



UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA



FACULTY OF TOURISM AND
HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT
OPATIJA, CROATIA

Book of Abstract

6th International Scientific Conference
ToSEE - Tourism in Southern and Eastern Europe

ToSEE – Smart, Experience, Excellence
&
ToFEEL – Feelings, Excitement, Education, Leisure



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ENHANCING COMPETITIVENESS FOR ECONOMIC AND TOURISM GROWTH: CASE OF CROATIA

Adriana Jelušić
Karmen Mikulić

Abstract

Purpose – the Tourism-Led Economic Growth Hypothesis (TLGH) is fundamental to the development of the tourism countries. The following research stresses the ever-growing importance of knowledge and creativity– through various disciplines – on national competitiveness and overall economic and tourism development. Emphasis will be given to the particulars of the tourism industry, the achieved level of economic growth, the tourism and economic competitiveness as well as the level of creativity. The study asserts that the nation’s economic and tourism development corresponds to the acquired competitiveness and creativity level.

Methodology – the relationship between the variables which indicate economic and tourism development, knowledge, competitiveness and creative economy, will be examined through the comparative study on the case of EU countries (EU28). Multiple linear regression model (MLR) is tested on the case of Croatia (IBM SPSS).

Findings – in today’s global crisis, one of the ways to promote economic wealth and growth is supporting service and creative industries. Tourism, as a part of the economic growth model, has a strong positive impact on the creative economy and competitiveness. The optimal development model of tourism economies is global comprehensive approach and it encompasses multidisciplinary relationship with all economic activities. Competitiveness, creativity, economic and tourism growth can be used as variables in forecasting tourism demand and tourism consumption.

Contribution – the research’s contribution is reflected in a comprehensive study of the competitiveness and creative economy with a particular emphasis on tourism. The proposed macroeconomic model forms an excellent basis for the conduction of an economic policy and the employment of the appropriate instruments.

Keywords: international tourism demand, creative economy, economic growth, competitiveness, tourism development, multiple linear regression (MLR)

HISTORICAL RESEARCH ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

Vasja Roblek
Danijel Drpić
Vedran Milojica

Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to show the evolution and change in content over time and the emergence of different concepts of sustainable tourism (ST) in tourism and hospitality. For this purpose, a Comparative Automated Content Analysis (ACA) is used to analyse scientific articles published between 1990, when the first article in this field was published in the Web of Science, and the end of 2020.

Methodology – The Leximancer 5.0 was used to analyze the content comparisons of texts based on Automatic Content Analysis, used for the content analyses of the scientific articles, based primarily on probabilistic models generated by algorithms. It represents a text-mining tool, and it is used for the analysis of text using AI/machine learning techniques. Its focus aims to identify patterns, generate predictions, and identify and define thematic/themes in the selected text collection (terms).

Findings – With the use of ACA for analysis papers research, this research enables helps findings and explanations about out more about changes in business models, organisational processes, investment technologies that enable ST, green investments, sustainable standards in tourism and hospitality, and sustainable reporting.

Contribution – The paper presents an important step in researching sustainability practices in tourism and hospitality and introducing the theory of ST. After comparing the analysed issues among the four research groups, the most critical and recent global socioeconomic and technological trends in ST in tourism and hospitality are identified and explained.

Keywords: sustainable hospitality; sustainable tourism; holistic sustainability; ESG; systematic literature review; automated content analysis

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW: THE NEXUS OF ECONOMICS GROWTH, TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEKS

Thao Hoang

Abstract

Purpose – Tourism for the time being, is still one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the areas, especially the developing countries. The benefits of the tourism industry are huge, not only in terms of contribution to GDP, job creation, poverty reduction, but also it is also a way to connect - cultural exchange, promote the land image, and especially tourism expansion get along with growth is a tool to help perfect human development in many areas of perception - physical - emotional and psychological. A systematic study on the relationships between these three variables will be necessary to solve the following research aims: to understand the current state of research between economy - tourism and human development; find out the short-run, long-run or causality relationships between these three observed variables show up in these countries; and the results gained from these articles.

Methodology – This is systematic review research, which is based on the keywords of economic growth, tourism development, and human development index, studies from 1975 to 2020. The 88 articles with at least one citation for the review are used to find the nexus between economic growth, tourism development, and human development index in the short-term, and the long-term.

Finding – Tourism causing growth is the leading result of both time-series and panel studies. In a few studies, it has been found that economic and tourism growth do not fully promote human development, but human development is a positive factor in economic growth and tourism expansion.

Contribution – Comprehensive and sustainable economic development strategy towards human satisfaction, and perfection both physically and mentally.

Keywords: Tourism, Growth, Human development, Systematic literature review

TOURISM SECURITY AND TAKING RESPONSIBILITY IN THE SHADOW OF THE COVID19 PANDEMIC – WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Andrea Horváth
Maja Lena Lopatny

Abstract

Purpose – Today’s tourism is undergoing radical changes. Until 2020, the number of people participating in tourism had grown steadily, and no one would have thought that the globally dominant economy would experience such a shock. Many tourism businesses were forced to suspend their activities and not all of them could continue in the future as they had to look for other sources of livelihood. But businesses that succeed in surviving the economic collapse must be prepared to meet the changing needs of tourists after a reopening. The aim of our research is to assess the attitudes of potential tourists towards the issue of tourism security. Within the topic, we sought answers to what responsibilities, if any, they assume related to health security. There are obviously mandatory requirements for tourism service providers, but in our research, we also looked at whether potential tourists expect them to provide their security. Responsible behaviour, as an expectation, is directed primarily at service providers or they may feel safe in a destination due to actions taken by other actors (including the travellers themselves).

Methodology – Prior to compiling the planned questionnaire for the survey, we conducted an unstructured interview with tourism service providers who operate their business in the field of accommodation and hospitality. Based on these, a questionnaire was compiled, which was distributed online at the end of 2020 due to the pandemic situation. Of course, this also means that we have only been able to reach and involve in research those who use the Internet. The target group of the survey is over 18 years of age. In a study based on an online questionnaire survey of almost a thousand people, we sought to use closed, decisive, and ranking questions. The results were processed by statistical data analysis using SPSS program.

Findings – Those wishing to travel do not even see the situation created by the current pandemic as a barrier to traveling. When it comes to security, public safety is considered to be paramount, and the public sector is expected to create it. Health security is only in second place, but the results suggest that the responsibility lies with service providers in this regard. The majority of respondents are willing to cooperate with tourism service providers, but they would only comply with the restrictive measures that health/epidemiological authorities are obliged to impose. It is still not planned to spend the resting and recharging time in a destination different from the previous ones, although they are more interested in close-to-nature destinations.

Contribution – The survey not only pointed out that the issue of security is important for those wishing to travel, but also that health security is a factor which only partially influences the travel decision. The research provides valuable information to those on

the supply side of the tourism sector, as after the lifting of restrictions due to the COVID19 pandemic, when tourism is restarted, service providers will face a new competitive situation. Based on the obtained results, both tourism service providers and destination management organizations can place more emphasis on tourism security and its marketing communication.

Keywords: tourism security, health security, responsible tourism, pandemic, tourist attitude

TOURISM AND MIGRATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF CROATIA

Neven Ivandić

Abstract

Purpose - Since the Census in 2011, Croatia has seen a substantial population decline. Given the high contribution of tourism to the Croatian economy, this paper empirically analyses the relationship between population migration, namely total net migration and net migration abroad, and tourism activity.

Methodology – The research design of this paper is based on quantitative econometric panel data analysis using annual data for cities and municipalities in Croatia between 2002 and 2019. A one-way and two-way fixed effects model are used for the estimation of the regression model coefficients.

Findings – The set models provide insight into the relationship between net migration or migration abroad and tourism activity. Tourism can be seen as a generator of demographic change, especially in rural and less developed areas, as it generates employment opportunities and, thus, the opportunity for permanent residency.

Contribution – The main contribution of this paper is the novel use of such detailed data at the geographical level that spans over two decades. This generates empirical insights that hold high levels of external validity. A further important aspect of the paper is the analysis of the connection between population migration and tourism activity in the context of Croatia's accession to the European Union and verification of the theoretically grounded expectation that tourism activity as pull factor is positively related to population net migration.

Keywords: population, migration, tourism, Croatia, panel

UNDERSTANDING SHORT-TERM RENTAL DATA SOURCES. A VARIETY OF SECOND-BEST SOLUTIONS

Adam Pawlicz
Catherine Prentice

Abstract

Purpose. This paper aims to identify major supply data sources for short-term rental market research and to provide their advantages and limitations.

Methodology. In the paper a grounded approach was used based on a literature review. This review comprised two steps with the first being the query in major databases that was supplemented by academic search engine that resulted in 170 articles. The second step was to investigate the papers' methodological sections to identify characteristics and limitations of all data sources.

Findings. This study identifies three major data sources for the short-term rental market: web scraping with the use of self-made bots, Inside Airbnb and Airdna. A majority (e.g. 74% of papers using Airdna as a source) did not mention any limitations and provide no discussion about the data source, while the remainder gave only superfluous information about possible limitations of its use. Their characteristics and limitations are extensively discussed using a proposed framework that consists of three levels: intermediary, web scraping, and source-specific.

Contribution. Very limited number of studies have focused on the short-term rental data sources and this is the first one that discusses advantages and limitation of their use. This paper may be of help to academics or professionals in identifying the right source of data to suit their technical knowledge, financial and technical resources and research areas.

Keywords: Airbnb, short-term rental market, web scraping, Airdna, Inside Airbnb

GOALS AND OUTCOMES OF SLOW TOURISM. CASE STUDY OF VOJVODINA PROVINCE

Tamara Božović
Jovana Miljković
Karmen Mikulić

Abstract

Purpose – Numerous new forms aimed at meeting the sophisticated needs of modern consumers characterize tourism, as one of the fastest growing sectors in the world. In such conditions, the concept of slow tourism gained importance accompanied with a strong need to slow down the pace of life. The aim of this paper is, in addition to explaining this phenomenon, to examine the manner of travel when visiting slow destinations in the autonomous province of Vojvodina, as well as to determine the goals and outcomes of tourist visits.

Methodology – For the purposes of the research, authors form list of goals, outcomes and mode of travel. The list of goals and outcomes expected after the trip in the questionnaire was taken and adjusted to the scale applied by the authors Oh, Assaf and Baloglu (2016), while authors introduced some question to the last segment of questions about the mode of travel.

Findings – Based on the results, it is concluded that the ways of travel of slow tourists are largely related to the goals and outcomes of tourists who visited Vojvodina, and all tourists included in this study are highly satisfied with Vojvodina as a slow destination.

Contribution – The contribution of this study is reflected in the fact that slow tourism has not been sufficiently researched in Vojvodina, and this study is significant because it initiated research on this topic, which can be a great potential of this region.

Keywords: slow tourism, slow destinations, consumer behaviour, goals of travel, outcomes of travel, Autonomous Province of Vojvodina

ASSESSMENT OF CONVENTION PARTICIPANTS' SATISFACTION TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENT OF BUSINESS TOURISM OFFER: A CASE STUDY OF ISTRIA, CROATIA

Daniela Gračan
Marina Barkidija Sotošek
Rea Matošević

Abstract

Purpose – of this paper is to analyze participants' profiles (characteristics) and level of their satisfaction with the offer provided in a destination. Convention tourism is extremely useful and has a number of impacts on the economy of a particular destination as well as the country.

Methodology – The empirical research was concerned with exploring trends in convention tourism. The research was conducted in two convention hotels in Poreč using the survey method from 24 to 27 April 2019 and 120 properly filled questionnaires were collected.

Findings – Most of the subjects were satisfied with the audiovisual equipment of the hall, quality of the exhibitors at the convention, convention program and the comfort of the hall, accessibility of the destination, the attractions in the destination, the additional content and the value for money. Participants were not satisfied with the schedule of the event and level of use of technology during the convention, which certainly points to necessary changes in the convention itself.

Contribution – Conventions have an impact on the development of tourism by increasing off-season movements and creating a new image of Istria so the results of this paper could be valuable to the Istrian tourism board but also to the hotels and other facilities who are trying to profit from the convention tourism.

Keywords: Tourism Markets, Business Tourism, Convention Tourism Participants, Tourism Trends, Tourism Requirements

STANDARDIZATION OF SERVICES AS KEY COMPONENTS OF CYCLING TOURISM DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Nataša Slavić
Tanja Ivek

Abstract

Purpose – The objective of this paper is to suggest a development scenario for cycling tourism destinations in the form of a model with identified stages, stakeholders, and activities, contingent upon regional commitment and supported by EU funding. Its purpose is to evaluate the role of service standardization in cycling tourism destination development from the stakeholder perspective.

Methodology – This paper uses the case study approach in capturing practical implications of real-life regional tourism development. The conceptual model is a result of the conducted study and analysis that included qualitative data from strategic documents, implemented actions, and onsite observations, as well as the opinions, attitudes, and suggestions of tourism development stakeholders. Proposed is a more general and widely applicable cycling tourism development model, built around service standardization as the key component.

Findings – Not all regional stakeholders (primarily service providers) demonstrate willingness to adapt to cycling tourism standardization, regardless of the simplicity of criteria for a basic (entrance) level of standardization. Interestingly, service providers that already cater to cycling tourists (or have attempted to) and have adopted some kind of service customization are more responsive to regional standardization initiative. Research results confirm the standpoint of the conceptual model that service standardization plays a key role in cycling tourism development.

Contribution – This research provides more insight into the stakeholder perspective of cycling tourism development. Capturing stakeholder behaviour and attitudes towards service standardization as part of the strategic regional tourism development model offers practical and managerial implications for destination management and other (potential) actors in cycling tourism development. Research results indicate that service standardization is the key component of the destination's cycling tourism development model, influenced by top-down development planning, stakeholder-involvement, and collaborative efforts at each stage.

Keywords: cycling tourism, service standardization, cycling tourism development, cycling tourism destination, cycling tourism development model

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY LITERATURE REVIEW 2010-2020

Nuria Louzao
Clelia Vergé
Sofya Shibaeva
Montserrat Crespi

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to establish a clear image of the most relevant findings on the topic on emotional connection between employee and customer in the hospitality industry, as well as creating a review on the main conclusions extracted from the subject and its different approaches.

Methodology – The literature review developed in the study was based on a systematized bibliographic systematic review process, commonly used in social sciences. Eventually, 348 articles were selected and created a complete review of the literature and theoretical framework, considering that only hospitality related articles were chosen. The topic suitable articles were narrowed into 88 articles according to the keywords and specifications of the study whose systematized review was defined by Stand, Sutton & Papaioannou, (2016). In addition, a tag cloud was developed to find out what were the topics and most mentioned keywords.

Findings – This topic, related with hotel experience management, from both internal and external parts, has no relevant theoretical background, which makes the conducted research important and valuable.

Contribution – The definition and clear establishment of the concept of emotional connection is not sufficiently studied in the existing literature, creating a gap in measuring its level of application and its understanding in hotel companies. Employee engagement is an evolving concept within the business, management, and human resources areas of knowledge. It is a relatively recent approach that has become a widely used term, with real organizational and professional interests, although studies, especially those related to the tourism and hospitality sector are limited. The concepts of emotional connection, employee and customer cannot exist without the other, giving the great importance and field of implementation to research of emotional employment in hospitality, loyalty of customers and the liaison of both.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Engagement, Emotional Connection, Luxury Hotels

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY STUDENTS IN THE FACE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Christian Stipanović
Elena Rudan
Vedran Zubović

Abstract

Purpose – Unfavorable conditions in the macro environment (Covid-19, economic crisis, depopulation) pose new challenges to the tourism industry and thus to the training of future tourism professionals. The aim of this paper is to explore the level of entrepreneurial intention of students at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management in Croatian tourism in response to the modern environment (analysis of the influence of the environment on the level of entrepreneurial intention).

Methodology – The paper investigates the entrepreneurial intentions and skills of students of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management. The research, using a questionnaire based on a sample of 323 undergraduate students, shows the motivation factors of the entrepreneurial intentions in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Exploratory factor analysis is used to establish four levels of motivation to pursue entrepreneurial activity.

Findings – The theoretical level of research analyzes the influence of unfavorable macroeconomic conditions on tourism and their impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions. Existing research mainly focuses on personal challenges which provides the greatest incentive to start a new business. The influence of the social and societal environment is playing the most important role according to the research results.

Contribution – The article determines the level of entrepreneurship of students in tourism who need to develop their skills in a practical sense. The study can be extended to undergraduate students and compared with similar studies conducted in other tourism and hospitality faculties to determine entrepreneurial intention.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial intentions, Covid-19, student, exploratory factor analysis

STORYTELLING AND PRODUCT STOCKING: STRATEGIES APPLIED BY DIASPORA TOURISTS TO SYMBOLICALLY EXTEND THE VISIT TO THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Denis Berberović
Emir Kurtović

Abstract

Purpose – Purpose of this study is to understand how diaspora tourists as a specific tourist segment symbolically extend their holiday in the country of origin upon returning to the country of current living.

Methodology – Aim of the research was to disclose underlying meanings of this specific consumption pattern. Data was collected through 24 semi-structured in-depth interviews with diaspora members from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Analysis was inductive, starting with micro-analysis, proceeding then with axial coding around the revealed concept. Throughout analysis the comparative method was applied, alongside researcher's diary and memos as analytic tools.

Findings – The concept of 'bridging' explains how diaspora tourists cross over from one reality to another on a symbolical level, i.e. when travelling back from the country of origin. It also is a symbolical bridging between complex of identities: the past identities and the present identity, which they have constructed in countries of current living. They seem to use two major strategies: storytelling and product stocking.

Contribution – This paper reveals a new concept among diaspora tourists, i.e. their approach to extend their visit to the country of their origin on a symbolical level by using symbolically laden products. The research is further contributing by disclosing that diaspora tourists apply two different strategies in order to symbolically extend their home country holiday: the story telling strategy and the stocking strategy. Finally, it also suggests that the stocking strategy has two phases; the first phase being 'symbolic representation filling phase' and the second phase labelled as 'mainstream trend purchase phase'.

Keywords: bridging, symbolic consumption, diaspora tourist, home country holiday, qualitative research

MODELLING DYNAMICS OF THE TALC WITH SYSTEM DYNAMICS METHODOLOGY AND DPSIR FRAMEWORK

Marko Hell

Abstract

Purpose – touristic destinations develop over time, which is why, in order to get a comprehensive picture of their development, it is necessary to observe its dynamics.

Methodology – in this paper system dynamics methodology and of DPSIR framework will use. In order to model reasoning behind the TALC behaviour, presented research in this paper leans on TALC logistic curve.

Findings – deeper analysis of the causes and/or consequences elements of destination (sub)system (supply and demand) will indicate way of affect touristic area life cycle dynamics.

Contribution – better understanding of the background structure of TALC pattern behaviour may help destination managers/planners to bring appropriate policies to move destination's sustainability towards higher level of organisation.

Keywords: TALC logistic curve, TALC pattern behaviour, system dynamics, DPSIR, policies

INFORMATION TOOLS FOR CULTURAL TOURISM DESTINATIONS: MANAGING ACCESSIBILITY

Ivor Ambrose
Katerina Papamichail

Abstract

Purpose – This paper is prepared in connection with the H2020 IMPACTOUR project on “Improving Sustainable Development Policies and Practices to access, diversify and foster Cultural Tourism (CT) in European regions and areas”. It addresses the development of indicators for the management of accessibility in European CT destinations, responding to the growing accessible tourism market as a driver of sustainable tourism strategies.

Methodology – The paper describes the development of tools, indicators and metrics for gathering accessibility information, which DMOs may use as part of the IMPACTOUR CT destination management system. It reports on global and European destination management systems and tools, and describes key requirements for accessibility indicators, namely: 1) Validity, 2) Reliability, 3) Universality, 4) Availability, 5) Scalability and 6) Operability.

Findings – A set of “core indicators” and additional “optional indicators” are selected for initial testing in the IMPACTOUR Destination Pilot Sites in various EU countries. Pilot destinations and representative groups of citizens and visitors will be engaged in testing and validating the accessibility parameters of the tool and demonstrating how tourists with access requirements can be suitably catered for within the overall framework of sustainable destination management.

Contribution – The paper describes the development of information tools supporting CT destinations in managing the demands of the growing accessible tourism market. The use of accessibility indicators in destination management is part of the holistic, data-driven approach promoted by IMPACTOUR, aiming to ensure inclusive cultural tourism for all visitors and citizens in the host communities.

Keywords: Cultural Tourism, Destination Management, Accessibility, Indicators

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES OF SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT CULTURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: THE EXPERIENCES FROM SPLIT METROPOLITAN AREA LIVING LAB

Ante Mandić
Smiljana Pivčević
Lidija Petrić

Abstract

Purpose – This paper tends to analyse often-diverging stakeholders' interests to discuss how to manage cultural tourism development in a sustainable and resilient manner.

Methodology – We frame our analysis in the context of cultural tourism development in the recently established Split Metropolitan area LL. The analysis employed phenomenology as a primary research method and in-depth interview and focus group discussions to obtain experiential description.

Findings – In destinations where cultural heritage is underutilised and cultural tourism underdeveloped, progress can be made only with the joint effort and aligning policies with development priorities. LL as open innovation spaces enable collaboration between stakeholders and community-led approaches to address their needs. Tourism development policies should support sustainability and foster resilience by supporting polycentric governance, learning, connectivity between multiple actors, and adaptive behaviour. In participative tourism-focused LL, there is no clear distinction between providers and utilisers as their activities, motives for inclusion and perceived benefits intervene in co-creation processes. The development of human and social capital is the foundation for the success of LL. The synergy between stakeholders is founded on complementarity and embeddedness. This approach where cooperation is built on trust and stakeholders co-design innovative solutions to mitigate challenges will only work if the public sector efforts are framed within competitive and goal-oriented ecosystems.

Contribution – This study addresses the current limitation in the literature on stakeholder participation in tourism LL and sustainable and resilient cultural tourism development using Split Metropolitan area LL as an example.

Keywords: sustainable tourism development, resilience, cultural tourism, stakeholders, living lab, Split

WHY ARE TWO DESTINATIONS WITH HIGH CULTURAL POTENTIAL COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ON THE TOURISM MARKET: THE CASE STUDIES OF DOLNÍ KOUNICE AND LEDNICE (MORAVIA)

Antonín Vaishar
Milada Šťastná
Jiří Brychta

Abstract

Purpose: The paper puts the question of why two destinations with extremely valuable attractions of cultural heritage gain completely different results of the tourism traffic. To find the causes of this inequality is the main aim of the paper.

Methodology: The comparative method was used. Lednice and Dolní Kounice in Southern Moravia were selected as case studies. Statistical data and strategic documents on the regional and local level were analysed.

Findings: It is stated that there are significant differences in the strategic conceptual plans based on which investments in infrastructure are directed. While Dolní Kounice is more of a destination for suburban tourism of the inhabitants of Brno and the historical heritage is only an added value, in the case of Lednice, the use of this heritage for tourism is one of the main development priorities. The paper further notes that cultural tourism is often understood in strategies as a sector of the economy rather than part of the culture.

Contribution: The solution consists of the approach and vision of the people involved in rural development. Intensive tourism development may not always be a priority for local people. On the other hand, cultural heritage must be considered not only as an economic sector but also as part of the identity and spirit of the place.

Keywords: cultural tourism, destination management, rural development, Dolní Kounice, Lednice

THE END OF 'BUSINESS AS USUAL'? REIMAGINING BARCELONA TOURISM AFTER COVID-19

Danielle Bishop
Montserrat Pareja-Eastaway
Montserrat Simó Solsona

Abstract

Purpose – This paper examines the impact of COVID-19 on tourism in Barcelona and identifies the pandemic as a crucial turning point for redefining the sector and reimagining Barcelona's relationship with tourism. The present urgency of reactivating tourism's potential contribution to economic recovery is weighed against the future challenges of post-COVID tourism and Barcelona's need for greater sustainability.

Methodology – We employ a mixed methodology including qualitative analysis based on interviews conducted with stakeholders in the city government and tourism sector, and press and document analysis, as well as quantitative analysis of existing economic and tourism data and the results of a residents' survey undertaken through the project (EU-H2020).

Findings – Barcelona's tourism sector has experienced an unprecedented drop in visitors and revenue throughout the pandemic. The city must embrace new strategies for tourism and development to remain resilient. Cultural tourism offers both a short-term opportunity for economic recovery and a longer-term solution to pre-existing sustainability issues. In addition to capitalizing on Barcelona's wealth of cultural resources to attract "proximity" tourists, cultural tourism affords future opportunities to reduce mass tourism's negative externalities and reimagine a more sustainable tourism model.

Contribution – This paper highlights the role cultural tourism may play in Barcelona's inclusive growth after COVID-19, addressing prior sustainability issues and promoting a more equal distribution of tourism's benefits. It contributes to the ongoing dialogue between researchers and government and tourism actors regarding tourism's role in local development and the future of the city, thus contributing to future strategies and policies.

Keywords: Tourism, Cultural Tourism, COVID-19, Sustainable Cities, Sustainability

COVID-19 AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES: THE IMPACTOUR PILOTS COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

Pedro Pereira
João Martins
Graham Bell
Tarmo Kalvet
Shabnam Pasandideh

Abstract

Purpose – The quest for sustainable cultural tourism is undoubtedly connected with local communities. What can Cultural Tourism give to local communities in these times of crisis? It should be a leverage to increase their sense of pride, whether that lies in the cultural or natural environment. New ways of enlightening local communities should be pursued. They should learn how to cultivate resilience, to discover new ways of Cultural Tourism promotion and to better communicate their local cultural and natural splendours. Each place is unique and that should be advertised as a major attraction. Local communities, the ones more affected by the Cultural Tourism drawback, must be prepared, and should pave the way, contributing to the economic recovery. This paper presents the approaches taken by IMPACTOUR Project Pilots Community members to overcome COVID- 19 issues.

Methodology – The data gathering for this paper followed a methodology based on surveys, webinars and workshops, inside the IMPACTOUR project pilots.

Findings – A common belief is that digital is the key to sustainable Cultural Tourism. Different solutions were reported, such as digitalization of museums' content, digital campaigns towards tourists, more and easily understandable digital information, digital events or digital marketing. Several destinations suffered a huge reduction in international mass tourism, but an increase of local and cross-border tourism was found as the “new normal”. Local tourism emerged as a way to mitigate the adverse pandemic effects. Above all the sense of pride in local communities was a strategy followed by many IMPACTOUR Pilots Community members, making us confident that the tourism sector will be able to rise up again and make a comeback based on resilience, optimism, daring and innovative approaches. The Sustainability-Green-Digital triangle could be the key to unlock hidden treasures and move towards new and more sustainable Cultural Tourism business models.

Contribution – It is common knowledge that the tourism sector, which accounted for 9% of the worldwide GDP and 8% of total employment in 2019, and particularly the Cultural Tourism sector, which represented 37% of the tourism sector with a 15% annual growth in 2018, were deeply impacted by the current pandemic. Based on our research, the results of this paper are applicable as a resilient strategy for Cultural Tourism Communities. The findings are a new approach, the sustainability-green-digital triangle, which can be seen as a instrument for decision and policymakers to reboot their strategies and find best practices for any future unpredictable situation. Nevertheless, the obtained results showed that the pandemic can be seen as an opportunity to apply new technologies, test our solidarity, cooperation and resilience as a society.

Keywords: Cultural Tourism, COVID-19, Resilience, Local Communities, IMPACTOUR

DEVELOPING AN INDICATOR-BASED FRAMEWORK TO MEASURE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN ROMANIA. A TERRITORIAL APPROACH

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Paul-Răzvan Șerban
Ines Grigorescu
Nicoleta Damian
Irena Mocanu
Monica Dumitrașcu
Cristina Dumitrică

Abstract

Purpose – Sustainable tourism increases relevance in National Agendas to foster economic growth, social inclusiveness, the protection of cultural and natural assets. According to Kester (2017), Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST) requires: a coverage of economic, environmental and social factors; the development of the framework should build on existing statistical standards; sub-national spatial scales are fundamental; several indicators are needed to assess sustainability instead of a single or composite indicator. In this view, the current paper aims to (1) identify the indicators needed to assess the local tourism sustainability at NUTS5 level; (2) to analyze the territorial disparities of the indicators employed and (3) to develop a Composite Index for each territorial level to measure sustainable tourism.

Methodology – Assessing tourism sustainability requires constant monitoring. The study was performed using the statistical data available at NUTS5/LAU level provided by the National Institute of Statistics. In addition, the general overview relies on various data and information extracted from documents published by the UNWTO, National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism, the World Bank, EUROSTAT etc. The authors have selected 10 statistical indicators in order to highlight the main components for tourism sustainability by using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The current patterns of sustainable development of tourism and the territorial inequalities at a micro-scale were assessed based on a Sustainable Tourism Index (STI). In addition, to observe the way in which the indicators interact and determine each other and to analyze the territorial disparities, the Hierarchical Ascending Classification was used.

Findings – The values of STI ranged from 54,500 in Bucharest City and 49,284 in Gogoșu, a small commune in Dolj County. High STI values are characteristic for 11 LAUs, the majority being urban centers and only two, large cities: Bucharest and Constanța. Almost half of the LAUs having the STI with a medium-high degree have important touristic natural resources: the Southern and Western Carpathians and Transylvania Plateau; the Black Sea coast and the Danube Delta; and a small area in the North of Bucharest. Medium STI values are mainly registered by rural settlements (594) located in the Carpathian and Subcarpathian regions, as well as in the extensive area of the Dobrogea and Transylvania Plateaus. Low-medium STI values are generally near the national average and include more than 2,000 LAUs. Low STI includes 301 rural LAUs mainly located in the SW, S and NE parts of Romania.

Contribution – Studies such as the present one are meant to provide a methodological framework that will be useful in the quantitative assessment of the sustainable level of tourism development in terms of economic, social and environmental performance. As a result, by applying a Sustainable Tourism Index the authors were able to assess the tourism development level at country scale in Romania, delineating the most advantaged/disadvantaged areas. The analysis of sustainable tourism in Romania shows that tourism performance is more consolidated in the big cities, on the Black Sea coast, in the Danube Delta and the Carpathian Mountains. By calculating the STI for each NUTS5/LAU, the management of tourism destinations in Romania could fully benefit from the resulted quantitative and qualitative results to further support sustainable development.

Keywords: tourism sustainability; economic, social and environmental indicators; territorial disparities; Romania

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TOURISTS AND FUTURE TOURISM EMPLOYEES IN THE PERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND SOFT SKILLS

Ana Čuić Tanković
Jelena Kapeš
Valentina Kraljić

Abstract

Purpose – Besides possessing professional knowledge, tourism service providers need to have expressed communication skills and soft skills in order to offer a better tourism product. In this paper, the tourism employees' set of soft and communication skills is analysed and compared from two different points of view: tourists on the one hand and future tourism professionals, i.e., tourism students, on the other. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to analyse the differences in the perception of soft skills and communication skills in the hospitality sector from these two standpoints.

Methodology – Two structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data: the first questionnaire aimed at examining the tourists' attitudes regarding the impact of soft and communication skills (N=431), and the second one, at analysing the importance of soft skills from the perspective of future tourism professionals (N=404). The research results are presented using descriptive statistics, the t-test, and the Mann-Whitney U test.

Findings – The results show statistically significant differences between the tourist sample and the future tourism professional sample in their perceptions of all items of the Soft skills factor, with the exception of the items Demonstrating respect, Integrity, and Responsibility, where no statistically significant differences were found. Both samples show similarities with regard to all kinds of Communication skills. Statistically significant differences in the perception of all five Communication skills items from tourists' and future tourism professionals' perspectives were found.

Contribution – The theoretical contribution of the paper is the systematization and analysis of the literature of the conceptualization of soft and communication skills up to date, while its empirical contribution is based on the examination of collected data related to the tourist sample and the future tourism employee sample. This different point of view contributes to filling the research gap and opens new future research directions. By examining the most important soft skills and communication skills from these two perspectives, this study's practical implication for hospitality managers is that it is important for them to invest more effort in developing the communication skills and soft skills of their employees.

Keywords: communication skills; soft skills; tourism employees; tourists

THE COVID-19 CONSEQUENCES ON EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE PROJECTS AND CHALLENGES MANAGERS ARE FACING IN NEW TOURISM ERA

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Tamara Jovanović
Lazar Lazić
Tamara Zelenović Vasiljević
Nemanja Milenković

Abstract

Purpose – Tourism industry is facing unexpected economic consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak, indicating the need for knowledge that would support the crisis management in rapidly changed market conditions. Such difficulties increased the managers' and decision makers' anxiety and put a pressure on actions with uncertain outcomes. Tourism has become a top priority in Serbia, which is supported by the fact that Novi Sad was declared European Capital of Culture (ECoC) 2021. Authors analyzed the consequences on the ECoC Novi Sad (Serbia).

Methodology – The research was conducted in the form of interviews with representatives of the leading institutions related to the ECoC project and tourism of the City of Novi Sad, institutions in the field of the ECoC project management, tourism and creative industries, as well as the leading institution for tourist promotion of the City.

Findings – The main findings are indicating the fact that respondents' marketing and management concepts, applied in the previous year of the crisis, are proactive and reflected in the following activities: planning, organizing, communicating, controlling. The main issues were related to the following topics: Modifications in the business since the moment when the COVID-19 pandemic was declared until today; Assessment of the travel risk/benefit perception and activities related to mitigation/exploitation of such circumstances and; Recommendations in the field of the crisis management segment for the next ECoC.

Contribution – This research will focus on building a knowledge base for various stakeholders from different sectors in terms of developing the guidelines for the risk management strategies.

Keywords: COVID-19, European Capital of Culture, Novi Sad, Rijeka, tourism, management

Abstract

Purpose – Contemporary tourism in many developed destinations relies on natural resources, many of which can be directly valorised as tourist attractions. Within natural resources, geoheritage (geological heritage) consists sites or areas of geological features with significant scientific, educational, cultural or aesthetic value. Despite its multiple values, the attractive geosites and their valorisation in tourism are still insufficiently covered.

Methodology – This paper, aims to present the state of the art in a form of a research overview of geoheritage valorisation in tourism by analysing the WoSCC database. The results of overviewing 171 scientific papers on keywords geoheritage and tourism are presented and interpreted in the form of qualitative and quantitative analysis, maps, tabular and graphical representations. To identify the main research links and streams between geoheritage and tourism the bibliometric analysis is carried out using VOSviewer software.

Findings – The papers are classified and it is revealed an insufficient representation of research in the field of tourist valorisation of geoheritage. It is also notable the spatial inhomogeneity towards interest in geoheritage research.

Contribution – The paper brings a research agenda for covering gaps in the further scientific research of the field. The research also points out some possible streams and framework for future geoheritage research that offers new opportunities for the growth of tourism as a responsible and sustainable industry.

Keywords: tourism, sustainable tourism, natural heritage, geoheritage, tourist attractions

TRUST AS THE ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS IN A PROJECT PROCESS

Sandra Barac Miffarevic
Marko Paliaga

Abstract

Purpose – In recent researches, the concept of trust in a project process appears to be the one of the most significant elements. A project process involves numerous actors with often clashing interests difficult to adjust during cooperation, but the leading aim is common to all - an accomplished project. This empirical research analyzes two dimensions of trust, according to Rousseau's dimensions of trust (calculus-based and relational-based trust), in a relationship with the satisfaction with a work relationship in a project process and project outcomes, success or failure, to try to explore its mutual correlation and its predictors influence on project outputs.

Methodology – A questionnaire was delivered through Survey Monkey platform on 750 e-mail addresses in Croatia with a response rate of 13.2% (99 respondents). A correlation analysis and multiple linear regression were used to analyze collected data.

Findings – The results of an analysis revealed that trust is an essential factor in the project process, which leads to the satisfaction of players with the working relationships in a project process, and to the project's success or failure. Further the results revealed that trust is perceived as a base operator in a project process. Trust deficit can point to significant issues even before the dawn of project process, so it is a prerequisite to bring together all targets, and clashed interests.

Contribution – A trust in a project process is a complex construct which demands further debate, and this analysis is an attempt to add further scientific insight about the relevance of trust in a relationship among the participants, and at the same time provides an application design with the opportunity to foresee a behavior of stakeholders engaged in a process. A wise leader will gather on all components in an equation, trying to identify the most effective approach to carry out and execute the project with success.

Keywords: calculus-based trust, relational-based trust, satisfaction with a work relationship, project, project success, project failure

THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE USE OF MOBILE APPLICATIONS BY THE LOCAL POPULATION IN THE SMART TOURISM DESTINATION

Zrinka Zadel
Nikolina Šerić Honović
Damir Magaš

Abstract

Purpose – During the COVID-19 pandemic, the ways of using technology have expanded, i.e. more and more residents in their area have been using the advantages of technology development for satisfying their everyday needs. The purpose of this paper is to determine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the use of mobile applications by the local population in Rijeka as a smart tourism destination.

Methodology – The research will be conducted in the form of a structural questionnaire among the local population of the city of Rijeka. The extent to which the local population has been using smart technology in Rijeka before and during the pandemic will be explored. The descriptive statistics and t-test will be used to analyse the research results.

Findings – The paper will determine the importance of smart technology for both locals and tourists. The analysis of the research results will define which smart technologies in the pandemic conditions make it easier for the local population to fulfil their everyday obligations, and therefore also for tourists who mainly arrive to satisfy their basic life needs.

Contribution – The obtained research results will be of use to the destination management when designing the tourism product of the destination because the research will provide the information on which smart technologies are necessary to be developed in order to meet the basic needs of tourists in a destination which is safe and easy to "consume". Today, the decision to travel is primarily influenced by the protection of tourists' health in a destination.

Keywords smart destination; mobile applications; the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; local population

ICTS AND MOBILE APPLICATIONS FOR PROMOTING TOURISM DESTINATIONS: THE CASE OF SMART MARCA APP.

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Roberto Pierdicca
Mattia Balestra
Emanuele Frontoni
Alessio Cavicchi

Abstract

Purpose – In last decades, digital technologies have progressively transformed tourism becoming an opportunity to satisfy the demand for cultural tourism, increasingly asking for immersive and interactive experiences. This paper investigates the connections among tourism, cultural heritage, and ICT, by providing an assessment of how these applications can influence customers' intentions to visit a destination. To this aim, the case of Smart Marca - a mobile tourism app aimed at promoting cultural tourism in Fermo area (Marche Region, Italy)- is presented.

Methodology – The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been adopted as a framework to explore customer intentions to adopt tourism apps and visit a destination. A survey on a sample of 128 university students has been conducted. Starting from the TAM framework elaborated by Kuo and colleagues (2019), a grid of 8 influencing factors has been built, in order to investigate young users' attitudes towards continuing using the app, adopting other similar mobile apps and visiting one or more of the attractions presented within the app.

Findings – The survey found that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use play major roles on attitudes towards continuing to use Smart Marca and adopting other similar applications. Results also show that specific features of a mobile app can positively affect the intention to visit a destination.

Contribution – The research highlights that new technologies, and mobile apps, could play a crucial role for the promotion of a destination. Results may be also useful in terms of marketing, to increase the ability of the mobile app to attract tourists.

Keywords: ICT, e-tourism, mobile tourism app, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), cultural tourism, experiential tourism

THE CONCEPT OF SHADOW DESTINATION & VALUE CREATION

Anna Sörensson
Ulrich Schmudde

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of shadow destinations. What value do shadow destinations create to the main attraction in a region? How can a shadow destination create a value of its own?

Methodology – The study was constructed as a qualitative multiple case study. Five different shadow destinations in Sweden were selected based on stratified selection. Sweden was divided into five regions and one destination from each region was identified. Data was collected through interviews, observations and through written materials during 2019-2020.

Findings – The findings show that shadow destinations are highly dependent on some sort of main attraction in the region. The results also show that there exist different types of relationships between the shadow destinations and the main attraction. The results also show that shadow destinations can create value for the tourists to become more important for the tourism region, as well as a main destination by themselves.

Contribution – The theoretical contribution from this study shows that the concept of shadow destinations has not been addressed in any larger extent in tourism research. This study shows that this concept needs further studies. It gives contributions to tourism development of shadow destinations.

Keywords: destination, shadow destination, tourism development, value, value creation

PERCEIVED WELLBEING – MATURE VS. DEVELOPING TOURIST DESTINATION

Daniela Soldić Frleta

Abstract

Purpose – The main study purpose was to explore whether there are any differences between the residents of mature and developing tourist destinations with regard to perceived wellbeing, personal economic benefits of tourism, and overall benefits and costs that tourism generates. Moreover, the aim was to identify the determinants of the residents' perceived overall wellbeing.

Methodology – An onsite approach was used to collect data during 2019 and up to February 2020. The target population were individuals residing in Istria County (a mature tourist destination) and Krapina-Zagorje County (a developing tourist destination). Descriptive statistics was used for sample profiling, and principal component analysis was conducted to identify the overall wellbeing dimensions. Regression analyses were carried out for the purpose of identifying the factors that influence residents' overall wellbeing.

Findings – The findings indicate that there are significant differences in all observed concepts. The results indicate that the residents' perceived overall wellbeing is influenced by a variety of factors: county of residence (mature/developing tourist destination), level of support for tourism development, income, age, and perceived tourism benefits and costs.

Contribution – This study aims to add value to the literature on residents' wellbeing by examining the relationship between residents' perceived tourism-generated benefits and costs in their community, personal economic benefits of tourism, sociodemographic characteristics and their perceived overall wellbeing in two types of destinations - mature and developing.

Keywords: wellbeing; tourism; mature destination; developing destination; residents

IMAGE FORMATION IN RURAL TOURISM DESTINATION

Ivana Pavlić
Ana Portolan
Barbara Puh

Abstract

Purpose – Tourism can be an efficient factor of quality and sustainable development especially in the countryside. Nowadays many rural communities are facing agriculture decline and tourism can enable a new concept of economic development. Rural tourism is multifaceted since it can consolidate agriculture, forestry, farming, heritage with numerous and various tourism activities far away from urban center and mass tourism. Forming positive tourism image in such destination is essential. The focal purpose of this paper is to empirically test a concept of rural tourism destination image formation which did not fully commercialize their potential as a tourism destination and to define the relationship between different parameters and the image of rural tourism destination.

Methodology – For the purpose of identification the relationship amidst different parameters and rural tourism destination image empirical research has been conducted applying accessible deliberate sample of tourists (600) who had visited rural areas near famous world tourism destination - Dubrovnik, Croatia in a period June 2017 - January 2018. 534 questionnaires were found to be fulfilled correctly and were used in further analysis. Data were analyzed in three steps. First, to detect the sub dimensions of affective and cognitive determinants of image exploratory factor analysis was enforced. Secondly, to test validity of the dimension of the different image components, confirmatory factor analysis was used. Thirdly, structural equation modeling was used to examine which dimension has important influence on the rural tourism destination overall.

Findings – The findings suggest several differences among various analyzed image dimensions. The affective dimension of the image has an important aspect in image formation and has significant influence on the rural tourism destination overall image.

Contribution – The results of this paper have provided useful strategic direction for the rural tourism destination in order to improve their competitiveness. To upgrade the current image into the marketing strategy, affective image dimension of the rural tourism destination such as experience should be presented in the further marketing communication of the regional and national tourist boards.

Keywords: image formatting, rural tourism destination, Dubrovnik Neretva County

IMPACT OF FISHING TOURISM ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TOURIST DESTINATION

Krešimir Dabo
Filip Babli
Romana Lekić

Abstract

The tourist offer of Croatia, especially in rural areas, needs to be expanded, so it is considered that fishing tourism is an ideal solution for rural areas to develop in the direction of tourism, but also to complement developed tourist destinations with new forms of tourism. The aim of this paper is to analyze fishing tourism and its impact on the development of destinations and to present ideas for improving fishing tourism in Croatia in order to take advantage of the great potential that has been neglected. Educating and involving the local population of the destination in fishing tourism could achieve good results because fishing would no longer be considered as an occasional source of food, but as a sustainable source of tourist product and supply, if well managed. The development of fishing tourism also reduces mass tourism and its negative impact on the tourist destination and its resources.

Keywords: fishing tourism, Croatia, tourist destination, sustainability

SIMPLE TOURISM SECTOR DEVELOPMENT INDEX: CRISES VALUES

Dorđe Mitrović
Sabina Taškar Beloglavec

Abstract

Purpose – The paper aims to construct a simple tourism sector development index reacting to crises occurrences.

Methodology – Paper is two-folded, theoretical background with literature overview and empirical part based on the DEA method. Instead of using a vast number of different individual indicators measuring countries' tourism performance, it is more appropriate to use one composite index to depict complex tourism development issues in a particular country. The composite index proposed in this paper TSDI, was developed using DEA encompassing tourism soundness and macroeconomic data.

Findings – We are especially interested in index values in the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic crises relatively to the previous and following year. Therefore, the data time series include the annual data of selected tourism soundness factors from 2016 to 2020. The paper has three hypotheses dealing with simple tourism sector development index (TSDI) values during crises and the correlation of this calculated index to The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) and The Global Competitiveness Index (GCI).

Contribution – The paper may offer some basic policy recommendations for policymakers as it may be applied as a relatively simple tool for professionals to assess future crises or economic shocks implications on the tourism sector. The TSDI proposed in this paper can point at the differences in countries' responses to crises shock that could be influenced by government policies aimed at tourism sector development. TSDI is, due to its simplicity, a good tool for practitioners to use in monitoring and placing recommendations for improvements.

Keywords: Tourism, Composite index, DEA, Crises, Competitiveness

BUSINESS CONDITIONS REGIONAL ANALYSIS WITH A REFERENCE TO POTENTIALS IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF SERBIA

Dorđe Mitrović
Emilija Manić
Slobodan Ivanović

Abstract

Purpose – Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the world, and many developing countries saw it as the chance of economic development accelerating. However, tourism potential is different among countries as well as within one country. The scope of this paper is to reveal the regional differences of business conditions considering tourism development in Serbia.

Methodology – Instead of using a wide number of different individual indicators measuring regions' tourism performances, it is more appropriate to use one composite indicator for depicting complex issues in regional tourism development - a composite index was developed using Data Envelopment Analysis. Data Envelopment Analysis is a sort of methodology that constructs an 'efficiency frontier' based on each region's individual data using mathematical linear programming. It determines the best practice by measuring the relative position of each of regions in terms of the value of the set of observed indicators. Such presentation of the existing region's development in the tourism field and recommendations for possible improvement are clearer to the general public and non-scientific audience. The composite index is calculated as the weighted sum of the corresponding individual indicators, where the weights are endogenously determined by mathematical linear programming to obtain the maximum possible value.

Findings – The results of DEA showed which parts of Serbia have the best business conditions for tourism development, considering the different factors (regional development index and sub-indexes). The results have been contrasted to chosen tourism statistics on the regional level, with a reference to the limitations during the research process. The proposed composite index is used to point the differences in regional business conditions which could be further influenced by government policies to tackle the specificities and needs of each separate region during tourism development.

Contribution – DEA is a known methodology in regional development analysis, but it hasn't been so much used in business conditions regional analysis before. Having different indicators which shaped business climate within one region, using DEA one tried to analyze the entrepreneurship possibilities with a spatial reference to the tourism development. This is an important contribution in the context of local economic and social development especially within poorly developed regions in Serbia.

Keywords: business conditions, tourism, development, DEA, entrepreneurship

MOTIVATION-BASED IDENTITY OF ISLAND DESTINATIONS AND TOURIST SATISFACTION: THE CASE OF CROATIA

Lorena Bašan
Antonia Škravan
Jelena Kapeš
Ivana Prižmić
Marinko Franulović

Abstract

Purpose – This study focuses on common identity attributes of Croatian island destinations based on pull travel motivators. Its main purpose is to determine the significance of the gaps between the importance and performance of these attributes, as well as to examine their influence on overall satisfaction and destination brand loyalty.

Methodology - The survey was conducted in Croatia in 2020, using two interrelated questionnaires designed for two target groups, domestic tourists and Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) managers. A total of 116 valid questionnaires were collected from tourists and 6, from the DMOs of all coastal counties. Importance-performance analysis (IPA) was applied, followed by a paired sample t-test and simple linear regression analysis.

Findings – The IPA results show a negative and statistically significant difference between the importance and performance of natural and cultural attributes, making them the key points of future interest for DMO managers. The regression analysis results show a statistically significant and positive influence of all island destination attributes on overall satisfaction, and the significant positive influence of satisfaction on destination brand loyalty.

Contribution – The research provides evidence on satisfaction and loyalty concerning the main motivation-based identity attributes of island destinations. The results can help DMO managers to reallocate marketing efforts from low- to high-impact areas to achieve satisfaction and brand loyalty. The findings can also help reinforce the collaborative marketing activities of Croatian island destinations based on common identity attributes.

Keywords: motivation-based identity, identity attributes, tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty, island destination

TOURIST ACCOMMODATION IN HOUSEHOLDS – PERCEPTION OF SERVICE QUALITY

Ana-Marija Vrtodušić Hrgović
Elisabeth Brito
Ema Petaković

Abstract

Purpose – The research focuses on analysing the service quality in tourist accommodation in households. The aim of this paper is to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in the perception of quality service (technical and functional quality aspect), with emphasis on quality improvement.

Methodology – The research was based on a structured questionnaire, that was carried out during the summer months of 2020, on a sample of 168 tourists who stayed in tourist accommodation in households. According to the type of data obtained, statistical differences between multiple groups are examined using nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis H Test in IBM SPSS Statistic software.

Findings – The results indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the perception of service quality with regard to socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Foreign guests visiting Croatia and staying in tourist accommodation in households rate the quality of service at a higher rate compared to domestic guests. Regarding the differences based on qualification levels and age, individuals with university degrees, and those in the age group 60-77 tend to give statistically significantly higher ratings to quality elements.

Contribution – The scientific contribution of the research is seen in widening the knowledge on service quality as well as the development of a measuring instrument for measuring service quality taking in to account tourist accommodation in households. Its practical contribution can be seen in the comparison of service quality dimensions, taking into account socio - demographic characteristics of respondents, based on which improvement of quality can be made in this segment of accommodation offer.

Keywords: tourist accommodation in households, service quality, quality improvement

EXISTING ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY, FACTOR OF INFLUENCE ON TOURIST ARRIVALS. CASE STUDY: CALARASI COUNTY, ROMANIA

Cosmin Nicolae Mirea
Puiu Nistoreanu

Abstract

Purpose – The existence of accommodation capacity is an indispensable condition for carrying out tourist activities. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to find out the influence of accommodation capacity on the number of tourists, the number of overnight stays and the average stay, so as to highlight the importance of this indicator for the tourist potential of Calarasi County.

Methodology – In order to analyze the influence of the existing accommodation capacity on the number of tourists, the number of overnight stays and the average stay, the simple regression model was used, so as to find out what percentage of the dependent variables is explained by the dependent variable. The Eviews program was used to create the simple regression model.

Findings – Following the application of regression, we found out that in Calarasi County, 30% of the variation in the number of tourists is explained by the variation in existing accommodation capacity. There is also a weak link between existing accommodation capacity and the number of nights spent.

Contribution – The present study focused on the influence of accommodation capacity on some indicators of tourist traffic, and the results could meet the decisions that local authorities could take regarding the support of accommodation units in the county.

Keywords: existing accommodation capacity, number of tourists, Calarasi county, regression, correlation coefficient, Romania

VISITING AND RE-VISITING TOURIST DESTINATION DUBROVNIK

Marija Dragičević Čurković

Abstract

Purpose – According to the researchers there are different factors influence visiting and revisiting tourist destination. The paper present the results of the research referring to the customers satisfaction with the elements of tourist offer, as well as the factors important for the first visit and re-visit to the tourist destination Dubrovnik. The aim of the paper is to explore the customers' satisfaction with components of the tourist destination product and importance of chosen factors during the first visit and re-visit to the tourist destination Dubrovnik.

Methodology – For the purpose of this paper the primary research has been carried out in Dubrovnik in 2018. including the sample of 420 tourists. The 25% of tourists have been re-visitors. The questionarre has had three different groups of questions. The first group of questions refered to the sociodemographic characteristics of respondents, the second to the source of information, third group of questions to the customers' satisfaction with elements of tourist offer and the fourth group of questions referred to the factors important for visiting and re-visiting tourist destination Dubrovnik.

Findings – According to the data which has been collected in Dubrovnik there is no significant difference in customers' satisfaction level with accomodation facilities during the first visit and revisit. The similar situation is in the area of food and restaurants services, entertainment facilities and excursions, but there is a decreasing satisfaction with transport and shopping. It is also visible that the price of the tourist product is not the important element for first itme visitors and re-visitors. Reducing the risk of an unsatisfactory experience is important for the first time visitors, and also for re-visitors to tourist destination Dubrovnik. To experience some aspects which were omitted on a previous visit is especially important for re-visitors. The return visitors have pointed out the importance of achieving some experience in a different/ new way and they have stated it as very high priority element.

Contribution – The paper defines new elements important for re-visiting tourist destination Dubrovnik. The results of the primary reseach and provided recommendations based on the results of the research could be used in planning and creating tourist destination offer.

Keywords: first visit, revisit, factors, tourist destination, Dubrovnik

BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF POSTGRADUATE DISSERTATIONS PUBLISHED ON THE SUBJECT OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM: A COMPARISON OF TURKEY, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Emre Ozan Aksöz
İpek İtir Can
Ervin Mihelj

Abstract

The study aims to examine postgraduate dissertations in the areas of social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship in tourism and entrepreneurship in tourism published in Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States through bibliometric analysis. For this purpose, a total of 126 doctoral dissertations published between 2015-2020 were reached through Proquest Dissertations, YÖK National Dissertations Center, EThOS British Library and EBSCO Dissertations databases. The obtained dissertations were discussed in line with parameters of country where the dissertations were prepared, type of the dissertations, publication year of the dissertations, title of the dissertation's supervisor, university where the dissertations were prepared, field of study of the dissertations, and research method used in the dissertations. In conclusion, it was found that Turkey was behind the United Kingdom and the United States in terms of quantity of doctoral dissertations published about social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in tourism. Social entrepreneurship in tourism has been found to be a current issue that needs to be researched and has a large literature gap for all three countries.

Keywords: Bibliometric analysis, Entrepreneurship, Social entrepreneurship, The United Kingdom, The United States of America, Turkey

SENTIMENT ANALYSIS AND MULTIMODAL APPROACH APPLIED TO SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Jelena Musanovic
Raffaella Folgieri
Maja Gregoric

Abstract

Purpose – The importance of the "data gold rush" that occurs in real time on various social media platforms is recognized by various tourism stakeholders and researcher. To extract knowledge from textual data, the purpose of this study is to apply text mining techniques to social media data.

Methodology – Descriptive statistical analysis is conducted to quantify the activity of hotel brands on Facebook. The topic modelling technique Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) is used to extract and validate knowledge from text data of 25 Croatian four- and five- star hotel brands that were active on social media in 2019. Sentiment analysis is used to identify personal attitudes expressed through user-generated text that hotel brands promote by posting messages on Facebook pages.

Findings – The LDA analysis of the Croatian hotel posts extracted 6 topics: Wellbeing, Atmosphere, Promotion, Gastronomy, Surrounding and Satisfaction. The results of the sentiment analysis indicated that Facebook page followers are more likely to express positive sentiments reflecting an overall satisfaction with the promoted products, services and staff by hotel brands.

Contribution – It is a unique study that provides an analysis of textual data in Croatian hospitality research. The application of the multimodal approach contributes to a better uses of contents in possible different strategies so that effective indicators can be given to perform an effective communication. This study provides recommendations, challenges, and current insights into applied communication strategies for marketers to increase a greater number of tourists visiting destinations.

Keywords: tourism, hospitality, social media, text analysis, sentiment analysis, Latent Dirichlet Allocation

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN TOURISM EDUCATION AND TOURISM EMPLOYMENT IN CROATIA: A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM PERSPECTIVE

Oliver Kesar
Danijela Ferjanić Hodak
Ema Roginić

Abstract

Purpose – The main purpose of this research was to analyze the position of vocational education in Croatia from the perspective of tourism high school teaching staff. The main objective was to propose state regulations to limit the access of non-professionals to specialized jobs in tourism, and to enhance the status of tourism vocational education.

Methodology – Desk research was focused on the analysis of available body of knowledge related to tourism employment and tourism education. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. The research sample included 104 tourism high school vocational teachers in Croatia. For data evaluation, both inferential and descriptive statistics were used.

Findings – Although Croatia heavily relies on the economic benefits from tourism, its performance is often diminished due to labor market mismatch in terms of specialization, knowledge and skills. This research determined that Croatia has a well-established and prospective high school education system for tourism, but lacks of image among employers and young generations. The state market regulation of tourism employment and the improvement of 'dual education model' of tourism education were strongly supported by respondents.

Contribution – The theoretical contribution of this research is in determined long term gaps in matching tourism education outcomes and tourism employment practices. Empirical contribution is derived from the analysis of attitudes and perception of tourism-oriented teaching staff regarding the improvement of tourism education and employment. Practical contribution is in providing empirically proved policy recommendations, while social contribution can be recognized in promoting tourism education and professionalism to young generations.

Keywords: tourism vocational education, tourism employment, labor market regulation, Croatia

INFORMATIVE, EDUCATIONAL, AND PROMOTIONAL ROLE OF GEOCACHING IN THE REGION

Ewa Pisula

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to discuss the potential of geocaching as an informative, educational, and promotional tool that can be implemented and managed in a particular area. This paper concentrates on the features of the game and the potential benefits of geocaching for the region. The article also explains the reason why geocaching can be treated as an attractive tool of regional communication and promotion. **Methodology** – Desk research method and own research including semi-structured interviews among Officers of Polish Marshal's Offices (14 out of 16 in Poland) were applied to achieve the paper's purpose. In addition, the data obtained from the websites: www.geocaching.pl and www.geocaching.com was analysed as a source for market information.

Findings – Findings from the literature review show that players expect geocaching to play an informative, educational, and promotional role. Geocaching is perceived as an attractive tool to showcase the region. Findings from interviews show that regional Officers treat geocaching as a modern tool that can be used to build the region's image and present its values.

Contribution – This article proved that geocaching could become a useful and an attractive informative, educational, and promotional tool for regions. Since this kind of game is not commonly used by regional managers in Poland, it is important to analyse its possibilities. As such, this paper is of value to region management seeking solutions to present and make the region more recognizable.

Keywords: geocaching, region information, education, region recognition, region promotion

ROLE OF MAAS IN TOURISM

Ivana Martinčević
Predrag Brlek
Nives Domjan

Abstract

Purpose – The occurrence of bottlenecks, congestion, increased fuel consumption and environmental pollution are the basic problems of large urban areas, especially when it comes to tourist areas where with the local population roads are used by visitors who, during or after a stay are looking for some way of transportation. Regardless of the final destinations, the tourist activity strives to meet the needs and requirements of visitors to the maximum, so their offer must be attractive, fast and accessible at all times, as well as adaptable to changes in travel habits. With regard to the specific criteria of the local economic, social and environmental policy mobility services should be adapted to different target groups, including a unique travel option that would facilitate the stay of tourists. The aim of this paper is to: (1) analyze and investigate the importance of MaaS concept (2) explore the benefits of MaaS Concept in area of tourism (3) and to provide literature review from these areas.

Methodology – For the purposes of writing this article, new Croatian and world literature has been used and analyzed and authors can be considered as representative authors in the field of interest of this topic. The papers were selected by searching various databases, such as Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar, using the search phrase ("mobility as a service" OR sustainable development) AND ("transport" OR "tourism"). For this purpose, a survey was conducted to explore the importance of MaaS in the field of tourism on the basis of which the advantages and benefits of the mentioned concept as one of the main conditions for sustainable development were analyzed.

Findings – As no research has been conducted in the territory of the Republic of Croatia that investigates the application of the MaaS concept in the field of tourism and its importance and contribution to strengthening tourism, this research contributes to strengthening the awareness of individuals about this concept and its application. The intention and goal of this research was to make aware general public of the importance of the MaaS concept. Although MaaS concept is a relatively new concept it takes on increasing importance; therefore, it needs to be strongly and systematically developed further. By analyzing the relevant scientific sources and the results of the research, it can be concluded that a strategic approach to the MaaS concept can provide the a numerous of advantages and benefits. Recommendations for further research is to include in the research data from other countries of the European Union (EU) or from neighboring countries in order to be able to compare data by specific areas.

Contribution – By introducing the concept of MaaS in the segment of tourism, it opens the possibility for visitors to access a wide selection of public and private carriers through a digital platform. The trip for each user is planned separately according to the previously collected data on the demand and supply of transport services, combining them with

information on the preferences of the participants themselves. Simply put, the traveler can plan, book and pay for any trip, anywhere and at any time. Simultaneous planning of tourism and transport is not an easy task because in most cases these plans diverge, but the cooperation of stakeholders of both branches is necessary for more attractive and environmentally friendly measures of sustainable mobility that ultimately affect the development of tourism. The obtained results can be used to expand the current scientific knowledge about the MaaS concept and its impact in the field of tourism.

Keywords: mobility, mobility as a service, sustainable development, tourism

ASSOCIATING TO CREATE UNIQUE TOURIST EXPERIENCES OF SMALL WINERIES IN CONTINENTAL CROATIA – OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Rikard Bakan
Dejan Tubic
Bozidar Jakovic

Abstract

Purpose – the purpose of this paper is to explore the possibilities of creating an integrated tourist product based on traditional wine production, wine culture and gastronomy, heritage and customs on the example of a small wine-growing area in Virovitica-Podravina County.

Methodology – the authors of this paper wanted to examine the views and attitudes of small winery owners considering possibilities of developing a wholesome oeno-gastro experience. Based on the studied literature connected with wine and gastrotourism and the experience economy, as well as based on a field research of the mentioned area, the authors have conducted a structured in-depth interview with the president of Pitomača vine growers' association and focus group with five winery owners to obtain information on their familiarity with scattered hotel models and the concept of unique tourism products based on the experience economy. Following the interview and data obtained through a focus group, a survey was conducted on a sample of fifteen respondents with the purpose of examining the attitudes of winery owners towards the opportunities and limitations for the development of this tourist product.

Findings – the data obtained through the survey indicate the fact that most of the respondents are not familiar with the concept of scattered hotels or the opportunities provided by the market with the development of modern, personalized tourist experiences. Even though the respondents see the potential for developing such tourist product in the examined area, they encounter many obstacles in their reflection, which limits their inclusion in the tourist offer.

Contribution – this paper can contribute to raising the awareness of local stakeholders for developing a unique offer by evaluating the existing, unused resources.

Keywords: oeno-gastro tourism, micro-clusters, scattered hotel, experience economy, rural environment

FUTURE TRENDS OF TOURIST ACCOMMODATION ORGANISATION – HOW TO COMBINE LEISURE WITH REMOTE WORK AND DIGITAL NOMADISM?

Tamara Floričić
Nadia Pavia

Abstract

Purpose – Tourism accommodation facilities with workstations for remote work enable stays and business activities. Different contexts of modern tourism and the hospitality industry affect the development of this innovative form of accommodation offer supported by technology, often called “workspitality”. The presented concept is the subject of the research which the authors are conducting with the aim to detect the preparedness of the hospitality industry, namely small private entrepreneurs, to respond to the challenges of competitiveness.

Methodology – The methodology includes scientific analyses of the potential for affirmation of innovative accommodation concepts “workspitality” tourism product. The research design included metasearch as well as original scientific processing of data obtained through a structured questionnaire. Methods include statistics as well as qualitative methods, including focus groups and creative thinking techniques and impact the formation of conclusions which point to new scientific knowledge.

Findings – The findings point to the conclusion that supply providers should learn about new competitiveness potential, so the education relating to offer organisation and investments could provide solutions to the quality organisation of the specific offer.

Contribution – The paper represents a valuable contribution to an understanding of the organisation and innovation of receptive offer in tourist destinations. The research results, as well as the obtained knowledge, could affect the perception of the decision makers i.e., accommodation owners and managers, about the importance of adjustment of existing structures and facility equipment in accordance with demand preferences. The adjustment to the new demand preferences targets competitive advantage and business results. The research results reflect on the formation of scientific knowledge in the area of organisation of accommodation offer, as well as on the consideration and identification of its key elements.

Keywords: remote work, holiday rentals, serviced apartments, digital nomads, technology, competitiveness

TOP 30 SOFT SKILLS IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY GRADUATES: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

Ljudevit Pranić
Smiljana Pivčević
Daniela Garbin Praničević

Abstract

Purpose – To improve the employability of tourism and hospitality (T&H) graduates, faculty must continually reassess what soft skills are essential for T&H graduates to possess and amend their curricula to meet these needs. Thus, this study aims to identify the soft skills perceived as essential for the T&H graduates through a systematic literature review (SLR).

Methodology – Google Scholar was systematically queried from 1990 to April 2018, resulting in 77 T&H soft skills-related peer-reviewed publications. Four T&H researchers/educators produced an initial pool of 1447 T&H soft skills from these publications, categorized them in either conceptual/creative, leadership or interpersonal dimensions of Sandwith's (1993) Competency Domain Model and trimmed for relevance. Finally, the elicited key soft skills were further edited via an online survey of 19 T&H researchers/educators from Italy, Malta, Portugal, and Spain. The relevance of generated soft skills was double-verified through same SLR based process for literature from April 2018 onwards.

Findings – A final set of 30 items emerged – 10 items per each of the three soft skills dimensions – i.e. conceptual/creative, leadership, and interpersonal. Based on these findings, both T&H higher education institutions and faculty should evaluate their classes/curricula to determine whether a particular soft skill identified in this study is included as a learning objective of one or more specific classes.

Contribution – The main contribution lies in devising a theoretically-and methodologically-based list of key soft skills for a broad range of segments of the T&H industry. From a methodological point of view, the SLR conducted is considered as novelty in T&H soft skills research. Practically, this study provides educators with an updated benchmark tool to identify gaps in the curriculum. The related positive implications are expected for the students and T&H industry as well.

Keywords: Soft skills, systematic literature review, key skills list, student employability, hospitality human resources, tourism education

FOREIGN LANGUAGE ABILITY IN HOSPITALITY BUSINESS

Alenka Šuljić Petrc
Krešimir Mikinac
Dolores Miškulin

Abstract

Purpose – The main aim of this research is to explore the issue of the role of foreign language abilities in the hospitality industry, focusing on the perspective of employees and students. The differences between theoretical and practical knowledge that lead to incompetence in using foreign languages in the real sector are usually the main problem of employees and students preparing for their quality service. Therefore, in this paper, a review of recent research is made to analyze the possible changes that need to be made in order to become aware of the need for foreign languages as an essential element in a quality service at all levels of the hospitality industry

Methodology – Foreign language proficiency in the hospitality industry involves the use of the specific hospitality language, which is the broad field of language for professional purposes. The research of this paper was conducted in the context of (1) investigating and comparing the attitudes towards the role of foreign language ability role of two different groups of respondents: Tourism employees and students attending the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management; (2) exploring the role of formal education on the quality of service performance.

It included a questionnaire that explored how and why the role of foreign language ability in the hospitality industry is important from the perspective of employees and students. After collecting primary data from the survey results, the authors analysed them statistically using descriptive analysis to describe the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and the variables, and Independent Sample t-test to determine the statistically significant differences in the means between the two groups of respondents and selected variables.

Findings – This case study examined two groups' attitudes toward the role of foreign language proficiency in the hospitality industry and the role of formal education on service quality. Examining the perspectives of two groups reveals that both groups are very aware of the importance of foreign language skills in their personal and professional lives. In addition, both groups perceived that the ability to communicate in a foreign language is important in achieving career advancement and a higher professional position.

Contribution – This research confirms the importance of foreign language ability in the process of offering quality service. Due to the ever-increasing competition, tourism employees and students of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management must be aware of the constant need to train their foreign language skills according to the requirements of the workplace. The advantage of foreign language learning will lead to quality service in the hospitality industry and tourism in general, increase competitiveness and increase profits.

Keywords: foreign languages, ability, quality service, hospitality business

SUSTAINABLE BEST PRACTICES OF EUROPEAN CULINARY FESTIVALS

Bence Csapody
Katalin Ásványi
Melinda Jászberényi

Abstract

Purpose – The COVID-19 pandemic has a major impact on the operation of hospitality establishments today. Conscious entrepreneurs have exploited this critical situation to carry out self-revision and examined the opportunities to open towards new models. But what is the situation with culinary events? The period of recovery after a crisis often shifts in a new direction of operation such as the emergence of sustainable approaches in gastronomy and tourism. In order to showcase exemplary methods, our main research question is “what sustainable practices are applied in European culinary festivals”?

Methodology – The following study is primarily based on the identification of best practices from European gastronomic festivals. Using benchmarking methodology is a complex, systematic process including the creation of new standards in order to provide ideas for event organizers to make their festivals more sustainable.

Findings –The results were allocated within four dimensions (ingredients and food served; organization; communication and programs; local communities and culture), assigning each practice to specific aspects by dimension. Based on the results, we can state that “local thinking” appears across the dimensions in exemplary practices, regarding the culture of settlements hosting the festivals as well as the procurement of ingredients. Moreover, in connection with the social pillar of sustainability, while promoting local family businesses, the transfer and preservation of local culture by the festivals must also play a key role.

Contribution – We were seeking functional implementation ideas that can help strengthen sustainable gastronomic tourism in the post-crisis recovery period. Our goal is to detect and showcase these examples and raise the awareness of event organizers.

Keywords: sustainability, culinary festival, gastronomic event, COVID-19, gastronomy, hospitality

BACK TO BASICS: EXPERIENCING A DESTINATION THROUGH GASTRONOMY – THE CASE OF MADEIRA ISLAND

Soraia Garcês
Margarida Pocinho
Saúl Jesus

Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to explore gastronomy tourists' wellbeing in Madeira Island, Portugal, particularly those who acknowledged this activity as the experience they most enjoyed.

Methodology – Data was retrieved in 2019, and it is part of the "Wellbeing Tourists Project" developed in Madeira Island. From a preliminary sample of 475 tourists, 52 considered gastronomy their most enjoyed experience, composing this subset of participants the sample for the current study. Data collection occurred in-person (before the pandemic) and online. Tourists filled the Tourism Wellbeing Scale, which evaluates tourism experiences through positive Psychology variables [wellbeing (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment), creativity, optimism, and spirituality].

Findings – Tourists from England/UK, Czech Republic and Portugal (mainland) considered gastronomy their top choice. Findings showed that a gastronomy tourist in Madeira is someone who first looks to have fun, acknowledges the experience as unique/original, and enjoys engaging with the local community. Logistic regression showed that the estimated odds ratio favoured an increase of nearly 53% for the Gastronomy experience every one unit increase of the Meaning variable.

Contribution – Madeira has a unique cuisine with unique flavours, which can be an essential attraction factor for this destination, but it is considered a complementary product. This study highlights that gastronomy should be considered a potential to promote the Island tourism and that it can also be an essential factor to promote wellbeing and Madeira food heritage.

Keywords: Gastronomy; Madeira Island; Wellbeing; Memorable Experiences.

HOTEL'S WEB SITE HEALTH AUDIT AND PAGES DISTRIBUTION BY THEIR STATUS: AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF FIVE STAR HOTELS IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Mislav Šimunić

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to indicate the importance of direct online booking in the structure of hotel online booking channels. In this context, this paper explores the relationship between quality of websites and the amount of online direct bookings through hotel websites.

Methodology – Empirical Research was conducted by qualitative multidimensional analysis of 5* hotel websites in the Republic of Croatia. This process is made up of numerous analytical subprocesses such as web site health, user engagement, user experience, traffic, functionality, website performance and other. In this paper the focus is on the Hotel's web site health audit. Hotel's web site health audits aims to analyze the overall health of web pages within web site while discovering all issues that hotel should be aware of. The authors' research was conducted using Semrush analytical platform for improving search engine visibility.

Findings – The research the results of the empirical research show the distribution of web pages within the analyzed web sites according to their qualitative status. Interpretation of the research results explains the impact on the structure of online booking channels in hotel business and applicability in theory and practice.

Contribution – The scientific contribution stems from empirical research that defines the way and space to improve direct online hotel bookings through own web site in terms of improving web site performances.

Keywords: Hotel, online direct booking, website audit, visibility (Search Engine Result Page), KPI

CAMPING TOURISM EXPERIENCE, SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY FROM CROATIA

Tihana Cegur Radović
Dina Lončarić
Josipa Cvelić Bonifačić

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to determine the impact of different dimensions of the camping tourism experience on satisfaction and loyalty. To achieve the purpose of this research, it was necessary to adjust and validate the measurement scale of the tourism experience in camps and confirm the influence of the tourist experience dimensions on the satisfaction of camping tourists. Furthermore, the goal was to investigate the relationship between the camping tourist satisfaction and their loyalty to the camp.

Methodology – The paper applied desk and field research. An analysis of recent literature on the topic of tourist experience and camping tourism was performed. Empirical research was conducted on a convenient sample of 143 visitors to campsites. Descriptive and multivariate statistics were used in the data analysis. The reliability and explorative factor analysis were applied. Hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis. Data analysis was performed using the software package IBM SPSS Statistic Version 26.

Findings – The results of empirical research show that of the four extracted dimensions of the camping tourist experience, three have a positive and significant impact on tourist satisfaction and loyalty. These are education, escapism and aesthetics, while entertainment has no significant impact.

Contribution – The results of this research contribute to theory and practice. In theoretical terms, this research represents a starting point for further research about the camping tourism experience. The scale for measuring the camping tourism experience was validated and can be used in further research. The results can help managers to develop marketing strategies and tactics, as the determinants of the tourist experience of camping tourists are established.

Keywords: camping tourism, tourism experience, satisfaction, loyalty, Croatia

IMPACT OF CYCLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ON TOURIST DESTINATION – ATTITUDES OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

Kristina Brščić
Katarina Lovrečić
Tina Šugar

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of the research was to examine the attitudes of local cycle tourism stakeholders towards cycle tourism development in Istria County and its impact on the destination. Also, the goal was to determine local stakeholders' general opinions and suggestions regarding past and future cycle tourism development.

Methodology – The research target group was local cycle tourism stakeholders in Istria County. For the research purpose an online questionnaire was created. The research was carried out online from April 7, 2020, to July 5, 2020. In total, 201 questionnaires were collected.

Findings – As the research results show, local stakeholders have a generally positive attitude towards cycle tourism development in the destination. Most respondents evaluated that the local community benefits from cycle tourism development in the destination and that cycle tourism development additionally promotes the destination. Moreover, 30% of local stakeholders consider that they should be more involved in developing and planning cycle tourism in Istria County.

Contribution – The paper's practical value is that research results can be used as a relevant database in future planning of these tourism products. Also, insights obtained by conducting empirical research can contribute to a better understanding of how the local stakeholders can be involved in planning tourism in the destination.

Keywords: cycle tourism, local cycle tourism stakeholders, sustainable tourism, cycle tourism destination

USING ANALYTIC HIERARCHY PROCESS (AHP) FOR TOURIST CHOICE OF DESTINATION: A CASE STUDY OF CROATIA

Ivana Blešić
Tatjana Pivac
Maja Lena Lopatny

Abstract

Purpose – Understanding how and why people travel, decide and select a specific place, and what they expect from their destination to meet their actual needs is also a highly important topic. The goal of this article is to investigate the elements that influence Serbian visitors' decision to visit Croatia (Croatian coastline) as a destination. The most important characteristics, components, and types of tourism destinations are analysed. The definition of consumer behavior is explained, as well as the idiosyncrasies of the decision-making process. The most important internal and environmental elements that influence tourist decision-making are summarized. An examination of the cultural, societal, and personal psychological aspects that influence decision-making of Serbian tourists to travel to Croatia cost with different attributes like sea, cultural and natural attractions, image, price, human resources is done.

Methodology – As a result, the decision-making process is extremely difficult, particularly when determining which factors are more significant than others. The Analytical Hierarchical Process (AHP) method, which has a strong mathematical foundation, could be used to find a good solution to this problem. The Analytical-hierarchy process (AHP) is a systematic way to solving complicated problems that leverages hierarchical structures by generating priorities for various options decided by decision makers.

AHP can aid tourism decision-making by examining a large number of decision factors (e.g., factors influencing destination choice, motives for visiting a place, hotel site selection, tourist indicators) and measuring the relevance of each component impacting the decision. The questionnaire used for this manuscript was taken from the paper Blešić et al. (2018). The questionnaire consist of five factors that include 22 items.

Findings – Destination amenities, tourism infrastructure, cultural attractions, human resources, price, environmental features are the important attributes for choosing Croatian coast as tourism destination.

Contribution – This study makes a valuable contribution by highlighting tourists' motives for visiting coastline destinations in Croatia. Finally, understanding the motivations and preferences of tourists is critical to realizing the full potential of tourism. Consumer behavior research is crucial for tourism sector stakeholders because it can provide important insights into who the tourist is and how stakeholders (travel agencies, hotels, restaurants, food producers, cultural organizations, and so on) can target and develop markets successfully. This research will help researchers better understand what inspires Serbian tourists to visit a Croatian coastal location. The findings will indicate the most common travel motivations that lead Serbian travelers to choose Croatia as their vacation location.

Keywords: decision-making, tourism destination, Croatia coastline, Serbian tourist, AHP method

EVALUATION OF THE BENEFITS OF THE CERTIFICATION LEADING QUALITY TRAILS BEST OF EUROPE: CASE STUDY LUŽNICE VALLEY HIKING TRAIL

Liběna Jarolímková
Jiří Vaníček
Blanka Bejdáková

Abstract

Purpose – The article presents the results of a study evaluating the efficiency, benefits, and contribution to the sustainable development of destination of the Certification Leading Quality Trails Best of Europe in the Czech Republic in Lužnice Valley Hiking Trail.

Methodology – The cost-benefit analysis was used for the evaluation of the efficiency of the certification. HEAT method was used for quantification of the economic benefits from improving health due to hiking activity on the monitored route. The evaluation of non-financial benefits was based on indicators of the sustainability of destination development in the economic, social, and environmental areas and in the aspect of visitors' satisfaction.

Findings – The economic efficiency of the certification is low. However, the non-financial benefits of the certified trail are significant. The survey showed the benefits of modern trail certification in several aspects: the improvement of the quality of the tourist hiking trail led to greater satisfaction of tourists and their better experience. Another benefit is the increase of the image of the destination (Toulava). The certification of the trail contributed also to the sustainable development of the destination in all three pillars.

Contribution – The investigation confirmed the importance and benefits of modern route certification. There was a significant improvement in the quality of the route and increase tourist satisfaction. This creates the potential for further sustainable development of the destination and related services. Therefore, it is recommended that other hiking trails in the Czech Republic also undergo certification.

Keywords: Tourism. Hiking Trail. Leading Quality Trails. Lužnice Valley. Toulava. Czech Republic.

ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF WELLNESS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW ERA: THE CASE OF CROATIA

Danijela Ferjanić Hodak
Oliver Kesar
Ingeborg Matečić

Abstract

Purpose – The intent of this study was to compare the extent to which Croatia’s wellness tourism products are comparable to those in the leading wellness destinations in Europe. The purpose of this paper is to assess the possibilities and limitations of Croatia’s convergence to contemporary wellness trends, to explore willingness and intention of service providers to improve their wellness tourism products, and to provide some policy recommendations that would bring Croatia's wellness destinations closer to benchmark wellness destinations in Europe.

Methodology – This qualitative research is based on primary and secondary data collection. A desk research method was used to identify the key trends, select benchmark destinations, and to analyze Croatia’s wellness tourism offer. For primary data collection, a focus group was used to explore the willingness and intention of wellness service providers to improve their offer according to global trends.

Findings – The research proved that wellness is still an increasingly attractive tourism product, but also revealed large variations in its quality across Europe. Although Croatia’s wellness tourism offer suffers from mediocrity, absence of standards and vision of future development, it has significant potentials to become internationally competitive.

Contribution – The main contribution of this research is four-fold: 1) provides overview of new market trends in wellness business, 2) enables insight into current state and ways of improvement of wellness tourism offer in Croatia, 3) discusses intention of wellness managers to improve wellness tourism offer, and 4) provides some policy recommendations to improve its convergence towards global standards and best practices.

Keywords: wellness tourism, new trends, convergence, Croatia

THE CRITERIA FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT

Zsuzsanna Fehér
Katalin Ásványi
Melinda Jászberényi

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to identify the criteria for sustainable museums found in the literature and specified in our research, and to make suggestions for these directions for museums. Within the scope of the study, the phenomenon of sustainable museum was examined in contemporary art museums.

Methodology – In our primary research, the criteria of a sustainable museum was interpreted along four pillars, for which in-depth expert interviews were conducted with Hungarian museum professionals. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the viewpoints, expectations and perceptions of museum staff.

Findings – In the field of environmental sustainability, Hungarian contemporary museums place less emphasis on making the museum building itself more sustainable. However, if they are thinking in the long run, it is worthwhile for them to become more and more eco-friendly. The issue of economic sustainability is most problematic for Hungarian museums, which can be greatly improved with an active, supportive community that helps museums either through volunteer work or financially. From a social point of view, one of the most important tasks of museums is to ensure equal opportunities, to achieve the widest possible range of people, which is facilitated if the museum can function as a community space, adequately involve museum visitors, and it continuously strengthens its role in education

Contribution – We conceptualize and provide a framework for sustainable museums. Through our research, we have contributed to broadening the theoretical background of sustainable museums from the perspective of contemporary art museums.

Keywords: sustainable museum, economic, environmental, social, cultural, in-depth interview

MARKETING OF RIJEKA MUSEUMS: CURRENT PRACTICES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Đurđana Ozreć Došen
Emanuela Cvetinović
Tanja Komarac

Abstract

Purpose – The paper is dedicated to the marketing of Rijeka museums. It presents the research that encompassed a) museum professionals' marketing knowledge and skills and their implementation in practice b) core and additional services offered by museums c) museum professionals' opinions and attitudes about the new trends in museum marketing.

Methodology – Exploratory research was conducted. Data for the theoretical foundations were collected from secondary scientific sources and by searching the websites, social networks, and promotional materials. Qualitative research in the form of in-depth, semi-structured personal interviews with key informants was performed to collect primary data.

Findings – The level of familiarity with the services marketing in Rijeka museums was low, pointing to a lack of marketing professionals. Nevertheless, the need for marketing was recognised, and museums were striving to implement some generic marketing activities. The core services (exhibitions and/or collections of materials) showed predominant product orientation, with insufficient orientation on a visitor. Opinions and attitudes of interviewees on museum marketing trends were positive. However, museums could not include new content despite wishes due to the lack of capacity. Furthermore, the legal frame prevented expanding the offer of a souvenir shop.

Contribution – Although the research was conducted before the onset of the pandemic, the paper provides theoretical insights and practical suggestions, which could help academics and professionals to understand better and deal with the potential opportunities and threats in museum marketing in the dramatically changing environment.

Keywords: museum marketing, museum professionals, exploratory research, Rijeka

APPROACHES TO STORYTELLING AND NARRATIVE STRUCTURES IN DESTINATION MARKETING

Zuzana Kvítková
Zdenka Petrů

Abstract

Purpose – Storytelling is a very actual trend in destinations' promotion. Travel narratives are renowned for the ability to arouse interest in the reader. The stories can be told in a written form, visual form, or in a form of movements (dances, theatre, etc.). Travel narratives can include more detailed information, they evoke emotions and empathy. Empathy has then a positive relation to behavioural intentions. Therefore, storytelling as a concept is more and more adopted by destination marketing organisations (DMOs). The approach and use of the concept can be different. The aim of the paper is to identify the approaches, and structures used by DMOs and to reveal the level of readers' or tourists' involvement in the narratives.

Methodology – The main purpose of research is reached by conducting an empirical study using the qualitative methods of analysis - content analysis, deconstruction of the stories, analyzing the story structure, and comparison of the identified structures with the theory. Quantitative analysis, descriptive statistics and contingency tables are used to analyse the frequency and combinations of storytelling structures and approaches of the DMOs.

Findings – A narrative is the central theme of the communication in 65.12% of analyzed campaigns. The most used structures are Petal and Hero's Journey. The tourists are the main characters in 55.81% of the analyzed campaigns. They are also involved in the story creation in 46.51%. The most used communication channel is YouTube; this is valid on all levels of destinations.

Contribution – Storytelling is an important part of destinations' marketing, however, the research usually brings insight from a narrow or specific point of view (e.g., analysis of one platform or in a form of a case study). This research brings a comprehensive view of the narrative structures used for destinations based on empirical research from several destinations and a deep analysis of the content.

Keywords: Tourism, Storytelling, Destination, Marketing

COMPARING DESTINATION MARKETING ACTIVITIES RELATED TO MOVIE TOURISM IN CROATIA'S ZADAR COUNTY

Martina Furčić
Ljudevit Pranić

Abstract

Purpose – While influence of movies and television on destination image and tourist destination choice is well documented in tourism literature, understanding of the perceptions of destination marketers in movie locations remains an emerging area of inquiry. Consequently, the objectives of this study are: (a) to assess the perceptions of key destination stakeholders regarding the level of integration of movie-induced tourism and destination marketing after a movie's release, and (b) to compare their perceptions to what can actually be observed, in a relatively popular movie-shooting destination such as Zadar County (ZC), Croatia.

Methodology – Using the Hudson and Ritchie (2006a) model for exploiting movie marketing opportunities, this study employs multimethod research, combining interviews and observation. First, 10 representatives of the tourism and movie industries in ZC are interviewed about the following four factors: movie-induced tourism, marketing activities, branding, and stakeholder involvement. Second, seven tourism-related websites in ZC are analyzed for presence and quality of the movie-related promotional content.

Findings – Interviews reveal that key stakeholders (1) embrace the notion of movie-induced tourism, (2) find movie tourism to be well integrated into destination marketing activities, (3) believe that movies are an integral part of ZC's place branding strategy, and (4) perceive that tourism and movie stakeholders actively and systematically collaborate on advancing the movie tourism. However, website content analysis reveals exactly the opposite.

Contribution – Theoretically, this research sheds light on the destination marketers' perspectives in regards to movie-induced tourism. Practically, it offers insights on how to tap the potential benefits of movie tourism.

Keywords: Film tourism, movie-induced tourism, tv tourism, tourism stakeholders, destination branding image, destination marketing

DESIGN OF A WORKBENCH AND GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE THE EFFICACY OF ADVERTISING MESSAGES

Raffaella Folgieri
Tea Baldigara
Sergej Gricar

Abstract

Purpose – This study is aimed at proposing the design of an efficient workbench and guidelines to help content providers in tourism to address proper messages both in managing ordinary activities and in facing unpredictable events and external shocks.

Recent Covid-19 related events have particularly stressed the importance of tools supporting, guiding and directing message providers in designing advertising campaigns to attract visitors providing proper information and contrasting the possible negative influence of misinformation. Social media and the Internet can give a wide picture of current trends. Nevertheless, without appropriate tools suitable to analyse a huge quantity of data, the research of information on trends and mood by advertising providers constitutes a challenge difficult to face unless limited to the analysis of selected websites with consequent possible loss of details. Such a choice, based on humans' subjective selection of sources, could introduce bias compromising the efficiency of the message.

Methodology – Several studies state that the composition of an advertising campaign should be a conjoint activity including both creative and scientific work, involving also methodologies and tools helping messages provider to improve the efficacy and the impact of advertising campaigns. The present study aims to introduce an innovative methodology based on combining ideas from Information Technology and Econometrics. In particular Artificial Intelligence methods, such as Machine Learning and sentiment analysis, through the Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) and Vector Autoregressive models (VAR).

Findings – The language used and emotions elicited in tourism advertising messages have a strong impact on attracting visitors and tourists, particularly when international events create concerns in the population. Indeed, a multimodal approach, supported by tools from Econometrics, Machine Learning and Sentiment Analysis showed the efficacy in capturing the mood and the trend in prospect visitors to allow to redistribute tourist flows towards different destinations and within wider periods of the year.

Contribution – The work gives a theoretical and practical contribution. Indeed, the combination of Econometrics, Artificial Neural Networks and Sentiment Analysis tools can constitute a scientific base to analyse trends and to compose advertising texts, websites and campaigns taking into account the impact of unexpected events and maximising Linguistics suggestions to improve the efficiency of messages. Besides, the tools also allow suggesting guidelines of the features and the structure that should be always considered. Last but not least, these tools could be used to select the main topics arising on the web and social networks around current issues perceived by visitors, allowing the selection of a list of Q&A practical indications which can be translated into effective virtual assistants particularly useful when the personnel is reduced due to unexpected events and constraints, as during Covid-19 periods.

Keywords: Tourism, Econometrics, Machine Learning, Sentiment Analysis, Workbench, Virtual Assistant

PARKING SERVICES IN THE HOTEL PRODUCT: ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Edna Mrnjavac
Robert Maršanić
Drago Pupavac
Ljudevit Krpan

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand whether and to which extent hotel enterprises, under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, have adjusted their business strategies with regard to parking services, given the change in the structure of guests, that is, a decrease in the number of air-travel guests and an increase in the number of car-travel guests. The study examines changes in turnover and guest structure in hotels in central and southern Dalmatia that were focused on air-travel guests in the pre-pandemic period. The study involved desk research to obtain insight into the responses of hotel enterprises to changed business conditions as a result of the pandemic, with special reference to the modification of business strategies in those segments deemed to be of special importance to individual destinations. This was followed by primary research using the interview method and involving managers in destinations accessible largely by air transport. The aim was to understand the quantitative and qualitative changes in guest turnover caused by the pandemic and to examine the attitude and resulting responses of managers in the segment of parking services for hotel guests.

The study reveals the drop and change in the structure of hotel guest turnover and presents the various responses of managers, which ranged from implementing no measures to ensure the required parking spaces, to developing elaborate models.

The contribution of the study is that it identifies the different strategic approaches that can be taken to ensure parking services for hotel guests, as those services are a crucial determinant of the quality of a hotel offering. The modified strategies of hotels in the segment of parking services for guests can serve as a platform upon which individual hotels, based on their specific features, could build their own business models, for the purpose of maintaining a certain turnover of guests until the time the situation in the market returns to normal.

Keywords: parking service, hotel, COVID-19, modified strategy

DESTINATION CRISIS MANAGEMENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS – BACKGROUND FOR BETTER PERFORMANCE

Dora Smolčić Jurdana
Romina Agbaba

Abstract

Purpose – The paper highlights the importance of introducing and attending various educational programs, courses, and workshops that are crucial in times of crisis. Knowledge resources need to be more integrated within management organizations, to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in overcoming challenging conditions. Managers must learn and devise new ways of managing in times of crisis.

Methodology – Secondary data sources, relevant studies closely related to this area of research, indexed in the databases WoS, Scopus, Hrčak, and others, were used. Australia, Croatia, and China were the countries selected and analyzed, with the aim of presenting the degree of representation of educational programs in the field of crisis management, and to determine whether such educational programs exist in university education and business activities, whether they are publicly available, and whether their themes are exclusively based on the still-present COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings – The research on educational programs in the field of crisis management in three selected countries (China, Australia, Croatia) on three different continents indicates that, regardless of the differences in the countries' size and educational systems, there are no significant deviations in the modalities of educational programs in crisis management.

Contribution – The contribution of this paper is in the presentation of, and the literature review on, the contribution of educational programs in the field of crisis management. Given the occurrence of crisis situations in tourism, which are increasingly common and come from different sources, the need to strengthen educational programs in this area has undoubtedly been identified.

Keywords: tourist destination, crisis, crisis management, education

COUCHSURFING AS A MODERN WAY OF DESTINATION EXPLORING, CASE STUDY: BALKANS

Jovana Miljkovic
Tamara Božović
Ivan Capeta

Abstract

Purpose – The accelerated lifestyle has led to changes in the way of traveling. The development of technology and the internet has created the opportunity for online contact with people from all over the world, so we can say that traveling has not been this easy and affordable so far. People choose shorter trips, meet the locals, learn about their culture and customs. The paper looks at the benefits of using the Couchsurfing network and the aim is to present the motivation of respondents from former Yugoslav countries to use the network during travel, as well as to host travelers at home.

Methodology – The questions for the questionnaire were taken from the research done by author Liu (2012), while the authors entered the offered answers based on a review of the Couchsurfing.com site. Couchsurfing users got online questioners by private message and through groups. The questioner was also sent through Facebook private messages and posted in private groups.

Findings – Based on the results, it is concluded that the dominant motive for using Couchsurfing during the trip is to get to know the local population, culture, and customs and to host and keep company with travelers who visit this region.

Contribution – The social contribution of this paper emphasizes the motives of the Couchsurfing users from the former Yugoslav countries for traveling and hosting travelers. New research can be expanded to the level of Europe or separated for the mentioned countries.

Key words: Couchsurfing; Cultural exchange, Slow tourism, Couchsurfing trust, Travel, Balkans

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS TO HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN TURKEY

Esat Saçkes
Suzana Baresa
Ercan Özen

Abstract

Purpose – The COVID-19 virus, which has affected the lives of millions of people globally and caused the death of hundreds of thousands, has adversely affected the tourism industry, like other industries. The tourism industry has come to a standstill, with curfews, various travel restrictions, flight cancellations and difficult working conditions. As in many other sectors, some decisions have been made that can support the tourism sector, which provides a high degree of employment and foreign exchange income, in these difficult times.

The *aim* of this study is to examine the financial support during the COVID-19 outbreak that has been declared by various tourism associations and state institutions for the protection of hospitality businesses in Turkey.

Methodology – Within the scope of the study, financial incentives and support elements offered for the use of tourism enterprises were analyzed and compiled using the content analysis method.

Findings – The COVID-19 pandemic severely affected the number of tourists and tourism revenues of Turkey in 2020, and revenues decreased from 34.5 billion USD to 12 billion USD. Some economic measures have been taken to reduce the level of exposure to the recession into which the sector has fallen. Upon examination of these measures, it becomes evident that these are fiscal measures rather than direct monetary payments. These financial measures consist of income tax reductions, the reduction of value added tax (VAT) rates in the accommodation and aviation sector from 18% to 1%, reduction of VAT rates in workplace rental operations and provision of low-interest loans. As can be seen from the findings, supports given due to COVID-19 in Turkey are mostly fiscal rather than monetary.

Contribution – This situation shows the importance that Turkey attaches to the tourism sector. This indicates the need for the continuation of the support and incentives provided to tourism enterprises by the government and other institutions.

Keywords: Tourism, Hospitality, Financial supports, COVID-19, Turkey

THE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK ON TOURISM INDUSTRY IN SARAJEVO CANTON

Almir Peštek
Lejla Lazović-Pita
Velma Pijalović

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the effects that COVID-19 outbreak has had on tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and specifically in Sarajevo Canton.

Methodology – A survey was conducted in two rounds in March and September 2020, and responses were obtained from 126 running businesses from the tourism in Sarajevo Canton about the actual and expected consequences that COVID-19 outbreak has had on their business. The respondents were asked questions about the effects that COVID-19 has had on their business operations during the first six months of COVID-19 outbreak and their expectations for the future. The questions also included issues related to the government interventions and stimulus packages to overcome the effects of COVID-19 to ensure the sustainability of the tourism in Sarajevo Canton.

Findings – Our results show that all businesses have faced a significant downturn in their business operations and had to undertake different measures and activities internally to overcome (and survive) the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The results also show that there is very low level of satisfaction with the government interventions to tourism.

Contribution – The findings illustrate and confirm many flaws in tourism system in Sarajevo Canton and BiH where tourism has been developing organically and without proper integration of the private and public industry. Our findings can be used for planning purposes and improvement of the situation during COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 period.

Keywords: tourism, Sarajevo Canton, COVID-19, crisis, government interventions

EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON TOURISM SECTOR USING INPUT-OUTPUT ANALYSIS: THE CASE OF CROATIA

Davor Mikulić
Damira Keček
Željko Lovrinčević

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of the study is to determine the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on tourism and other economic sectors included in the tourism value chain in Croatia. The evaluation of total effects is important in order to evaluate effectiveness of policy measures introduced by Croatian government.

Methodology – The estimation of COVID -19 effects on Croatian economy is based on standard input-output model. The open I-O model quantifies indirect effects generated in the tourism value added chain. Closed I-O model estimates induced effects related to the decrease in the net disposable income of the employees which participated in the tourism sector production chain.

Findings – Strong reduction in international tourism caused by COVID -19 resulted in significant decrease in activity of many other industries. Besides hotels and restaurant, the most affected sectors were transport, trade, food industry, sports and entertainment services. Total value of indirect and induced tourism effects is bigger than value of direct effects in terms of employment and value added because of multiplier effect. Government subsidies in the form of income support for companies which retained employees have only short-term and limited effects. Negative COVID -19 effects were partially mitigated by output rise in other domestic sectors. GDP decline was more pronounced than GVA since indirect taxes, notably VAT and excise duties were particularly sensitive to negative trends in tourism activity.

Contribution – The methodology applied provides the reliable analytical background for analyses of impact of negative exogenous shock affecting tourism and total Croatian economy and assessment of government policy response effectiveness.

Keywords: COVID -19, input-output analysis, total effects, tourism sector

THE EFFECT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE CROATIAN TOURIST SECTOR

Sinisa Bogdan
Luka Sikic
Suzana Baresa

Abstract

Purpose – The COVID-19 pandemic, unprecedented in terms of the speed at which it spread globally, affected the whole world swiftly after the initial outbreak and has produced heterogeneous effects on various industrial sectors and particularly pronounced effects on the tourism industry. This paper analyses the effect of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic through Europe on the tourist stocks in Croatia by means of application of the event study methodology.

Methodology – The analysis starts with a descriptive overview of the market-wide performance of different sectors in the period before, during and after the initial pandemic outbreak and subsequently explicitly tests for the COVID-19 outbreak effects on the tourist sector. First, a 35-day event window is specified so that important events related to the pandemic can be identified. Second, the first officially reported COVID-19 incidence in Italy and the World Health Organization's declaration of a global pandemic are used as identified events in a shorter 10day window event study estimation.

Findings – The results robustly point to the significant negative effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the returns of tourist stocks on the Zagreb Stock Exchange. However, the overall results do not provide evidence of the relatively stronger COVID-19 effects on the tourist sector, but rather equal effects across different sectors.

Contribution – This research offers a novel comprehensive review of the literature regarding the research topic and provides insights into the sectoral effects of the global financial shock caused by the COVID-19 pandemic on the local market. As this pandemic is increasing the market volatility, this research will be of importance to fund managers and carries implications for economic policy in terms of sectoral stimulus distribution and debt refinancing.

Keywords: stock market, stocks, volatility, abnormal return

SIGNIFICANCE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF EUROPEAN SMART DESTINATIONS

Romina Alkier
Vedran Milojica
Vasja Roblek

Abstract

Purpose – paper analyses the most recent and most important scientific literature contributions in developing and managing European smart touristic destinations and impacting urban sustainability. The purpose of this paper is to gain new knowledge about European smart touristic destinations with the use of the most recent data obtained from secondary sources.

Methodology – The research uses bibliometric, topic analysis, and automated content analyses to determine smart European tourist destinations' key features. It was analysed 66 scientific articles published in 36 scientific journals between 2015 and 2020. Only those scientific journals indexed in the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCI - EXPANDED), Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), Arts & Humanities Citation Index (A & HCI) and Web of Science - Emerging Sources Citation Index were selected.

Findings – Results are segmented into ten sections: (1) cultural heritage, (2) smart city; urban, (3) virtual reality, (4) mobile devices, (5) business ecosystem; open innovation; (6) human; (7) smart tourism destinations; communication technologies, (8) cultural heritage, (9) marketing and management, and (10) European regions and regional development. Each section is discussed in this article.

Contribution – The study contributes new knowledge about the smart European touristic destinations research phenomena.

Keywords: Europe, data mining, smart technologies, smart touristic destinations, urban management, regional development

DEVELOPMENT OF A CONCEPTUAL TESTING MODEL FOR COPING WITH STRESS IN FRONTLINE EMPLOYEES

Elizabeth Ineson
Louise Batty

Abstract

Purpose – Increasingly, stress has become an occupational hazard in careers involving customer contact. Managers and employees need to recognise the symptoms of stress and to learn and adopt coping strategies leading to efficient and effective workplace performance. From insights into the symptoms of stress and associated feelings in front-line employees, then an examination of coping strategies associated with job retention, a conceptual testing model for coping with stress in front-line occupations is developed.

Methodology – Given the examination of a complex phenomenon and process, a qualitative approach is preferable; in-depth informal and relatively unstructured, face-to-face interviews were undertaken with five male and five female international coach tour managers (TMs). As admittance to occupational stress may be seen as a weakness, the research aim was not conveyed to the subjects. To facilitate recall of situations and events, alongside explanations of the circumstances surrounding them, the critical incident technique was employed. Interviewees were invited to explain if/how work-related stress had affected them, whether they had suffered any subsequent symptoms and to explain how they had coped, with incidents - the crux of the research. The subjective interpretations of work-induced stress were scrutinised then, using thematic analysis, the data were analysed with a flexible mind and without preconceptions, so that patterns and categories could emerge. Quotations from the interviews qualify and enrich the results.

Findings – Both males and females were equally susceptible to stress. The total number of stressful incidents encountered was 117. Job-related stress was induced, directly or indirectly, by management styles, policies and attitudes, also client dissatisfaction, attributed mainly to operational management incompetence. Regardless of the number of stressful incidents reported, all of the interviewees had retained their jobs throughout the season. The coping strategies employed were predominantly adaptive and positive; although there is no substitute for on-the-job experience, only 40% of the respondents intended work as TMs in future. The best coping strategy was problem-solving then taking effective action. Self-reliance is essential; acceptance, negotiation and compromise may be necessary alongside distraction/escape where possible. It is concluded that stress prevention is paramount and that some coping strategies may be inappropriate for TMs due to lack of time and support in addition to the confines of the job.

Contribution – Evidence from the literature and the research findings is intertwined to develop a conceptual model for future testing and expansion, for coping with stress in frontline employees. The findings have implications for recruitment, selection and training. Future training should encompass transactional analysis via stress provoking

scenarios to enable ‘on-the-spot’ coping strategies to be implemented. The ideal coping strategy is avoidance/prevention of stress from the outset, rather than to have to relieve it. Problem anticipation and solution are the keys to coping (cf. Jung & Yoon, 2016); TMs training should enable them to deal with all types of complaints from common to the worst scenarios. Training in stress avoidance and preventative methods are recommended, in addition to the development of interpersonal and technical skills required to implement professional coping mechanisms.

Keywords: Work-induced stress, Coping strategies, Front-line employees, International tour management

MEASURING STUDENTS' MEMORABLE CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS

Dora Rašan
Marina Laškarin Ažić

Abstract

Purpose – Hosting conferences has always been of crucial importance for the development of the pre and post-seasons of some destinations in Croatia. Considering that students are becoming the most frequent conference participants, the authors recognized the need to measure their memorable conference experience (MCE).

Methodology – To this aim, a questionnaire was created, based on the relevant scientific literature, and distributed online and onsite. Research was conducted among 108 students of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management in Opatija.

Findings – This research examines key factors in creating MCEs for students, who could recall their previous memorable conference experience. Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed first, followed by the hierarchical clustering method and regression analysis to determine significant clusters among participants and their influence on behavioural intention. The results indicate that affectively loyal participants are more likely to show their behavioural intention, in comparison with affectively non-loyal participants.

Contribution – The findings suggest essential implications for the tourism experience theory and for future conference organizing committees.

Keyword: students, memorable conference experience (MCE), hierarchical clustering, and behavioural intentions

URBAN TOURISM AND ITS CONSIDERATION IN STRATEGIC SPATIAL PLANNING IN SELECTED MIDDLE-SIZED CENTRAL EUROPEAN CITIES

David Klepej
Naja Marot

Abstract

Purpose – Urban tourism has been recently among fastest growing types of tourism that can, if unregulated, cause unnecessary negative impacts on the city and even lead to overtourism. Tourism-related organisations like UNWTO, WTTC and others have prepared tourism (visitors) management strategies and measures, but how/if cities in Central Europe adapt such measures has not been researched so far. In a few years before pandemic, these cities have experienced high tourism growth rates, but research focus has been instead on the biggest urban destinations (e.g. London, Berlin, Barcelona). Thus, this paper focuses on ten mid-size cities in the Central European context and analyses their urban tourism performance, spatial dimensions of tourism in the city and how/if they carry out tourism and spatial management measures to ensure a responsible tourism development. As such, the paper intends to contribute to the conference topic “Local Government Role and Response to Tourism Development”.

Methodology – Methodology is based on desk research for which mostly qualitative methods were applied. Firstly, ten mid-sized case study cities were selected and analysis of indicators on their urban tourism performance was performed. This is followed by spatial analysis of the urban fabric structure and basic tourist infrastructure to investigate spatial distribution of tourist sights and formation of tourism business districts and cultural quarter. Thirdly, policy analysis of spatial planning and urban development documents is performed. Each acquired strategic document is analysed to determine main development challenges of selected cities and prioritised development goals. After deducting general development orientations, the analysis is focused on the level and typology of tourism integration into the analysed strategic documents. Cities are compared on the level of consideration of the tourism sector, proposed measures and how they correlate to their urban tourism performance trends.

Findings – Comparison analysis of urban tourism in selected cities shows that they have similar urban structure, tourism offer (focused on cultural, gastronomical, congress and sport tourism) and tourism management issues (unrecorded bednights and tourist visits, seasonality, dated infrastructure). Their top attractions are mostly located in historic city centres alongside majority of other tourism and culture offer attractions which is a solid ground for touristification of the urban space and overtourism. Analysis of strategic documents shows that cities mostly do not favour tourism sector under major development objectives and do not adequately address it via development monitoring indicators and measures. Cities approach tourism mostly as economic activity without a serious consideration of its spatial dimension. More to that, they do not plan to mitigate the anticipated problems generated by unregulated urban tourism growth showcased in more (even overly) developed urban tourist destinations.

Contribution – This paper addresses the urban tourism phenomenon in ten selected middle-sized Central European cities. It takes special focus on the tourism coverage by strategic spatial planning and urban development. Thus, the paper conceptualizes a new cross-sectoral research approach to the interlinking of urban tourism and spatial planning. Selected cities that have recorded positive urban growth trends in recent (pre-pandemic) years are assessed on their proactiveness towards visitor management and guiding urban tourism development through measures of spatial planning. Paper provides a proposal of further actions and measurements to be undertaken by various stakeholders in urban tourism development.

Keyword: Urban tourism, spatial governance, spatial planning, mitigation measures, overtourism, Central Europe

SUPPLY-SIDE IMPLICATIONS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR URBAN TOURISM IN THE MIDDLE-SIZED EUROPEAN CITIES

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David Klepej
Irena Ograjenšek
Nina Štubičar
Manca Krošelj

Abstract

Purpose – The aim of this contribution is to reveal the impacts pandemic has had on the urban tourism and in this context the cultural tourism as well. Contribution builds on the result of two projects, MESTUR in which we analyse the social and spatial impacts of the urban tourism, and SPOT, h2020 project which aims to improve the management of the cultural tourism and look for new alternatives of this type of tourism in the 21st century. Due to the disruption of the *SARS-CoV-2 pandemic*, in both projects we addressed the issue of the impacts of pandemics on the urban/cultural sector as viewed and experienced by different target groups: the tourism suppliers, tourists and the inhabitants at the destination, in our case, the City of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Methodology – The research data was derived via qualitative methods: at the end of the first lock-down, this is at the end of May 2020, we have performed interviews with 12 tourism providers (cultural institutions representatives, hotels, tourism associations, municipalities, creative sector) who told us about the influence of the COVID-19 on their work, organisation, tourist offer, existing risk management measures, and, especially, their expectations for the year 2020 as tourism year. In the period August to October 2020 we have carried out three surveys, one with the residents of Ljubljana (on-line panel), one with the tourists (field survey), and one with the tourist providers (on-line and telephone). Again, we were interested in how all three target groups accommodated their needs and travel habits (inhabitants and tourists), offer and operations of the business (tourist providers).

Findings – Above all, results show that urban tourism managers and providers are not prepared for such situations and not many mitigation measures had been put into place before the pandemics. Existing strategies do not cover this policy area, at most, they mention measures in case of terrorist attacks. The tourist providers in the spring possessed mixed feelings about what will happen throughout the year, however, in autumn more scepticism was present. Business also mentioned that some of them will for sure need to disease their operations. As positive outcomes, cultural institutions mentioned adaptations of their offer, as for example on-line exhibitions, very affordable season ticket for cultural institutions of Ljubljana for the inhabitants, etc. On the demand side, both, residents and tourists report change in the travel patterns; mostly they travel short distance, inside Europe, individually. Foreign visitors again confirmed the lack of global attractiveness and recognition of the Ljubljana's cultural offer which besides the

summer Ljubljana's festival is not much known outside of the Slovenia. Both groups are missing the cultural events, which for health reason we cancelled.

Contribution – This paper brings empirical results about the impacts of pandemic on the cultural tourism in the City of Ljubljana, one of the Central European city destination which before the crisis recorded steep growth of the foreign tourists' number, and the development of the tourism infrastructure, e.g. hotels, shared economy accommodation provision. Thus, the pandemic abruptly stopped this boom and partially uncontrolled growth, and as suppliers argue, demand change in the tourism and spatial planning practices. In the conclusion we suggest some measures to be adopted, both by the city and by the tourist management to become more resilient in such situations.

Keyword: cultural tourism, urban tourism, pandemic, Ljubljana, tourism providers