

Sustainable Tourism Business: An Introduction to the Thematic Issue

Doris Gomezelj Omerzel
University of Primorska, Slovenia
doris.gomezelj@fm-kp.si

International journal *Managing Global Transitions* is striving to address and present key issues in international research, first of all from the area of business, economics and management. This thematic issue is following the *MIC 2015 International Conference Managing Sustainable Growth*. The selected papers are focusing on different determinants of tourism sector (including tourism firms and tourism destinations) performance, aiming to provide new knowledge and contribute to the research in tourism area. We decided for the topic of this special issue particularly because of the importance of tourism industry issues and concerns related to the national economies all over the world during the past years. The authors from worldwide locations such as Cuba, South Africa Poland, Montenegro and Slovenia contributed their views and discussions of the special issue. The articles included in this special issue present interesting research findings and offer to the audience theoretical and practical implications related to tourism industry.

The first contribution to the issue entitled ‘Sustainable Tourism Development Frameworks and Best Practices: Implications for the Cuban Tourism Industry’ is authored by Jukka Laitamaki, Lisandra Torres Hechavarría, Mariko Tada, Siying Liu, Natania Setyady, Nuntawan Vatcharasontorn, and Feizhou Zheng. The objective of their research project was to identify best practices for the Cuban tourism industry in implementing a comprehensive sustainable tourism strategy. The study is aiming to solve the important and topical research problem of how to improve sustainable tourism development in this country. The authors provided some practical recommendations to the Cuban tourism industry on how to learn from the suggested best practices and how to implement them effectively. The article brings a comparative literature review regarding the sustainable tourism development best practices, moreover authors invite tourism stakeholders and policy makers to improve in all the areas of more integrated development approach.

The second paper is devoted to the tourism industry contribution to

economic growth. Andrew Phiri in his article entitled ‘Tourism and Economic Growth in South Africa: Evidence from Linear and Nonlinear Cointegration Frameworks’ set out that tourism has justifiable being recognized as an essential factor of economic growth in South Africa. The aim of this study is to examine the causal effects between tourism and economic growth in South Africa, employing the annual data for the period between 1995 and 2014. Author decided for two empirical approaches; namely linear cointegration framework, and nonlinear cointegration framework. Furthermore, two sets of measures of tourism development were used in the empirical part of the study, namely; tourist receipts and number of international tourist arrivals. The results imply that South Africa can improve her economic growth performance also by strategically harness the contribution of the tourism industry towards such economic growth.

The subsequent paper by Zbigniew Zontek entitled ‘The Role of Human Resources in Enhancing Innovation in Tourism Enterprises’ is yet another contribution to the knowledge about how to enhance innovation in tourism firms. The paper presents a review of issues related to the influence and importance of human resources in the process of innovativeness in tourism businesses. The main purpose is to identify how the employees are involved and utilized in innovative activities of the researched tourism entities. Moreover, this article presents an overview of the chosen aspects related to innovation in tourism enterprises, located in in the South Sub-Region of Silesia (Poland). The results of the empirical part of the research indicate that the key factors of innovation are exogenous factors, and the impact of human resources on these processes is varied. The paper indicates the need to change the behaviour of managers of tourism firms, especially to include employees in the process of finding innovative solutions.

The fourth contribution draws the attention of the audience to the Granger Causality in Tourism Analysis for Slovenia and Montenegro. Sergej Gričar, Stefan Bojnec, Vesna Karadžić, and Svetlana Rakočević, authors of the paper entitled ‘Comparative Analysis of Tourism Led-Growth in Slovenia and Montenegro’ aimed to perform a comparative analysis of the tourism led-growth in the above mentioned countries between December 2007 and June 2015. The analysis focused towards gross domestic product, tourist arrivals and unemployment rates as endogenous variables. In addition, monthly time series of inflation rates were introduced as exogenous variables. Some interesting results are presented

in the study. The Granger Causalities differ between countries. The applied empirical Granger Causality approach has confirmed bi-directional causality in Montenegro, wherein the tourism sector causes the economic growth and economic growth causes tourism growth. In Slovenia, the causality is unidirectional as economic growth causes tourism growth.

Finally, Doris Gomezelj Omerzel in her paper 'The Impact of Entrepreneurial Characteristics and Organisational Culture on Innovativeness in Tourism Firms' aimed to outline some of key factors of the innovative capability of a company. In the research she tried to examine the influence of different elements of individual entrepreneurial orientation and organisational culture dimensions on firm innovativeness and on direct subsequent company growth. The measures for five dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation are proposed, namely risk taking, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, autonomy and customer orientation as also measures for three dimensions of organisational culture; namely power distance, uncertainty/avoidance and individualism/collectivism. A survey was performed on a sample of tourism companies in Slovenia. The data were analysed by employing univariate and multivariate data analyses techniques. The results suggest that entrepreneurial orientation and organisational culture dimensions positively influence innovativeness in tourism companies. Therefore, a company with more developed entrepreneurial characteristics and organisational culture have more possibilities to perform in innovative way.

We are pleased and proud to present to our readers this thematic issue of *Managing Global Transitions*, hoping that you will find the content up to time, relevant and insightful. We believe that by reading these papers you will recognize many interesting findings and results as also identify valuable ideas for further research.



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