from Managing Metropolitan Tourism: An Asian Perspective (WTO, 2009) and UN-Habitat Priority Substantive Areas (UN, 2016)

It is interesting to note that eight of the top 20 cities in the MasterCard Global Destination Cities Index 2016 were in Southeast Asia, with Bangkok being the number one city, having the most international overnight arrivals in Asia-Pacific. Singapore was second, closely followed by Kuala Lumpur. These cities already have large populations and significant tourist figures, and other than Singapore are operating beyond their social and environmental capacities. This concern is characterized by the concept of 'overtourism' which requires sophisticated and engaged tourism destination planners and managers (Skift, 2017).

When one considers the issues facing urban areas and the concept of destination planning and management presented in Figure 2, there is clearly an intersection of interests and mandates among key stakeholders, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 2: The Concept of Destination Planning and Management

Source: Walter Jamieson & Michelle Jamieson

. This intersection must be understood within the larger national tourism policy context, given the importance that many countries place on using tourism as a tool for economic and social development. This importance places pressure on urban destinations to continue to increase their tourism numbers at a time when they have little or no capacity to absorb greater numbers. The task of destination planners and managers is made ever more challenging as they work within policy decision-making processes or organizational structures with a silo mentality that impacts not only planning and operations but also the implementation of master or destination plans (Gleeson, 2013). This is explored in *Urban Destination Level Tactical Planning in Developing Economies* (Jamieson & Jamieson, 2016).

Figure 3: The Intersection of Overall Urban and Tourism Stakeholders

Source: Walter Jamieson & Michelle Jamieson

There can be no doubt that the effectiveness of destination planning and management can be improved through structural changes, increased budgets, increased power given to destination management organizations and more effective policy frameworks. However, given the political and social realities, the prospect for any significant change in the short to medium-term at most destinations must be assessed as minimal given a number of obstacles and constraints. What is evident is that the rate of tourism growth in the region does not allow the luxury of time to wait for larger scale changes and improvements to occur.

Given this reality, one area where change can be implemented is increasing the capacity of those responsible for planning and managing destinations. This is very much in keeping with the initiatives of the 10 ASEAN countries which have recognized the need for human capacity development and adopted the Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP) along with MRAs for other industries (ASEAN, 2015). This is a significant milestone, as the countries have recognized the need for capacity development on a regional basis in order to meet a range of objectives. The MRA-TP establishes competencies and detailed delivery mechanisms for 32 job profiles which include positions in hotel services, front office, housekeeping, food and beverage services and travel services. Positions at various levels of capacity and responsibility are developed within each of the position areas. For the purposes of this article the model of countries working together to increase capacity sets an important precedent that can be adapted to upgrading the skills and knowledge of tourism destination planners and managers. In-depth updates to the MRAs are explored in the MPI-Asian Development Bank (ADB) report *The Long Road Ahead* (Mendoza & Sugiyarto, 2017).

As is the case for the six capacity areas identified in the existing MRA, this article recognizes that tourism planners and managers have varying levels of responsibility and decision-making powers, depending on a number of factors including destination size, structure, level of government support etc.

Given the level of capacity required, there are three competency areas that need to be addressed: generic, core and functional (adapted from the South African Council for Planners, 2015):

- Generic competencies: The essential skills, attributes and behaviors which are considered important for all planners and managers, regardless of their function or level.
- Core competencies: The set of specific knowledge, skills, abilities or experience that a planner must possess in order to successfully perform his/her work and activities.
- Functional competencies: The basic skills and behaviors that are needed to perform successfully.

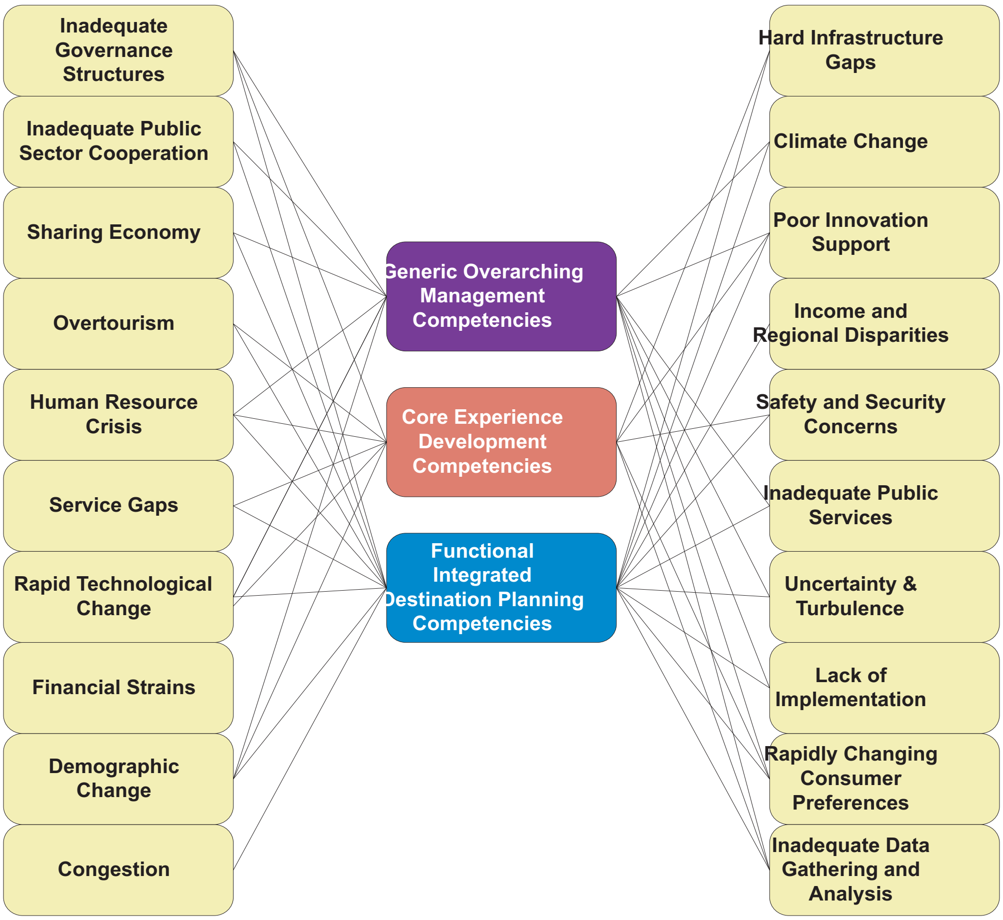
Global and Regional Forces-Trends and Issues

A number of global and national forces, trends and issues influence and determine the development capacities required for destination planners and managers. In part these forces, trends and issues are based on the authors' involvement in regional, national and destination tourism planning, marketing and development, with a primary focus on Southeast Asia.

Figure 4 identifies a formidable list of forces, trends and issues to be considered in any tourism destination planning and management process, and illustrates the interconnectedness of these various factors. The three factors at the center represent key competency areas necessary to carry out responsible tourism destination planning and management.

It is interesting to note that the HABITAT III priority areas include the following themes (UN, 2016) which correspond to the central factors in Figure 3: legislation and governance; urban planning and design; and capacity development. These three competencies are explored further in the next section of this article.

Figure 4: Global and Regional Forces, Trends and Issues



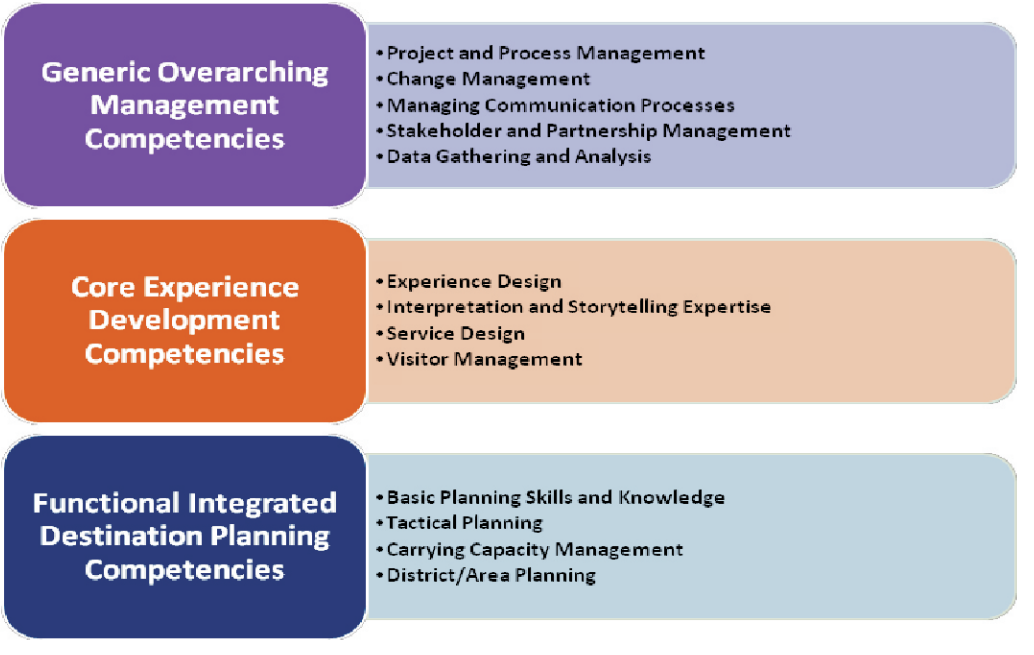
Source: Walter Jamieson & Michelle Jamieson

Note: The authors developed Figure 4usingvarious sources (as listed) and paired them with the competency areas identified. Sources referenced: Skift, 2017; Kasriel - Alexander, 2017; PATA, 2016; OECD, 2016; UNWTO, 2016; Deloitte, 2017; IBM, 2011; Burkhard et al, 2016; Fitzsimmons, 2017.

Capacity Requirements for Destination Planning and Management

The three areas of competency development to be explored, and selected dimensions, are illustrated in Figure 5. This exploration is necessary in order to begin to develop a set of competency initiatives and curriculums to address the pressing needs of destination planners and managers in Southeast Asia. It is recognized that the process of identification and discussion is a first step in the overall process of developing competencies and delivering systems, which would require all stakeholders to agree on a set of competencies and delivery approaches.

Figure 5: Generic, Core and Functional Competencies



Generic Overarching Management Competencies

Given the nature of the challenges facing destinations, the generic competencies are based on an understanding that multidisciplinary if not interdisciplinary approaches are necessary in which planners and managers have the essential competencies to work across disciplines and institutional and stakeholder boundaries. Five generic competency areas are explored which are illustrative of the skill and knowledge sets that planners and managers must have in order to orchestrate the overall destination planning and management process. The development of these concepts is based in part on established models of planning and management of tourism.

Project and Process Management

A generic skill for professionals involved in any large project is managing a project or process that has a number of dimensions and stakeholders. Key to any success in destination planning and management is having professionals that understand how to ensure a project takes place, in this case a destination plan or strategy.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: defining problems in a complex environment; defining objectives within that overall process; delivering results; a complete understanding of implementation processes; managing financial and human resources; using information technology; evaluating success and failure.

Change Management

Public tourism bodies, hotels, airlines, government departments, private sector organizations and other hospitality services recognize the need to develop structures and processes that allow them to respond quickly to demographic changes, visitor expectations, technological changes, business environment changes and more (Pforr & Hosie, 2016), in order to stay competitive in the tourism market and meet the needs of the local population.

Very often those responsible for the planning and management process do not have the expertise or mind set to incorporate change into the overall process and strategy. For the purposes of this article, change management is defined as a “structured approach to transitioning individuals, teams and organizations from a current state to a desired future state, to fulfill or implement a vision or strategy” (Ryerson University, 2011). For a region such as Southeast Asia or other developing economies to continue to be competitive, leaders and other team members require specific training to allow them to successfully implement change initiatives as a response to rapidly changing and unstable political and economic environments.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: the ability take the steps necessary to implement small or large scale change; process orientation; analytical skills; cultural awareness; a holistic perspective that accounts for the ‘bigger picture’; systematic resolution of problems; analytical thinking; customer/stakeholder focus; effective planning and strategy development; clear and effective communication; and risk and opportunity management.

Managing Communication Processes

Facilitating internal and external communication is a vital ability for any planner or manager, especially as it relates to change management and those leading the change (Kotter, 2012). The underlying objective of communication is to deliver important information driving change – new services, product ideas, evolving goals, market challenges, changes in the world economy, new competitors, new processes brought about through technological change and so forth. The key stakeholders need to understand the importance and objectives of an initiative, and planners need to be able to do so through various communication techniques and channels (Heathfield, 2016).

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: oral, graphic and multimedia communication skills; the ability to determine appropriate communication methods tailored to particular audiences; managing misinformation; internal communication and information sharing approaches; facilitating information exchange; and the ability to function as a mediator or facilitator when stakeholder interests conflict.

Stakeholder and Partnership Management

As noted, destination planning and management requires dealing with a large and diverse group of stakeholders that include the local community, local, national and regional governments, employees, suppliers, non-profit organizations, tourism organizations, development organizations, etc. Failure to effectively manage the key stakeholders when responding to the forces and trends influencing change in the destination environment, can result in stakeholders not supporting the changes.

With an increase in demand for services of all kinds, increased visitor numbers, and inadequate infrastructure, many destinations view partnerships as an essential way to meet hard and soft infrastructure needs. However, few destinations have appropriate stakeholder models to allow for the various interest groups in the destination to work effectively together - an essential factor in facilitating the development of partnerships.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: the ability to create an environment where information is shared and networking is effectively supported; identifying key stakeholders and how these groups interact; building relationships; negotiation, mediation and advocacy skills; and understanding the dynamics of conflict and how to achieve agreement.

Data Gathering and Analysis

As traveler expectations change and the business and global environment remain unstable, accurate and timely information and data are required to make informed decisions (McAfee & Brynjolfsson, 2012). To understand the future of the travel and tourism landscape wide-ranging research is required to guide planning decisions that will have a significant impact on the success of the industry (EY, 2017). There is no expectation that every planner or manager will have the advanced capabilities to collect and analyze the large data sets available, however, it is important that planners and managers understand the importance of this data and have the analytical skills to apply the information to their projects.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: understanding research ethics; data collection, investigative and research skills; quantitative and qualitative analysis and appraisal; survey design and data management; professional writing; computer literacy; data visualization to help people understand the significance of data; project management; and analysis and presentation of results.

Core Experience Development Competencies

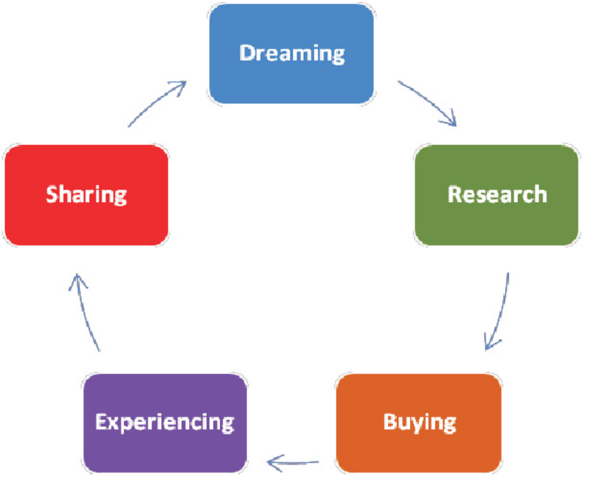
Destinations in Southeast Asia, as elsewhere in the world, are faced with rapidly changing traveler expectations. The reality of these expectations changing is one of the areas that the tourism industry can effectively foresee (Kronenburg et al, 2008). Travelers are looking for a transformative experience where personalization and a quest for wellness or personal growth are an important part of the visitor experience, along with authenticity which is key to the experiential tourism market (Skift, 2017). With a combination of changing demographics and markets, the travel industry needs to respond by adapting and creating new experiences to match new traveler preferences.

Experience Design

Experiences are not products and are not created by a tour company or site/destination. Experiences are created by the travelers themselves based on their travel history, expectations and the activities they participate in (Stange et al, n/a). Pine and Gilmore (1999) explore the anatomy of an experience, which they describe as "an event where a visitor experiences (activity) an attraction (resources) within a particular context or situation" (Stange et al, n/a).

Experience design is connected to all aspects of the customer/traveler journey where the visitor and service provider or environment connect (Lahteenlahti, 2015), and each of these touch points creates a significant challenge. Figure 6 illustrates the five stages of the visitor journey as they relate to the destination planning process.

Figure 6: Five Stages of the Customer Journey



The specific skills and knowledge needed include: carrying out customer mapping exercises which allow for a clear understanding of the many touch points where the elements of destination planning intersect; an understanding of visitor preferences and expectations; synthesizing these preferences; physically and virtually testing the experiences through a prototyping process which includes a range of techniques and knowledge; interaction design; visual design; and technical writing (Travis, 2017). Increasingly, ethnography is seen as an important skill needed to understand the behavior of visitors and residents.

Interpretation and Storytelling Expertise

As explored by the authors in the article, *Interpretation and Tourism Destination Planning and Management* (another article by the authors that can be found in this journal), interpretation can be a powerful planning and management tool (Interpret Europe, 2016). While interpretation has traditionally been seen as a means for telling the story of a heritage or historical site, the theory and process of interpretation can be applied to the larger story of a destination and help the planning process. A partnership with experts in interpretation can provide effective insight into the process. It is not expected that each destination planner will be an expert in the full interpretation process.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: knowledge of various interpretive models; interpretive plan development; knowledge of communication processes and strategies; marketing and advertising techniques; interpretive program design; knowledge of the use and effectiveness of various media; guide training; managing volunteers; storytelling; and the development of interpretive themes.

Service Design

Service design is the activity of planning and organizing people, infrastructure, communications and material components of a public, private or non-profit service in order to improve access, cost and quality and improve the interaction between the service provider and its customers. Destination planners and managers need to be able to influence the development and delivery of a range of services including transportation, accommodation, food and beverages, guiding services, currency conversion, fire and safety, waste management etc.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: empathy; customer journey mapping; quality control; determining user insights; testing and evaluation; prototyping; co-design approaches; storyboarding; service blueprinting; understanding how the digital economy is changing user behavior; communicating information; evidence and context-based design; facilitating decisions and risks; storytelling; strategic thinking; understanding constraints; and a user focus (Government of United Kingdom, 2017; Miller, 2016).

Visitor Management

Visitor management was originally created for the planning and management of protected areas. It involves knowing the visitor, understanding visitor behavior, dealing with visitor flows through a destination, and developing policies and plans that consider a wide range of concerns in terms of opening or restricting various parts of the destination depending on environmental and seasonal concerns. It requires destination planners and managers to have a knowledge and skill set to ensure that the destination and its various dimensions are not damaged and that visitor activity and spending is directed to places within the destination that require economic development.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: the ability to assess visitor numbers and levels of use; knowledge of visitor monitoring instruments; the ability to implement guidance and information policies; an understanding of visitor restriction methods such as zoning and zoning area closures; the ability to transmit the necessary information to the visitor in order to allow responsible visitation.

Functional Integrated Destination Planning Competencies

Destination and tourism planning needs to be much more closely tied into the overall urban planning and policy development process. This issue is addressed in a separate article by the authors (Jamieson & Jamieson, 2016) examining the key points at which tourism planners and the larger urban planning and regulatory environment need to be more closely integrated. Four key areas of capacity building related to integrated destination planning are discussed below.

Basic Planning Skills and Knowledge

Urban planners have a range of skills related to the spatial and physical dimensions of a destination, but are also skilled in the planning of complex social, environmental, political, economic and cultural systems. Destination planners and managers need not be professional planners but must be aware of what planners typically do, their particular interests and their mandates within the larger urban planning process. Urban planners are constrained by policies, regulations and laws designed to achieve planning results. In the present-day environment, it is assumed that those involved in the process of destination planning and management must think critically, taking approaches that consider strengths and weaknesses and finding solutions to complex problems.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: design thinking, critical reasoning and creative thinking; problem analysis; solution development; the ability to manage innovation; the production of creative and innovative strategies; making connections between diverse areas of thinking and practice; aesthetic and design awareness; and understanding how infrastructure functions.

Tactical Planning

A previous article by the authors, *Urban Destination Level Tactical Planning in Developing Economies* (Jamieson & Jamieson, 2016), explored the use and purpose of traditional master planning for destinations. The article puts forward the concept of tactical tourism planning that utilizes short to medium-term strategies that allow for a rapid implementation approach that responds to current needs within the tourism industry in the rapidly changing business and global environment.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: the ability to accurately forecast/anticipate the future; the ability to prototype; agility in order to adapt quickly; knowledge of urban spatial structure or physical design and the way in which cities work; the ability to analyze demographic information to discern trends in population, employment and health; techniques for involving a wide range of people in making decisions; understanding the social and environmental impact of planning decisions on communities; understanding the interaction between the economy, transportation, health, human services and land-use regulations (APA, n/a).

Carrying Capacity Management

Given the carrying capacity issues of many destinations, some have sought to limit tourist numbers. For example, in Barcelona the authorities have capped the number of licenses available for tourist accommodation and limited the number of large groups traveling to certain attractions during peak times (LaGrave, 2016). To cope with overcrowding, Amsterdam works with nearby locations outside the city to rebrand them as part of the city in order to disperse visitors and protect the visitor experience (City of Amsterdam, 2016). Amsterdam has gone as far as calling for submissions from entrepreneurs, research institutions and others to develop creative solutions to deal with the issues of overcrowding in the city (Pieters, 2016).

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: the ability to determine the capacity of a destination; identifying appropriate mechanisms for limiting the capacity of overall destinations by introducing a range of legal, stakeholder led and technical initiatives; and developing opportunities for experimentation and innovation.

District and Area Management

After overall planning and management policies are developed in most urban areas, the actual implementation and detailed planning occurs at the district or neighborhood scale. Numerous district and neighborhood approaches have been used including tourism planning districts, historic districts, business improvement districts, historic area planning etc. Within the fields of neighborhood planning, community planning, business revitalization, economic development and heritage planning there is significant expertise that can provide planners and managers with an understanding of how to work at a district or area scale.

The specific skills and knowledge needed include: undertaking tourism destination marketing activities; working with government employees and politicians; interacting with community and private sector groups; setting district/area priorities; place making; supporting and assisting economic development initiatives; providing advice and support to various stakeholders especially small and medium-size enterprises; formulating partnerships with neighboring communities; place making; creating a strong customer service environment; and budget and project management skills.

Conclusion

This article is focused on discussing and formulating capacities for tourism destination planners and managers in Southeast Asia as one way of improving the overall quality of destination planning and management. Southeast Asia was chosen as the focus given that the 10 ASEAN countries are working together on a range of tourism related matters including the development of competencies for several types of tourism professionals and have committed to developing region-wide competencies in selected areas. The countries have recognized that having a common set of competencies will help ensure a consistent set of quality experiences in various destinations in the region.

As noted earlier in the article, waiting for structural and regulatory changes which may never occur or will take some time to be put into place, is not acceptable given the fact that urban areas continue to grow at ever increasing rates. Equally, it is no longer reasonable to accept that unplanned unregulated tourism should continue adding to the pressures on urban areas. If Southeast Asian urban areas deteriorate as tourism destinations tourism will no longer be able to have a positive impact on meeting national goals and objectives and will affect the ability of the region to continue to function as a competitive destination in the global environment.

There is no expectation that any one individual will possess all of the required skills and knowledge. The reality however is that in some situations given financial and human resource constraints an individual or a small team will be responsible for a wide range of concerns, issues and stakeholders. Whatever the scale of the destination and the planning and management structure, there is a need for professionals who can promote effective cooperation, build partnerships and ensure the transparency and flow of information to key experts. Destination planners and managers must have an understanding of generic overarching management competencies. These can be considered the minimum competencies for an effective destination planner and manager.

Destination professionals working with stakeholders are responsible for the process of experience development and need to be in a position to manage those who develop experiences, create interpretive and storytelling strategies, and develop service design and visitor management policies. Destinations must have access to destination planners and managers who have integrated destination planning competencies and understand the nature of the planning process and achieve success. Depending on the scale and resources of a destination, a destination planner and manager will work with a variety of other professionals including engineers, environmental designers, transportation experts, marketers, developers and real estate professionals.

Developing the Curriculum

The list of skills and knowledge may seem extensive, however it realistically represents the current and future requirements of those involved in destination planning and management. As noted, the process of identifying skills and knowledge areas is not intended to provide learning opportunities to prepare managers to become experts in all competencies but rather to allow them to be aware of how to best deal with the interdisciplinary and political realities of destinations. It is proposed that there be a continuum of learning opportunities ranging from certificates to professional development courses, and an eventual move to bachelor and master degrees at the higher end of education.

Developing the curriculum requires a regional approach with stakeholders working in collaboration to identify specific areas of development and delivery. Depending on the level of skill and knowledge of individuals, some with planning and management backgrounds may be able to acquire the necessary tourism destination competencies rapidly while those without the basic competencies will need a great deal more capacity building. One of the key skills is an ability to interface with professionals in various disciplines and be able to access the required information and approaches to incorporate them into destination plans and management structures. This of course is not a new approach to education or capacity building. There are a significant number of interdisciplinary programs throughout the world that have successfully developed curriculums and delivery methods that allow their graduates to work effectively in complex interdisciplinary environments. The challenge will be to find institutions who can embrace an interdisciplinary approach, and this will require schools and colleges to come together to produce the necessary curriculums to make this happen.

Curriculum Delivery

In addition to university-based programs there is an urgent need to ensure that those already in the field have the opportunity to access specialized curriculum content. One possibility given the regional nature of the proposed initiative would be to develop an online portal where courses, modules and interactive experiences can be accessed at the convenience of the professional. This would allow for timely updates of information and for potential partnerships between academics and other professionals. A first step in realizing a regional set of competencies for destination planning and management would be for academics and practitioners to identify what they feel are the essential skills and knowledge. This could lead to a regional discussion and agreement on the roles and responsibilities in the development of the curriculum and delivery systems.

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Principles for Rejuvenating Tourism Destination through Organised Events

Asmahany Ramely and Basri Rashid

Abstract

Generally, tourists are drawn to a destination for its natural and man-made attractions. However it is possible that these attractions would eventually lose their appeal and fail to attract tourist and finally slump to the decline stage. This paper aims to provide an insight on the principles of organised events as the rejuvenating tool to avoid the decline stage. The desk research approach was applied by means of an in-depth review of relevant literatures. Consequently, 'four point destination rejuvenation' principles emerged from the literature. This finding would provide an extension to the current literature about the use of organised events in promoting and rejuvenating destinations particularly those at the declining stage. Additionally, the proposed principles could be applied by the communities and relevant stakeholders as guideline for their rejuvenation efforts particularly through organised events. It should be noted however that the rejuvenating principles are conceptual in nature, hence empirical studies shall be carried out in order to further clarify the subject matter.

Keywords: Tourism Destination, Organised Events, Rejuvenating Principles

Introduction

A declining stage in tourist destination is explained as the stage whereby the destination is unable to compete with new emerging tourist destination. At this stage, the existing tourist attraction no longer has the ability to attract tourist to visit the destination and loses its magnetism that can entice visitors to the destination (Butler, 1980). The destination would have difficulties in sustaining or increasing the number of visitors which in turn could reduce the interest of service providers to maintain their facilities at the destination. Ultimately, the destination becomes a slum or slowly drops out from the list of preferred tourist destination completely. In order to be back in business, destination must move out from this declining stage to the phase which is called the 'rejuvenation' phase (Butler, 1980).

Nonetheless, according to Kim, Uysal and Sirgy (2013), destination should evolve into rejuvenation phase before the destination reaches its maximum carrying capacity and the decline stage. Rejuvenation requires few actions such as; do a complete change in tourism destination, exploring new resources to replace the existing attractions, or upgrading the existing resources to attract more tourist (Omar, 2013). Rejuvenation could also happen when a destination renews its planning and promotion as well as rectifies problems that occur within the destination (Karnchanan, 2011). However, rejuvenating is a challenging process as the management team needs to reinstall and implement new regime of destination management (Faulkner & Tideswell, 2005).

In their effort to overcome issues mentioned above, destination managers should seek cooperation from various level of stakeholders (Faulkner & Tideswell, 2005). Stakeholders as the most responsible parties should work with destination managers to provide new forms of attraction. Zamzuri, Nordin, Ainun, Atory and Raja (2011) suggest that 'events' would be the most appropriate product to replace the existing resources of attraction. Alternatively, events can be planned as supplement or complimentary agenda for existing attractions. In this case, relevant events could be organised at attraction sites accordingly.

Staging organised events have additional benefit to the destination in terms of facilities development and improvement. Prior to organizing a mega event for instance, destination should construct and develop new infrastructure or improve the current ones, including roads and rail networks, airports, sewage and housing to fulfil the event needs. This would indirectly help the rejuvenating process at the destination (Chain & Swart, 2010). Thus, it possibly could be considered that having new and improved infrastructure would automatically drive the destination into rejuvenating process.

Building on from the idea of using events to help tourism destination rejuvenation process, the following section will discuss the benefits of organising events at tourism destinations. A clear understanding about the benefits of organised events would make the stakeholders realise the importance to rebuild the through staging organised events.

Literature Review

Benefits of hosting an event at a tourism destination

Organizing an event in a tourist destination could be one of the most effective solution to keeps the destination away from declining stage as an event activity consists of attractive power to lure tourists. Insch (2011) believes that an event would attract the tourists to visit the destination and it could lead to a revisit action particularly if the event is sequential. Although tourist usually visit a destination because of the natural and manmade attractions, the existence of organized events can trigger a reason to visit a particular destination.

A good tourism product must be able to provide equal or parallel benefits to various stakeholders at the destination particularly, the local businesses and the residents. In the case of organized event, the contribution can be seen in numerous dimensions including economic, tourism or commercial, physical, socio-cultural, psychological and political aspects (Fredline, Deery & Jago, 2006). In relation to this, past researchers acknowledge the improvement to quality of life brought by an event development (Liu, 2014). Li, Hsu and Lawton (2014) and Untong, Kaosaard, Ramos, Sangkakorn and Maquieira (2010) clarify that, an event contributes to creation of job opportunities which directly improve the income and standard of living of local people. Specifically, positive economic impacts of events include, greater employment (Li, Hsu & Lawton, 2014), business opportunities for community (Zhou, 2010) and increased tax revenues for local governments (Blosser, 2009; Pranic, Petric & Cetinic, 2012). Different types of events can respond to different community issues such as improving quality of life, building identity, as well as promoting healthy lifestyle (Ziakas & Costa, 2011). Ultimately, the positive impact can be seen through an improved status of resident's wellbeing (Reid, 2007). Studies from Canada (Misener and Mason, 2010), United Kingdom (Irshad, 2011) and Catalonia (Reverte & Izard, 2011) have found that organized events have improved residents socioeconomic status thus enhancing their standard of livings.

As for the socio cultural impacts, organized events provide opportunity for residents to meet new people, enhance local resident spirits of hospitality and bring residents together (Chan, 2015; Chen, 2011).In terms of physical impacts, events may urge the authorities at the destination to build new facilities and infrastructure (Ritchie, Shipway & Cleeve, 2010), which is beneficial in long term. Events also help redevelop and make the destination attractive, as the organizers upgrade the area for the event. In terms of psychological impacts, event brings a sense of belongingness and sharing for the residents. It also create excitement, pride, and self-esteem because of being the focus of international attention (Chan, 2015). On the political side, events provide career enhancement of specific political figures and enhance images and ideologies in resident.

Another benefit gained by the destination is that the revitalization could be through the building and improvement of new infrastructure to support the planned events. In term of promotional support, past researcher pointed out that an event could act as the remarketing tool for tourism destination (Do Valle, Mendes & Guerreiro, 2012; Raj & Vignali, 2010). This point is crucial and should not be disregarded. Taking Sepang, Malaysia for example, the number of people visiting the area since 1999 has increased annually; the only reason is due to the organizing of Malaysian Grand Prix-Formula One World Championship. As a result, the nearby towns started to offer other attractions such as shopping malls and other nature based attractions. This destination is a good example to highlight the ability of an event in positioning the destination in tourists' minds and in maintaining the performance as tourist destination.

The current debate about the benefits of events identifies an interesting viewpoint of using an event as a rejuvenation tool. Hence, to further understand the role of an event in rebuilding the event destination, the next section explores the idea of how an event could be considered as catalyst for above purpose.

Event as catalyst for destination rejuvenation

Past studies have acknowledged organised events to be a catalyst for destination rejuvenation. According to Getz (1991) an event can be considered as a tool in improving destination performance. He noted that events have the ability in destination branding as well as provide publicity for the destination. Many events by nature are organized in sequential basis or staged in stipulated time, hence these events may stimulate repeat visitation. In addition, business events or Meeting, Incentive, Conference and Exhibition (MICE) also help destinations to accrue income during low season.

Ziakas and Costa (2011) in their study highlighted that every tourism destination should have their own event portfolio. With the notion that event will act as a bond among citizen, they believe that an event should be organised in line with the destination resources and the community interest. For example, if the destination and their community were strongly connected with sports, then sports event could be their new tourism product. Presenza and Sheehan (2013) validated this notion from Italian perspectives in their research that examined the potential of transforming South Italy into sporting event destination for repositioning the destination. Their study found that this alternative was taken because of the increasing interest in sports among community members.

Similarly, if the destination is rich in local culture, cultural event should be hosted at the destination. For instance, Maneenetr and Tran (2014) discussed about Nong Khai Province in Thailand, which is famous with Dragon Fireball Festival because that destination is associated with the heritage story about dragon serpents. Consequently, with the aid of the

Fireball Festivals, Nong Khai Province has come to be prominently known as cultural tourism destination.

There is a general agreement that organised events could be used as a catalyst in rebranding and increase the publicity of tourism destination (Getz, 2007). To support the evidence presented in the preceding discussion, the next section highlight the four guiding principles of an event as a rejuvenation tool, which should be considered by destination managers.

Guiding Principles of Events as a Destination Rejuvenation Tool

At stagnation stage, every tourism destination most likely loses its original attractions, while social and environment carrying capacities are also reached or exceeded (Meyer, 2011). Thisng get worse when the popularity of the destination also declines. At this point, the destinations slide into a declining stage (Butler, 1980). Hence, to avoid the declining stage, destination manager should introduce new efforts to rejuvenate and revitalize the destination. As proposed by several researchers (such as Presenza & Sheehan, 2013; Chain & Swart, 2010) the effort might involve creating new kind of attractions such as ‘organised events’.

Review of the literature suggests that a number of considerations or guiding principles need to be observed in order to increase the chances of success in rejuvenating a destination through organised events. These guiding principles which could be considered by destination managers as trouble-shooter for escaping from declining stage of a matured tourism destination are discussed below.

Principle 1: An event in line with community preferences - An event that is categorised as fulfilling community preferences can be interpreted as an event which is able to satisfy the taste and interest of the community. What the community prefer could be influenced by publicity brought by the media about certain event. In other words, an event should be planned according to the local community tastes and upon their acceptance. In order to understand the taste and preferences of the local community, relevant studies must be conducted accordingly. This involves studies about the socio-economic and cultural background of the community at the destination. Abdullah, Petterson and Pegg (2015) conducted a study on how to promote Terengganu to an international level, and make Terengganu a popular sport tourism destination. In order to rationalize the purpose, they examined resident’s expectations, interests, and needs of the local community.

Community feedback can be gained by involving them in the planning process. Seeking community feedback will encourage helping communities to participate and maximize their level of engagement, thus stimulating their interest level and their perception that an event will bring benefits (Presenza & Sheehan, 2013). Pappas (2014) highlighted that, the higher is the level of engagement and involvement in event planning, the higher is the level of support that community will show. Boo, Wang and Yu (2011) found that residents with high involvement and participation would support an event development as they are expecting greater benefits from the event. Therefore, a reasonable level of engagement could make communities aware about the positive contribution of an event towards their well-being and quality of life.

Nonetheless, to encourage community engagement in an event development is rather difficult than planning the event. Tosun and Timothy (2003) highlighted that the policy makers needs to play their role in encouraging community engagement. Policy makers should be able to educate the locals by imparting greater awareness and understanding about the importance of hosting events at the tourism destination, hence avoiding the stagnation and declining stages. In order to achieve this, series of efficient and effective dialogues are ideal between the policy makers, resident, and other stakeholders (Presenza & Sheehan, 2013).

Principle 2: Events representing local culture - Local culture is endless and many visitors are fascinated by traditions particularly to the ceremonies or activities that seem extraordinary and different to theirs. By highlighting local culture, destination managers may not need to spend substantial amount of resources especially if the local cultural activities have become a public ritual at the destination. In this instance the destination managers need to convey to the locals on how to commercialize their culture and display it through festivals or cultural events. This type of an event would be beneficial as the supplemental attraction to blend with the readily available natural and man-made resources or to replace the currently declining natural and man-made attractions to re-attract tourist arrival. The Thaipusam religious-cultural possession in Penang, Malaysia, manages to lure tourist to the botanical garden – the location/destination that was once famous among local and foreign tourists. Alternative measures have been suggested by Butler (1980) suggesting that in order to avoid the decline stage, destinations need to completely change their products of attraction or in other words, create new type of attractions. This could be achieved through highlighting local culture as new tourism product to regain the destination attractiveness.

Principle 3: Creating unique themes/objectives of events - As discussed, the ability of an organised event in rejuvenating tourism destinations particularly the ones that are at their declining stage is acknowledged in various studies (such as Presenza & Sheehan, 2013; Chain & Swart, 2010). However, destinations that organise regular events may take a step forward to enhance the attractiveness of their events. Langkawi Island in Malaysia; a destination that regularly organise the Langkawi International Maritime and Aviation Exhibition (LIMA) may introduce some green elements in their events to create new interest as well as to educate the ever changing knowledge, attitude and behaviour of attendees towards environment. Indirectly this could help eliminate the possibility of Langkawi moving to the declining stage. In addition, Marzuki (2011) pointed out that 'green' elements are vital to rejuvenate a tourism destination like Langkawi, as sustainable practices in this tourist destination allow it to compete with other international destination such as Phuket and Bali. Faulkner and Tideswell (2005) highlight the objectives of sustainable practices as follow;

- To enhance visitor satisfaction and the competitiveness of the destination within the tourist market;
- To improve profitability and the return on investment of the industry;
- To maximize economic benefits to the region;
- To protect and enhance natural environmental assets;
- To provide a foundation for enhancing the host community's quality of life and life opportunities;
- To ensure that development is consistent with the local community's socio-cultural values

In essence, organised events are commonly focused providing experience, enjoyment, and excitement (3Es) to the visitors with less attention on their negative impacts upon the environment. Thus, to appear unique and appealing, destination providers should stage out green event concepts. Sensibly, green events can become the destination's competitive advantage that can differentiate the destination from competitors. In other words, the sustainable approach of green events can be regarded as a new and unique marketing tool that helps not only to rejuvenate a destination, but also helps visitors or tourists to portray their instinct for destination belongingness, environmental consciousness and humanity (Stettler, 2011).

Principle 4: Events using local resources - In case of Malaysia, the strength of tourism destinations are varied. Some destinations are banking on their natural attractions such as beach resorts (e.g. Islands resorts of Langkawi, Semporna, Sipadan, Tioman); or Hill resorts (e.g. Cameron Highlands, Genting Highlands) or National Reserved Forests (National Park Kuala Tahan, Mulu national Park and Kinabalu National Park). Other destinations offer visitors with heritage sites especially historical buildings and ruins such as in the States of Penang, Kedah and Malacca.

Ideally, to rejuvenate these tourist destinations, events must be planned based on the existing local resources. One example is the Georgetown festival which was held in 2016 to celebrate George Town (capital of Penang State) as a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a series of unique and diverse displays related to the local community culture and heritage. The event organizers deliberately utilized various local resource as they exhibited the art, music, dance, theatre, film, food, fashion and photography to the visitors. All these displays highlighted Georgetown as a heritage destination. Similarly, at a nearby location, the Butterworth Fringe Festival (BFF) was also been organized to give a new life to the old harbour town. This is comparable to Sepang, a town near Kuala Lumpur which successfully hosts Sepang Formula One Racing and other motor racing events in the region. The existing Sepang International Circuit has brought fame to the destination as a well-known major motorsport event venue. Apart from facilities to organise races, now the place has been developed other attractions such as shopping Malls and has popularised Pantai Bagan Lalang as a famous coastal tourism destination. Thus destinations with an organised event lead to development of tourism in nearby areas.

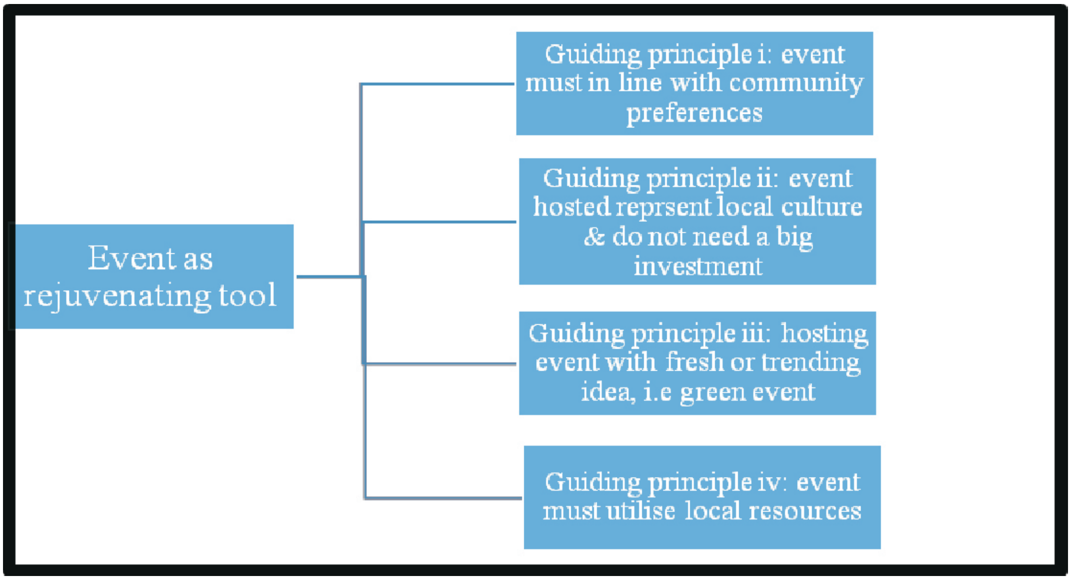
Practically, to stimulate an efficient rejuvenation process, it is highly recommended that the destinations identify their internal strengths and weaknesses along with external opportunities and threats. These elements would either help or ruin their efforts to put event as part of tourism product at the destination.

All of the above principles can guide destination managers and stakeholders to consider organized events as a rejuvenating tool in their life cycle.

Conclusion and Implications

This paper has elaborated the importance 'events' as a rejuvenating tools to save a destination from its decline stage. The advantages of organised events in terms of direct and indirect benefits have been highlighted particularly for the destination and the community. In line with Getz (1997) and Presenza and Sheehan (2013), the study suggests that it is important to have organised events as a tool to improve destination performance and eventually create a brand for the destination. Events can position the destination into visitors mind and automatically stimulate repeat visitation which is important the industry sustainability. Events can also act as instrument facility community bonding. It is logical to presume that a community with good relationship would simultaneously make tourism planning and development much easier. Conclusively, this paper propose a four event rejuvenating guiding principle framework to be considered by destination managers for rejuvenating a destinations. The guiding principles are illustrated in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Principle of events as a destination rejuvenation tool



This paper is expected to enhance the understanding of how to rejuvenate tourism destination from an event perspective. Additionally, the paper can provide useful guidance to destination managers for organizing events and inclusion of events in a strategy for rejuvenating destination. These guiding principles can be applied together or used independently while planning an event. The guiding principles identified in this study are however must be subject to empirical study for future researches.

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