



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND MANAGEMENT: A RAPID CHANGE AND REVIEW

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Abstract

The success of the tourism sector in the postwar period has resulted in an industry which is characterized not only by growth but also by rapid change as many as 75 per cent of the world's poor people live in rural areas. Top tourism destinations, particularly in developing countries, include national parks, wilderness areas, mountains, lakes, and cultural sites, most of which are generally rural. Thus tourism is already an important feature of the rural economy in these specific sites. It is self-evident that tourism will never come to dominate all rural areas, particularly in the developing world – there are vast swathes of rural areas for which tourism is not relevant for the foreseeable future. Between these two extremes are poor rural areas with some tourism potential, and an urgent need to develop whatever economic potential they have. Thus, an important question is whether more can be done to develop tourism within such rural areas, as a way of dispersing the benefits of tourism and increasing its sustainable rural tourism as a phenomenon and with a review of literature on rural tourism and rural development. Further the article brings the rural tourism industry, poverty impact, respect for nature and local cultures, attentive use of natural resources, sound working conditions, hospitality, supporting local economies, best local products: food, handicraft, culture, sustainable buildings and facilities etc. are becoming increasingly innovative managerial sustainable development of the industry in turn rural development of the country. The paper concludes that only by considering life cycle stage for sustainability and competitive position of the destination demands a distinctive strategy and approach to management can be the true elements of sustainable tourism are achieved.

Keywords: Tourism, Sustainability, Management, Rural Development, Infrastructure, Employment.

Tourism Management in India

It was only after the 80's that tourism activity gained momentum. The Government took several significant steps. A National Policy on tourism was announced in 1982. Later in 1988, the National Committee on Tourism formulated a comprehensive plan for achieving a sustainable growth in tourism. In 1992, a National Action Plan was prepared and in 1996 the National Strategy for Promotion of Tourism was drafted. In 1997, a draft new tourism policy in tune with the economic policies of the Government and the trends in tourism development was published for public debate. Atul Sinha (2011) the draft policy is now under revision. The proposed policy recognises the roles of Central and State governments, public sector undertakings and the private sector in the development of tourism. The need for involvement of Panchayati Raj institutions, local bodies, non-governmental organisations and the local youth in the creation of tourism facilities has also been recognised. The other major development that took place was the setting up of the India Tourism Development Corporation in 1966 to promote India as a tourist destination and the Tourism Finance Corporation in 1989 to finance tourism projects. Altogether, 21 Government-run Hotel Management and Catering Technology Institutes and 14 Food Craft Institutes were also established for imparting specialised training in hoteliering and catering. India is a country known for its lavish treatment to all visitors, no matter where they come from. Its visitor-friendly traditions, varied life styles and cultural heritage and colourful fairs and festivals held abiding attractions for the tourists.

The other attractions include beautiful beaches, forests and wild life and landscapes for eco-tourism, snow, river and mountain peaks for adventure tourism, technological parks and science museums for science tourism; centres of pilgrimage for spiritual tourism; heritage trains and hotels for heritage tourism. Yoga, ayurveda and natural health resorts also attract tourists. The Indian handicrafts particularly, jewellery, carpets, leather goods, ivory and brass work are the main shopping items of foreign tourists. The estimates available through surveys indicate that nearly forty per cent of the tourist expenditure on shopping is spent on such items. The organisations involved in the development of tourism in India are the Ministry of Tourism with its 21 field offices within the country and 18 abroad, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology, India Tourism Development Corporation, Indian Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering and the National Institute of Water Sports.

Growth and Economic Impact

Domestic tourism is as old as the Indian society. According to available statistics, domestic tourism has grown substantially during the last one decade. It increased to 167 million in 1998 from just 64 million in 1990, thus registering a compound annual growth of 12.8 per cent. The growth of inbound tourism since Independence has been quite impressive. It was just around 17 thousand in 1951. From this level it rose to 2.36 million in 1998. Tourism receipts on the other hand have grown at a phenomenal rate of 17 per cent to Rs.11, 540 crore in 1998 from Rs.7.7 crore in 1951.

Tourism has emerged as an instrument of employment generation, poverty alleviation and sustainable human development. During 1998-99, employment generation through tourism was estimated at 14.79 million. Foreign exchange earnings from the tourism sector during 1998-99 were estimated at Rs.12, 011 crore. Tourism has thus become

the second largest net foreign exchange earner for the country. Tourism also contributed Rs.24,241 crore during 1998-99 towards the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Boosting Tourism

Some of the recent initiatives taken by the Government to boost tourism include grant of export house status to the tourism sector and incentives for promoting private investment in the form of Income Tax exemptions, interest subsidy and reduced import duty. The hotel and tourism-related industry has been declared a high priority industry for foreign investment which entails automatic approval of direct investment up to 51 per cent of foreign equity and allowing 100 per cent non-resident Indian investment and simplifying rules regarding the grant of approval to travel agents, tour operators and tourist transport operators.

The idea of sustainable tourism with the overall goals of environmental integrity, social justice and economic development includes:

- minimises negative economic, environmental, and social impacts
- generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities, improves working conditions and access to the industry
- involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances
- makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of the world's diversity
- provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues
- provides access for people with disabilities and is culturally sensitive
- engenders respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence

Many stakeholders are involved in tourism: tour operators, destination managers, hotel owners, local authorities, convention and exhibition organisers, travel agents, farmers, and of course tourists. The question is: How could they contribute to sustainable tourism although there is no blueprint for it?

Reviews

This has led to a lack of management expertise at destinations, a divergence of aims between the commercial and public sectors and a shortterm planning horizon which in part is driven by public-sector, twelve-monthly budgeting cycles, but also by the tactical operating horizon of small businesses (Athiyaman, 1995). In this way, sustainable destinations can be delivered by considering differing strategic options at various stages of the destination life cycle. Destination visioning has the twin advantages of adopting the longterm approach whilst also engineering strong community involvement and 'buy in' of the future of the destination. Only by moving in this direction can we truly adopt a sustainable approach, not only because visioning takes into account the complex relationships within a destination, but also it recognizes the impact of decisions upon the future generations of those living in the community (Ritchie and Crouch, 2000). It is essential that tourism adopts these cutting edge approaches, after all if the destination is the most important element of the tourism system, then its effective management and planning is critical if tourism is to become a mature, sustainable and acceptable sector.

Tourism, Elliott (1997) explains, is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Governments in countries at all stages of development are increasingly dependent on it, but it is of special significance in countries intent on achieving sustainable development. This leads to general questions about the role of governments in various countries, questions about what governments conceive to be their particular responsibilities in relation to tourism, and questions about the relationship of tourism to public sector management. In the longer term there are also questions about the consequences of the development of tourism for citizens. It is increasingly apparent that people at all levels of society and in all occupations are affected in one way or another by this fast growing and important industry. Consequently, he examines all levels of government in relation to tourism, is timely and welcome.

Chris Cooper (2002) it can be argued that the destination is the most important element of the tourism system, motivating visitation, delivering visitor experiences and contributing to enduring memories of the tourism experience. Yet, the increased growth of demand for tourism, coupled to the changing nature of the tourism consumer means that destinations are under pressure to be both competitive and sustainable. For this to be realised, effective management and planning of tourism destinations is critical if tourism is to become a mature and acceptable sector. Indeed, it is also essential for the maintenance of a profitable and sustainable tourism sector at any particular destination. In this respect, concern for sustainability is central to the management of both markets and the destination. This view is echoed by De Kadt (1992) who states that sustainability has become the organising concept for tourism policy; a concept which has demonstrable advantages for the tourism sector as a whole (Bramwell and Lane, 1993; Bramwell et al, 1996; World Tourism Organisation [WTO], 1993).

Tourism and Adoption of Sustainability

In tourism the adoption of sustainability has been evidenced by a changing perspective away from the short term to the long term planning horizon (Ritchie, 1999). This in turn has seen the adoption of a strategic approach to both markets and destination management, a strategic approach which is now evolving into the concept of 'destination visioning'. There is a clear synergy here between the adoption of sustainable tourism principles and the disciplined, longer-term perspective provided by the strategic planning and visioning of destinations (Cooper, 1995). It is the aim of this paper to explore the key relationship between sustainable destinations and new models of strategic planning.

Brownlie (1994) sees strategic planning as the sequence of choices and decisions taken about the deployment of resources committing a destination to a future course of action. It represents a deliberate, integrative plan, which essentially recognises the need for formalised higher-order planning to coordinate and control change through a process of goal setting. In this way the destination puts into place a functioning system that can adapt quickly to changing situations and establishes information, planning and control systems to monitor and respond to change (Kotler, et al, 1993). In terms of the adoption of sustainable tourism principles, the benefits of the strategic approach to the destination are clear (Cooper, 1995). The process of goal setting provides a common sense of ownership and direction for the myriad stake-holders, whilst at the same time sharpening the guiding objectives of the destination. The coherence provided by the approach provides a framework for joint initiatives between the commercial and public sectors and demands the clear identification of roles and responsibilities. Finally, the approach delivers a range of performance indicators against which the destination's performance can be judged. In other words, strategic planning offers an integrated approach to the sustainable management of the destination and provides a sense of ownership for the stakeholders.

However, the introduction of a longer-term strategic planning perspective by tourist destinations can be problematic. Simply, the adoption of strategic planning at the destination is not as straightforward as in a commercial organisation where responsibilities and reporting lines are well defined. In this respect, both Haywood (1990) and Pigram (1992) identify a number of implementation gaps in the adoption of strategic planning at tourist destinations:

1. Destinations are comprised of a constantly shifting mosaic of stakeholders and value systems.
2. In addition, the tourist sector at destinations is characterised by fragmentation and a dominance of small businesses, who often trade seasonally.
3. The stage of the destination in the life cycle also influences the acceptability of a destination-wide planning exercise. In the early stages of the life cycle for example, success often obscures the long term view, whilst in the later stages, particularly when a destination is in decline, opposition to long term planning exercises may be rationalised on the basis of cost.
4. Finally, the performance indicators adopted in such exercises can be controversial as tourist volume is the traditional, and politically acceptable, measure of success in many destinations. From the point of view of sustainability such measures are more likely to be the less tangible ones of environmental and social impacts.

In other words, the tourism industry is often reluctant to make the tradeoff between present and future needs when success is judged by short-term profitability and volume growth. Tourism is a maturing field, with a considerable specialist literature, and relationships with traditional disciplines that are now fairly stable and well understood (Xiao & Smith, 2006b). In a mature field, various forms of 'score-keeping' are undertaken to investigate the most productive and influential scholars, institutions and publications. As a result there has been renewed interest in assessing and ranking tourism journals based on both perceived quality and influence (Jamal, Smith, & Watson, 2008; McKercher, Law, & Lam, 2006; Pechlaner, Zehrer, Matzler, & Abfalter, 2004; Ryan, 2005). This interest has extended to the ranking of individual academics and institutions based on publication and citation counts (Jogarathnam, Chon et al., 2005; Jogarathnam, McCleary, Mena, & Yoo, 2005; McKercher, 2007, 2008; Zhao & Ritchie, 2007). These recent attempts build on the earlier studies of Sheldon (1990, 1991). In addition, the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) has recently released a list that ranks journals in various areas of business, including tourism (Australian Business Deans Council, 2008). It seems likely Australian tourism academics who have published in high-ranking journals will be seen as producing 'quality' work.

Tourism and Sustainable Community Development

Attempts to create more sustainable forms of development must value the contribution of local knowledge (Redcliff 1995, Zazueta 1995, 1). This view of development promotes devolution of power from central political systems to the community level. A focus on local decision-making in tourism planning began to emerge in the tourism literature in the 1980s (Gunn 1979; Haywood 1988). In more recent years the argument that community-based approaches to tourism development are a prerequisite to successful and sustainable tourism development has become almost a mantra among researchers (Woodley 1993, Taylor 1995, Din 1997). It is possible to discern two main sub-streams in the way in which 'community' has been analysed in this literature. One prioritizes structures external to the community and considers local residents as largely passive forces in the development process (Britton 1991, 1996; see Milne 1997). In this case the community is seen to be 'serving' the industry's needs rather than vice versa. This, in turn, fosters the notion that communities are rather helpless victims in the face of an onslaught over which they have relatively little control.

The other approach emphasizes local agency, and sees communities and their constituent members playing an active role in determining tourism's outcomes (Drake 1991, see also Taylor 1995). This approach views communities as being capable of planning and participating in tourism development, of making their voices heard when they are concerned, and of having the capability to control the outcomes of the industry to some degree. It is not surprising, given these differing perspectives, that definitions of community led tourism cover a wide spectrum (Reimer & Dialla 1992), from "giving an opportunity to local people to become involved in the decision-making process" (Tosun & Jenkins 1998, 110), to: "producing a tourism product that the community as a whole wishes to present to the tourism market" (Murphy 1985, 37).

Progress in Tourism

Deng and Burnett (2002) undertook a study of water use in hotels in Hong Kong, assessing water use performance by using a Water Use Index (WUI, m³/m²), which is defined as the total annual water consumption divided by the total floor area of a hotel. The study found:

- The WUIs varied significantly from one hotel to another, the maximum 7.7 m³/m² and the minimum 2.1 m³/m², with the average being 4.5 m³/m². This reflects the diversified water use situations in Hong Kong hotels.
- The averaged WUI for the ten hotels with an in-house laundry was significantly higher (5.1 m³/m²) than that for the other seven hotels (3.6 m³/m²).
- The average WUI for five-star hotels was 5.1 m³/m², and those for four-star and three-star hotels were 4.1 and 3.3 m³/m², respectively. This again confirms that higher-class hotels consume more water than lower-class hotels.

Concept of Rural Tourism

At first glance, this is a simple question. Rural tourism is tourism which takes place in the countryside. But, on deeper consideration, a simple definition of rural tourism is inadequate for many purposes. Equally, it is difficult to produce a more complex definition which applies to all rural areas in all countries. Problems include:

- Urban or resort-based tourism is not confined to urban areas, but spills out into rural areas;
- Rural areas themselves are difficult to define, and the criteria used by different nations vary enormously;
- Not all tourism which takes place in rural areas is strictly "rural"
- it can be "urban" in form, and merely be located in a rural area;
- Tourism has historically been an urban concept; the great majority of tourists live in urban areas. Tourism can be an urbanizing influence on rural areas, encouraging cultural and economic change, and new construction;
- Different forms of rural tourism have developed in different regions. Farm-based holidays are important in many parts of rural Germany and Austria. Farm-based holidays are much rarer in the rural United States and Canada;
- Rural areas themselves are in a complex process of change. The impact of global markets, communications and telecommunication have changed market conditions and orientations for traditional products. The rise of environmentalism has led to increasing control by "outsiders" over land use and resource development. Although some rural areas still experience depopulation, others are experiencing an inflow of people to retire or to develop new "non-traditional" businesses. The once clear distinction between urban and rural is now blurred by suburbanisation, long distance commuting and second home development;
- Rural tourism is a complex multi-faceted activity: it is not just farm-based tourism. It includes farm-based holidays but also comprises special interest nature holidays and ecotourism, walking, climbing and riding holidays, adventure, sport and health tourism, hunting and angling, educational travel, arts and heritage tourism, and, in some areas, ethnic tourism. There is also a large general interest market for less specialised forms of rural tourism. This area is highlighted by studies of the important German tourism market, where a major requirement of the main holiday is the ability to provide peace, quiet and relaxation in rural surroundings.

Because rural tourism is multi-faceted, because rural areas themselves are multi-faceted and rarely either static entities or self-contained, and free from urban influence, a working and reasonably universal definition of the subject is difficult to find. However, in almost every case rurality is the central and unique selling point in the rural tourism package. The search for a definition must, therefore, begin with an understanding of the concept of rurality itself.

Rural Tourism: A Concept for Development and Conservation

It has been argued above that rurality as a concept is connected with low population densities and open space, and with small scale settlements, generally of fewer than 10 000 inhabitants. Land use is dominated by farming, forestry and natural areas. Societies tend towards traditionalism: the influence of the past is often strong. Government policies lean towards conservation rather than radical or rapid change. It follows, therefore, that rural tourism should be:

- Located in rural areas;
- Functionally rural, built upon the rural world's special features: small scale enterprise, open space, contact with nature and the natural world, heritage, "traditional" societies and "traditional" practices;
- Rural in scale -- both in terms of buildings and settlements -- and, therefore, usually small scale;
- Traditional in character, growing slowly and organically, and connected with local families. It will often be very largely controlled locally and developed for the long term good of the area;
- Sustainable -- in the sense that its development should help sustain the special rural character of an area, and in the sense that its development should be sustainable in its use of resources. Rural tourism should be seen as a potential tool for conservation and sustainability, rather than as an urbanizing and development tool; of many different kinds, representing the complex pattern of rural environment, economy, and history.

Infrastructure

Although there is insufficient research of water within the lifecycle of tourism infrastructure, Roselló-Batie, Molá, Cladera, and Martínez (2010) report that the use and construction of buildings are responsible for 17 per cent of water consumption worldwide. In a life cycle analysis of three hotels in the Balearic Islands they found that water accounted for about 5 per cent of the total mass of the construction materials. According to Low (2005), concrete is the second most consumed material in the world after water, with Van Oss and Padovani (2003) estimating that the annual worldwide water consumption for cement hydration is approximately one billion m³ of water. Tourism's contribution to this is likely to be substantial given that the major end uses of concrete are residential buildings (31 per cent), highways and roads (26 per cent) and industrial and commercial buildings (18 per cent) with increasing second home ownership being a significant driver of increased demand in building materials (Low, 2005).

Biofuels, currently seen by industry as having the greatest potential for providing sustainable fuels, in particular for air transport (e.g. IATA, 2009), will also increase water use. For instance, UNESCO (2009: 11) reports that 44 km³ or 2 per cent of all irrigation water are already allocated to biofuel production, with the realization of all current national biofuel policies and plans requiring an additional 180 km³ of irrigation water. Water use for the production of bioethanol from sugarcane, corn, sugar beet, wheat and sorghum tripled between 2000 and 2007, and production of biodiesel from oil- and tree-seeds such as rapeseed, sunflower, soybean, palm oil, coconut and jatropha even increased 11-fold between 2000 and 2007. The production of 1 L of liquid biofuels currently takes on global average 2500 L of water. Most of these biofuels are consumed in the European Union, the United States and Brazil, now including 23 per cent of maize production in the US (ethanol production) or 47 per cent of vegetable oil produced in the EU (biodiesel) - and necessitating higher imports of vegetable oil to meet domestic consumption needs. Yet, biodiesel accounts for only 3 per cent of fuel use in the European Union so far (UNESCO, 2009).

Currently, water use inventories are usually not available for destinations (regions or countries), even though they are an important precondition for water management (Eurostats, 2009). In adding complexity, effects of climate change can be modelled for regions and integrated in water use scenarios to identify suitable strategies to deal with water stress in the future (for an example see Kent, Newnham, & Essex, 2002; Essex, Kent, & Newnham, 2004). Depending on outcomes, destination managers and tourism stakeholders can re-consider their business plans, including perspectives on (emerging) politics. For instance, in the European Union, water abstraction for golf courses will become increasingly regulated through national policy implementation of the European Water Framework Directive (European Union, 2000). Generally, water management can be based on two strategies, i.e. demand side management (reducing water use), and supply side management (increasing water provisions) (Bates et al., 2008).

Stefan Gösslinga, b, et. al. (2012) given the global growth in tourism, the trend towards higher-standard accommodation and more water-intense activities, which are likely to coincide with changes in the global climate system leading to declining water resources in many regions, pressure on water resources and related water conflicts are bound to increase in many destinations. As a consequence, tourism development in many areas of the world may become less sustainable or no longer feasible. This may be due to foregone opportunities to carry out certain tourism activities, declining water levels or lack of fresh water availability, costs associated with provisions of fresh water, or declining water quality. Impacts will ultimately depend on several factors, including the relative scarcity of fresh water in tourism areas, also with regard to seasonal aspects, competition with other economic sectors such as agriculture (e.g. Downward & Taylor, 2007), institutional contexts such as water policies, as well as the structure of the water industry (profit or social benefits) and of the tourist industry (small guesthouses or large resort hotels). Such situations will clearly require a more integrated approach to tourism's role in water management at a catchment level than what has hitherto been the case ([Hall and Härkönen, 2006] and [Matias et al., 2008]). Furthermore, the increasing competition between tourism and other users, including the water rights and the food and water security of local people in a number of destinations raises fundamental questions about the ethics and politics of water access.

Conclusion

The major constraint in the expansion of international tourist traffic to India is non-availability of adequate infrastructure including adequate air seat capacity, accessibility to tourist destinations, accommodation and trained manpower in sufficient number. Poor visitor experience, particularly, due to inadequate infrastructural facilities, poor hygienic conditions and incidents of touting and harassment of tourists in some places are factors that contribute to poor visitor experience. Additional typical tourism impacts are socio-economic conflicts as property and general costs of living increases, and social structure can be changed significantly, when summer guests overrun small communities. Foreign customs and expectations can create conflicts and a deterioration of cultural and regional values.

To sum up, Indian tourism has vast potential for generating employment and earning large sums of foreign exchange besides giving a fillip to the country's overall economic and social development. Much has been achieved by way of increasing air seat capacity, increasing trains and railway connectivity to important tourist destinations, four-laning of roads connecting important tourist centres and increasing availability of accommodation by adding heritage hotels to the hotel industry and encouraging paying guest accommodation. But much more remains to be done. Since tourism is a multi-dimensional activity, and basically a service industry, it would be necessary that all wings of the Central and State governments, private sector and voluntary organisations become active partners in the endeavour to attain sustainable growth in tourism if India is to become a world player in the tourist industry.

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