

2012

# Tourism Abstracts

Eighth Annual International  
Conference on Tourism 11-14  
June 2012, Athens, Greece

Edited by Gregory T. Papanikos

THE ATHENS INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH





Tourism Abstracts  
8<sup>th</sup> Annual International  
Conference on Tourism  
11-14 June 2012, Athens,  
Greece

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## Preface

This abstract book includes all the abstracts of the papers presented at the *8<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Tourism, 11-14 June 2012*, organized by the Athens Institute for Education and Research. In total there were 22 papers and 26 presenters, coming from 14 different countries (Australia, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, Hong Kong, Mauritius, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, UK and USA). The conference was organized into 6 sessions that included areas of Tourism Destination and Development, Special Tourism Issues, Sustainability - Ecotourism and other related fields. As it is the publication policy of the Institute, the papers presented in this conference will be considered for publication in one of the books of ATINER.

The Institute was established in 1995 as an independent academic organization with the mission to become a forum where academics and researchers from all over the world could meet in Athens and exchange ideas on their research and consider the future developments of their fields of study. Our mission is to make ATHENS a place where academics and researchers from all over the world meet to discuss the developments of their discipline and present their work. To serve this purpose, conferences are organized along the lines of well established and well defined scientific disciplines. In addition, interdisciplinary conferences are also organized because they serve the mission statement of the Institute. Since 1995, ATINER has organized more than 150 international conferences and has published over 100 books. Academically, the Institute is organized into four research divisions and nineteen research units. Each research unit organizes at least one annual conference and undertakes various small and large research projects.

I would like to thank all the participants, the members of the organizing and academic committee and most importantly the administration staff of ATINER for putting this conference together.

**Gregory T. Papanikos**  
**President**

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**FINAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Tourism, 11-14 June 2012,**  
**Athens, Greece**

**PROGRAM**

**Conference Venue:** [Metropolitan Hotel of Athens](#), 385 Syngrou Ave., 175 64,  
Athens, Greece

**Organization and Scientific Committee**

1. Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos, President, ATINER.
2. Dr. Valia Kasimati, Head, Tourism Research Unit, ATINER & Visiting Research Fellow, University of Bath, U.K.
3. Dr. George Poulos, Vice-President of Research, ATINER & Emeritus Professor, University of South Africa, South Africa.
4. Dr. Nicholas Pappas, Vice-President of Academics, ATINER & Professor, Sam Houston University, USA.
5. Dr. Angelos Tsaklanganos, Academic Member, ATINER & Professor, University of Nicosia, Cyprus.
6. Dr. Joanne Gula, Assistant Professor, Hawaii Pacific University, USA.
7. Dr. Rodanthe Tzanelli, Lecturer, University of Leeds, U.K.
8. Dr. Andrew Yiannakis, Professor, University of New Mexico, USA.
9. Dr. Margarita Kefalaki, Director of Communication, ATINER.
10. Mr. Vasilis Charalampopoulos, Researcher, ATINER & Ph.D. Student, University of Strathclyde, U.K.
11. Ms. Lila Skountridaki, Researcher, ATINER & Ph.D. Student, University of Strathclyde, U.K.

**Administration:** Fani Balaska, Stavroula Kiritsi, Eirini Lentzou, Konstantinos Manolidis, Katerina Maraki & Celia Sakka

**C O N F E R E N C E P R O G R A M**

(The time for each session includes at least 10 minutes coffee break)

**Monday 11 June 2012**

**08:30-09:00 Registration**

**09:00-09:15 Welcome and Opening Remarks**

- Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos, President, ATINER.
- Dr. Valia Kasimati, Head, Tourism Research Unit, ATINER & Visiting Research Fellow, University of Bath, U.K.

**09:15-10:45 Session I: Tourism Destination and Development I**

**Chair:** Papanikos, G.T., President, ATINER.

1. Nicely, A., Assistant Professor, Purdue University, USA, Sydnor, S., Assistant Professor, Purdue University, USA & Johnson, C., Associate Professor, Purdue University, USA. When Local Culture Stymies Rural Tourism Development: A Caribbean Perspective.
2. Su, M.M., Assistant Professor, Renmin University of China, China & Ma, Z., Professor, Renmin University of China, China. Ecotourism at Nature Reserves in China: Negotiating Preservation and Development.
3. Hood, W., Lecturer, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa. Perceptions and emotions related to the Kudu brand (South African National Parks).
4. Delgado Laguna, E., Researcher, University of Alicante, Spain & Mazon, T., Titular Professor, University of Alicante, Spain. Public opinions toward a consolidated tourist destination: Benidorm (Spain).

**10:45 -12:30 Session II: Special Tourism Issues**

**Chair:** Kasimati, V., Head, Tourism Research Unit, ATINER & Visiting Research Fellow, University of Bath, U.K.

1. Nelson, L., Professor, North Carolina State University, USA. The Role of Statistics in Tourism Research.
2. Burgess, L., Lecturer, University of Wollongong, Australia & Kerr, G., Lecturer, University of Wollongong, Australia. Australian Traveller's Use of the Internet: Understanding Australian Online Planning and Booking Behaviour.
3. Martí, M., Lecturer, ESIC Business and Marketing School, Spain, Fernández, R., Lecturer, ESIC Business and Marketing School, Spain & Guijarro, M., Lecturer, ESIC Business and Marketing School, Spain. The Relationships between Perceived Value and Attitudinal Loyalty when Implementing a Client-Focused Philosophy in Travel Agencies.
4. Skinner, H., Lecturer, University of Glamorgan, UK. Cardiff & Co.

**12:30-13:30 Lunch**

**13:30-15:00 Session III: Tourism Destination and Development II**

**Chair:** Burgess, L., Lecturer, University of Wollongong, Australia

1. Elsayy, G., Professor, Domanhour University, Egypt. Therapeutic Tourism in Siwa Oasis.
2. Ragodoo, N., Lecturer, University of Mauritius, Mauritius. Local Level Recruitment in the Tourism Sector: Myths and Realities a Case Study of the Mauritian Hotel Sector.
3. Domonkos, P., Researcher, University Rovira I Virgili, Spain, Duro, J.A., Professor, University Rovira I Virgili, Spain & Farre, X., Professor, University Rovira I Virgili, Spain. Do Beach Users Like Heat Stress?
4. Hemmati Morad Abadi, J., Professor, Islamic Azad University, Iran &

Eslami, S., Teacher, Payan Noor University, Iran. Recognition of Sport Tourism Capacities Loresan Province of Iran.

**20:30-22:30 Greek Night and Dinner (Details during registration)**

**Tuesday 12 June 2012**

**09:00-10:30 Session IV: Tourism Destination and Development III**

**Chair:** \*Jennings, G., Adjunct Professor, Griffith University, Australia.

1. Villalobos-Cespedes, D., Professor, University of National, Costa Rica, Tolon-Becerra, A., Professor, University of Almeria, Spain & Galdeano-Gomez, E., Professor, University of Almeria, Spain. Tourism Adventure In Costa Rica and the Influence of Social Demographics, Motives and Travel Condition of the International Tourist in the Amount of Activities Done.
2. \*Vij, M., Assistant Professor, Skyline University College, United Arab Emirates & Vij, A., Professor, Skyline University College, United Arab Emirates. Tourism and Carbon Foot Prints in United Arab Emirates (UAE) – Challenges and Solutions.
3. Siu, T.Y., Researcher, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, China. Importance and Performance Analysis of Visitors' Attitude towards the Environmental Quality of Geopark: A case study of Hong Kong Global Geopark of China.
4. Kuhnhenh, U., Professor, University of Applied Sciences (HTW) Chur, Switzerland & Simon, S., Professor, University of Applied Sciences (HTW) Chur, Switzerland. Systematic Design of Synergies in the field of Tourism and Organic Agriculture.

**10:30 -12:00 Session V: Sustainability - Ecotourism**

**Chair:** \*Vij, M., Assistant Professor, Skyline University College, United Arab Emirates

1. Azabagaoglu, M.O., Professor, Namik Kemal University, Turkey. Determination of Ecotourism Potential of Igneada Region According to Rural Development.
2. Erdogan, N., Associate Professor & Assistant Director, Baskent University Tourism and Hotel Management Program Baglica Kampus, Turkey. Environmental Performance of Tourism Accommodations and Tourism Ecolabels in Turkey in Protected Areas.
3. Akgoz, E., Head of Tourism Department, Selcuk University, Turkey. The Importance of Local Touristic Assets in Sustainable Tourism: Beysehir Case.

**12:00-13:00 Lunch**

**13:00 -14:30 Session VI: Tourism Education and Management Issues**

**Chair:** Nelson, L., Professor, North Carolina State University, USA.

1. \*Jennings, G., Adjunct Professor, Griffith University, Australia. Action Research: Reflections on University Tourism Students Assessing Their Own Work.
2. Wong, S.C.-K, Assistant Professor, , The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong & Tang, A.L.L., Instructor, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong. An Exploratory Study of Postgraduate Hotel and Tourism Management Students' Experience of Learning by Games: A Case Study of Hotel and Tourism Training and Development Class in Hong Kong.
3. Drutu, M., PhD Student, The Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies, Romania & Butnaru, G.I., Lecturer, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University IASI, Romania. Improving the Quality of Tourism Services through Performance Management.

**17:00-20:00 Urban Walk (Details during registration)**

**20:00- 21:00 Dinner (Details during registration)**

**Wednesday 13 June 2012**

Cruise: (Details during registration)

**Thursday 14 June 2012**

Delphi Visit: (Details during registration)

**Erkan Akgoz**

Head of Tourism Department, Selcuk University, Turkey

**The Importance of Local Touristic Assets in Sustainable Tourism:  
Beysehir Case**

Tourism sector may cause to the used resources to get damaged as it could contribute to maintenance, asset of environmental value it sold as touristic product. Before touristic products are eradicated by public authorities, nongovernmental organizations and tourism operators, they should be maintained and their usage should be planned. This practice is of vital importance for sustainable tourism. A great many of studies were conducted for sustainable tourism but the importance of local touristic assets for sustainable tourism was not emphasized much.

What kind of effects local touristic assets have on sustainable tourism is studied in this research that is prepared for this purpose. Beysehir's important local assets were determined in the first phase of the research. Research data was obtained by asking the poll questions prepared related to these assets to tourists who came to Beysehir. The contribution that these assets made to sustainable tourism was determined by evaluating this obtained data through SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Science) package software.

**M. Omer Azabagaoglu**

Professor, Namik Kemal University, Turkey

## **Determination of Ecotourism Potential of Igneada Region According to Rural Development**

Recently, rural development is key factor to improve agricultural income and come to life to rural people and prevent traditional values. For this reason, ecotourism is major element for rural development. Different regional and natural identities should be considered as an alternative economic activity by definition of ecotourism. Research area is located in northeast direction of Thrace region and surrounding with black sea in Turkey. Igneada, deep spot in a sea forest, has very rich biological species and different variety of habitats. By the way it is biggest deep spot in a sea forest ecosystem in Europe. This place and its surrounding area are convenient to apply ecotourism activities. Such as; Nature Photography, Caving, Trekking, Hunting, Bird Observatory, Butterfly Observatory, Mushroom Picking, Orienteering, Water Sports, Fishing, Camping, Outdoor Cycling and Picnic. Igneada is also very important area for Botany and Wildlife researching. This research will argued how these ecotourism activities should be planned at Igneada.

**Lois Burgess**

Lecturer, University of Wollongong, Australia

&

**Greg Kerr**

Lecturer, University of Wollongong, Australia

## **Australian Traveller's Use of the Internet: Understanding Australian Online Planning and Booking Behaviour**

### **Objective**

To better understand Australians' Internet usage in the context of travel planning. The study serves as a benchmark measurement. The aim is to undertake the survey on an annual basis to monitor trends of Internet usage on a continuing basis and enable tourism businesses and industry to optimise their web-strategy accordingly. A secondary aim is to enable comparison with results of an annual survey (using the same survey instrument) conducted in the US by the National Laboratory for Tourism and eCommerce, Temple University, Philadelphia, USA.

### **Material and Methods**

The study was conducted using an online panel of Australian adults maintained by ResearchNow. Invitations to participate in the study were sent to a random subset of panel members. A total of 4,249 adults responded to the Internet use and travel-related questions. Of these persons, 85 percent (3,627) indicated they had taken a trip 80 kilometres or more, one-way from home or included an overnight stay during the previous 12 months. The sample of online adults was weighted based upon three criteria that have been shown to significantly affect Internet use - age, race and gender - in order to represent the Australian population aged 16 years and over.

### **Summary of Results**

- Seventy eight percent (78%) of Australian online traveller's used the Internet to plan pleasure travel only, whereas 18 percent used the Internet to plan both business and pleasure trips and a 3 percent reported that they used the Internet to plan business travel only.
- Of those Internet users surveyed there was a high incidence of access to support technology such as mobile phones (mean of 95.3%), and navigation systems (mean of 40%).
- Three types of Australian Internet travel planners were identified; those who planned for business travel only (BO);

- those who planned for business and pleasure travel (BP) ; and those who planned for pleasure travel only (PO),
- Internet users used the internet predominantly as the main source of information for travel planning. Word of mouth was the next most relevant source of information,
  - Of the three types of travel planning identified (BO, BP, & PO), more than 56% of respondents used the Internet to plan in excess of 75% of their travel,
  - Of 11 categories of websites provided, only four (search engines, online travel agencies, companies (airlines, hotels) and destinations) rated above 50% in the travel planning process,
  - Information about a destination was the most highly ranked website in seeking information followed by followed by airfares and hotels,
  - There was a willingness (> 50%) to sign up for e-newsletters on the part of Internet users while responding to online advertisements was below 20%,
  - In excess of 90% of respondents were either 'extremely satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied' with the Internet in their travel planning,
  - The benefits of using the Internet for travel planning were identified. In addition to gaining information respondents gave importance to 'involvement in planning', building expectations', 'reducing planning time while on trip' and 'achieving value for money',
  - In addition to information gathering respondents revealed high levels of online transactions particularly for airline tickets and accommodation. This is reflected in their on-line spending habits with \$1,000 to \$5,000 being the median level of expenditure for both pleasure and business travel although higher amounts were recorded for business travel.
  - Reasons for not using the Internet for travel planning were identified which predominantly includes issues of online security, lack of personal service and loyalty to travel agent.



**Elena Delgado Laguna**  
Researcher, University of Alicante, Spain

## **Public opinions toward a consolidated tourist destination: Benidorm (Spain)**

Benidorm is identified as one of the main tourist destinations in Spain, proved by its number of hotels, with 150 and 60.000 beds. In addition, this city provides 350.000 apartments for tourist. Benidorm is geographically located in the southeast cost of the Iberian Peninsula, surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea and well known as Costa Blanca.

The early development of Benidorm as a tourist destination started in the 50's and through the years, Benidorm has been forced to adapt itself to new requirements of its visitors. Therefore, due the number of years that Benidorm is known as holiday destination and adding the current economic crisis, this city has to face important changes in order to continue being considered a successful tourist destination in Spain.

This article focuses its main objective to understand the problems to be solved, and aspects to be improved. To do so, 30 interviews have been made to stakeholders directly involved within the Tourism Industry. From the responses obtained, it has been done a depth analysis concluding that Benidorm needs to act in different and significant fields. Firstly, the image should be improved, needing important investments; the accessibility to Benidorm, such as train, motorway or from the airport "El Altet" are far from being properly signposting. Additionally, Benidorm has been enforced to substitute its traditional shops by Chinese businesses. It is important to emphasize the riskiness described by the interviewers about the dependence of Benidorm to just two types of tourists, English tourists and retired people. Furthermore, and in relation to the human resources working within the Tourism Industry, the responses were unanimous, failing in terms of qualification and salaries. And last but not least, the gastronomic offer of Benidorm is considered very limited and ordinary compared with the vast demand.

**Peter Domonkos**

Researcher, University Rovira I Virgili, Spain,

**Juan Antonio Duro**

Professor, University Rovira I Virgili, Spain

&

**X. Farre**

Professor, University Rovira I Virgili, Spain

## **Do Beach Users Like Heat Stress?**

Tourism is an important sector of the Spanish economy. Some 90% of foreign tourists are beach users in Mediterranean or Canaries resorts. The popularity of Mediterranean beaches does not decrease even during the European economic crisis. The regional impacts of global warming may threaten the popularity of summer tourism both directly and indirectly. Extreme climatic events occurring either due to the global warming or the unforced climatic variability, can worsen the conditions for holiday activities in tourist resorts. The global warming phenomenon will likely result in the increasing frequency of unpleasant heat waves and severe droughts. Observed data shows that hot spells hardly affect the hotel tourism in the beaches of the Spanish Mediterranean. In spite of the more frequent summer hot spells in the latest decades, the summer tourism grows faster than the tourism of the other seasons of the year, and this finding is specific for Spain. The data shows that lots of beach users tolerate well or even like heat stress if they can live in air conditioned apartments. On the other hand, the indirect effects of climate change likely will harden the maintenance of good conditions for mass tourism. In connection with extreme climatic events, lack of fresh water, as well as the overload of electrical and transporting system might occur. The problem is more serious due to the growing number of tourists in some popular resorts. Consequently, high level, well- coordinated regulations are needed for the sustainable development of tourism in Spain. Appropriate regulations should be based on the strategic planning of tourism development and further aspects are the good information transfer and the consideration of local peculiarities in tourism management. With such regulations the attractiveness and popularity of the Mediterranean resorts can be maintained in the changing climate.

**Maricica Drutu**

PhD Student, The Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies, Romania

&

**Gina-Ionela Butnaru**

Lecturer, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University IASI, Romania

## **Improving the Quality of Tourism Services through Performance Management**

### **Objective:**

Quality in services, has established itself as compliance with customer requirements. Companies are working on improving the quality of tourism services by increasing managerial performance, serving both as objective and as their future strategy development. In the present study we aimed to analyze the contribution of performance management on improving the quality of tourism services.

### **Material & Methods:**

To achieve its purpose in "Improving the quality of tourism services through performance management," during the research were combined theoretical and practical aspects.

The methods used are varied and research undertaken in line with objectives. Thus, we have developed two types of questionnaires to two groups of subjects (the tourist reception managers and their clients), whose questions focused on the general objectives of the research.

### **Results:**

The importance method of assessment

1. The methodology proposed to take calculation into account the evaluation criteria in relation to: Feedback and assessment of economic agents;

2. The algorithm proposed added leaves open other criteria and complete the model, taking into account the complexity of tourism

3. To expect that this model can be embedded in the quality of life indicator.

### **Conclusions:**

Personal contributions of the research were the following: On the general theory, have deepened the following concepts: the concept of performance management and the concept of quality of tourism services, and presented the importance of improving quality of tourism services through performance management.

**Gihan Elsayy**  
Professor, Domanhour University, Egypt

## **Therapeutic Tourism in Siwa Oasis**

Therapeutic Tourism accounts for a ratio ranging from 5% to 10% of international tourism. The volume of Therapeutic tourism in the world is 92 million tourists in 2009. In Egypt amounts to therapeutic tourism traffic volume of 700 thousand tourists about 5% of the total tourists coming to Egypt in 2010. Expected to increase the number of tourists coming to Egypt for treatment in the range of 300-500 thousand tourists a year, Generating an estimated income of five billion Egyptian pounds, at least annually.

There are various areas of medical tourism in Egypt, where it has about 16 sites where available treatments for many diseases.

The most important of these areas are Siwa Oasis. The elements of tourism in the oasis of Siwa are: geographical location, the springs water, sand, climate, environment free from pollution and noise

The importance of the study in that it sheds light on the problems of therapeutic tourism in Siwa. Although, the enjoyment of Siwa viable medical tourism but that these components did not use the picture that makes it a magnet for tourists.

The human elements of the medical tourism is very weak , as the therapeutic facilities are not available in Siwa Oasis, and that there are no medical facilities for follow-up of patients .

The goal of research is to review the elements of medical tourism, and how to best use them and also open new horizons for tourism development.

**Nazmiye Erdogan**

Associate Professor & Assistant Director, Baskent University Tourism  
and Hotel Management Program Baglica Kampus, Turkey

## **Environmental Performance of Tourism Accommodations and Tourism Ecolabels in Turkey in Protected Areas**

The main objective of this study is to explore the nature of environmental performance (EP) of tourism accommodations in the surrounding area of Goreme Historical National Park (GHNP) in the Cappadocia region, Turkey. The park was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985. The study assessed the existing environmental performance and compared the three accommodation groups for hypothesized differences. The necessary data were collected from 73 accommodations by means of survey questionnaire administered to the accommodation managers. The questionnaire included 39 EP indicators and general demographics of accommodations. Findings show that, in general, they all have low performance on energy efficiency, water conservation, responsible waste management, communication, environmental training, the environmental awareness, necessary knowledge about and interest in the environmental protection and environmental policy. The ANOVA and post-hoc test results provided partial support for the hypotheses, because three groups differed in only seven performance indicators. It was concluded that the tourism accommodations need to have environmentally sensitive design that helps preserve surrounding ecological integrity in protected area.

**Jamshid Hemmati Morad Abadi**  
Professor, Islamic Azad University, Iran  
&  
**Sedigheh Eslami**  
Teacher, Payan Noor University, Iran

## **Recognition of Sport Tourism Capacities Lorestan Province of Iran**

The main goal of this study is the investigation and Recognition of sport tourism capacities Lorestan province of Iran.

From the point of view of sport tourism, one of the most important specifications of this province is collection of beautiful aspects of creation in one place. Something such as close bank to Zagros mountains, natural sea(for example: Gahar sea), river, lakes, ponds and full water dams and thousands of other attraction ready for any type of sport. The method of this research is descriptive. In this research used from research questionnaire (Kronbach: 80%) and also other complementary information current contexts and resources, the latest result of performed researches on the field in other to collect required information. Statistic population of research includes the persons in charge, native persons and present tourists at Lorestan providence. Thus 235 persons (58 persons in charge, 68 tourists & 109 native persons) were selected as the statistical sample by random. SPSS17 software was used for analyzing of data along with descriptive analyzing to the data of questionnaire. About 73.26% of subjects considered the Gahar and Que sea, bank if Lorestan providence as the best place for development of water /lake sports (Cano, water ski...). About 80.19% consider snow covered mountains of Lorestan providence as a suitable place for mountain sports(Grass ski, mountain climbing) and air sport such as Kit and ...69% of them considered traditional sports such as Dalpalon, Ghighach and ... as the important tourism attraction of Lorestan providence.

About 73.76% of subjects considered Lorestan providence as a reach place for tourism development due to its tourism attractions(natural, Religious place of pilgrimage, commercial & industrial, historical & sporting aspects).

**Willie Hood**

Lecturer, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa

## **Perceptions and emotions related to the Kudu brand (South African National Parks)**

The purpose of this research was to identify the perceptions and emotions associated with SANParks (South African National Parks) fifty six year old Kudu brand.

The conscious creation and marketing of a destination brand and image is a feature of the present age. This brand can also affect tourists' choices and behaviour and are therefore important for destination marketing. Marketing organisations devote considerable time to create brands and channel them through various media sources to target markets. The success of a destination brand can be measured and defined by the expectations of the tourists.

This study measured SANParks Kudu brand by means of 618 (n=618) structured, self-completion electronic questionnaires posted on SANParks official website. Using a perceptions and emotion related measurement tool, designed by the Institute for Tourism, Wildlife Economics & Leisure Studies (North West University, South Africa), SANParks Kudu brand were tested. A factor analysis was conducted on the correlation of twenty four pre-established perceptions and eight pre-established emotions. Three factors - a successful brand, brand associated with high quality service and a positive brand image emerged as perceptions. These three factors resulted in a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of .921, .900 and .887 respectively. Two factors related to emotions were divided into positive and negative emotions towards the Kudu brand and resulted in a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of .858 and .794.

The findings indicated the Kudu brand to be successful, but recommendations were made to SANParks to differentiate their Kudu brand. This will help to create a unique culture and identity for each National Park in South Africa and help to strengthen the brand competing against other national parks in South Africa and within Africa.

**Gayle Jennings**

Adjunct Professor, Griffith University, Australia

## **Action Research: Reflections on University Tourism Students Assessing Their Own Work**

### **Objective:**

The purpose of this paper is to report on an action research study aimed at developing students' reflective practices and praxes in order that students were able to focus, monitor and evaluate their own learning processes, products and experiences.

Successively over four years, students in an undergraduate, final-year, tourism studies project-based course were required to set their own learning aims within the context of broader course aims, monitor these aims over a semester and evaluate their achievement of both individual and course aims.

### **Material & Methods:**

Annually, based on student and lecturer feedback, successive cycles of action research (Lewin, 1948; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Heron & Reason, 2008) were pursued to continually monitor and improve course-learning engagements.

As a research approach, action research is situated within a participatory research paradigm (Heron & Reason, 2008). In this study, action research was informed by a qualitative methodology.

Weekly, the lecturer maintained "field notes". Student self-assessments were generated during preparation and after completion of assessment items. Formal student evaluation of the effectiveness of self-assessment occurred in written feedback and course/teaching evaluations.

### **Results:**

Self-assessment was found to be effective in engaging students in reflective practices and in developing reflective praxes. Lecturer field-notes included "Setting learning contexts, negotiating roles and responsibilities, and consistency in expectations is critical for fulfilment of course and individual learning aims." Students commented: "Having to set my own learning aims made me think more seriously about my learning." "I got a lot out of this course. You made me think and criticise my own work."

### **Conclusions:**

The effectiveness of student reflective practices and praxes as a self-assessment tool facilitated students' own learning, honed their ability to use self-assessment both formally and informally and furthered their capacity and capabilities as life long learners.



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## **Systematic Design of Synergies in the field of Tourism and Organic Agriculture**

### **Research background and research gap**

The proposed paper summarizes the results of the research project „Systematic Design of Synergies in the field of Tourism and Organic Agriculture“, which is conducted at HTW Chur. This project focuses both, organic farms and tourism suppliers (e.g. hotels, restaurants etc.), which play an important role in the economically underdeveloped alpine regions of Grisons (Switzerland) and were not taken into account as a subject of research so far. This research gap is very surprising, because there is a commitment about sustainable tourism on the one hand and sustainable healthy food production on the other hand.

### **Research aim**

The main objective of the project is to optimize the cooperation between these two economic branches along the inter-sectoral value-added chain in order to foster the regional development. The scientific aim is to identify synergies for cooperation between the two industries: organic agriculture and tourism.

### **Research Design**

Therefore a three-stage research design was chosen: (1) expert interviews, (2) survey of suppliers, (3) network analysis. On the basis of these results, innovative fields of cooperation can be identified, business plans for extending the portfolio of products and services as well as proposals for optimizing the existing marketing and logistic channels can be developed.

### **Results**

As a result, new bookable offers will be designed in the innovative field of “eco-tourism” and innovative inter-sectoral cooperations will be developed. Therefore the project has high relevance for both branches: Organic farmers have the chance to secure their economic existence by offering additional touristic services. The tourism industry ameliorates its competitiveness by attaining new target groups (e.g. LOHAS) and entering innovative markets.

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## **The Relationships between Perceived Value and Attitudinal Loyalty when Implementing a Client-Focused Philosophy in Travel Agencies**

This paper offers further research in literature dealing with the impact that implementing a customer-oriented strategy in a travel agency could have on the customer. Within this context, trust, together with commitment, stand for the touchstone of Relationship Marketing. They contribute positively to maintain a relationship throughout a period of time. Likewise these two factors act as a vessel for the influence that satisfaction has on loyalty. It is demonstrated that satisfaction, trust and affective commitment of customers towards the agency cause a positive effect on their attitudinal loyalty.

The tourist sector in general and the travel agency sub-sector in particular, currently find themselves in a rather complex and delicate situation, one that is highly dynamic due to factors such as technological innovations, a more demanding consumer, an increase in competition and changes in the tourism distribution system, which results in conflicts within channels and less commission for operating companies. In response to an increasingly turbulent, competitive and complex environment, both in the market-place and in technology, market orientation and relationship marketing coincide with a business strategy based on customer relationship management.

The main aim of this research paper is to further studies done on the impact an implementation of a client-focused strategy in travel agencies can have on the client. Conversely, the aim is to explore explanatory variables of the client-focused strategy and provide empirical evidence on the subject.

Through the design of an explanatory theoretical model based on the coexistence of two methods of the same business (online, offline), this study contributes to: the knowledge of the client's needs and behaviours; the analysis of value as perceived by the client, of its satisfaction in service provided, as well as loyalty developed with the

perceived service, in order to allow the company to build a long-term relationship with the client which produces value.

Therefore, this study aims to verify whether a positive and significant relationship exists between a client-focused strategy in a travel agency and the development of a client's product loyalty towards that agency which allows for the establishment of lasting and satisfactory relationships.

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## **The Role of Statistics in Tourism Research**

Statistics is an important component in maintaining the quality of tourism research. It is important in all phases of tourism research, not just in the analysis of data. Proper planning of research will help ensure that the data will be of the necessary quality and shed light upon the questions under study. Tourism research may involve evaluation of existing observational data or designing experiments which involve imposing treatments on experimental units and measuring data therefrom. For the former, there are accepted methods involving principles such as random selection and representation. Even using common techniques, there is a role for the statistician to help design the questionnaire, determine sample size required, and recommend stratified sampling if needed. For the latter, there are standard experimental design methods which involve design principles such as replication, randomization, and local control. More emphasis should be placed on obtaining the right amount of quality data rather than just putting emphasis on analysis techniques. Computational capabilities have improved greatly in recent years, but more emphasis should be placed on assuring that the data submitted to the computer are of high quality. In this paper are discussed principles involved but also operational requirements in sampling studies and designed tourism experiments. Sizes of samples required in observational studies and numbers of replications in designed experiments are discussed. These are based upon the anticipated variability of the data as well as the degree of precision required. Some newer time series mixed model techniques for market related econometric studies are also described. A goal emphasized is to standardize statistical methodology used in tourism research throughout the world so that it is possible to compare results of studies conducted in different countries.

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## **When Local Culture Stymies Rural Tourism Development: A Caribbean Perspective**

The literature is clear: local participation is critical to successful rural tourism development. Where there are some inconsistencies is the extent of participation required, the phase at which it is critical, the extent to which this requirement is contextual, and the solution when such participation is limited.

Hence, the goal of this study was to understand the role of community participation in rural tourism development. The study also explored cultural impediments to such participation and how a potential rural tourism destination in the Caribbean could overcome this.

The study was significant as it brought to focus a challenge being experienced by potential rural tourism destinations, like those in the Caribbean, where the demand, need and local inputs to develop a strong rural tourism product were in place only to be stymied by local cultural factors. The findings could prove instructive to leaders from these areas. The study could also stimulate further discourse and research in the area of cultural dichotomies and rural tourism development.

Three sets of transcripts were subjected to content analysis for this qualitative study: first, were the interview transcripts of one-on-one conversations with 50 leaders: 45 business and civic leaders from the parish of St. Thomas, Jamaica and five national tourism leaders, and second, the transcripts of a town hall meeting of residents as well as of a local talk-radio program which focused on the parish. Other archives were also analyzed for the study.

Careful analysis of the literature revealed that community participation was necessary at all levels of rural tourism development, but most critical at the needs assessment and benefits distribution phases. The study also revealed that St. Thomas was in a quandary as this area had cultural elements linked to its history that could simultaneously drive and impede its rural tourism development. Recommendations to address the competing subcultures the research uncovered were posed.

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## **Local Level Recruitment in the Tourism Sector: Myths and Realities a Case Study of the Mauritian Hotel Sector**

### **Purpose**

The contribution of the tourism industry towards the local community has been extensively studied. Being heavily labour-intensive, tourism is generally viewed as a major source of employment. In their quest towards social sustainability, hotels have no other alternative than to take the necessary steps to integrate the local community in the development process. The primary aim of this paper is to analyse the extent to which Mauritian Hotels recruit at local level, and the type of jobs shared with the locals. For this purpose, this paper examines share of jobs allocated at local level, the remuneration and working conditions associated, and the position of these jobs in the organizational hierarchy. These are compared with positions filled at national level by people not living in the vicinity of hotels.

### **Method**

For the purpose of this work, three regions with a concentration of hotels have been investigated. These are found along the western, the southern and the eastern coastline. Five hotels were selected in each of these regions. Secondary data, in the form of the residential address of all the employees, and their position in the organizational hierarchy, was used for analysis purposes. Questionnaires were also devised to collect the views of the local community and of hotel employees with regards to the local-level recruitment process, and opportunities offered to members of the local community in terms of promotion and training.

### **Key findings**

In spite of the fact that hotels recruitment massively at local level, there is a clear perception that it is primarily to fill vacancies at the lowest levels of the organizational hierarchy. Moving towards intermediate levels, the proximity criteria is taken into account to a much lesser extent. With regards to the opportunities available to the local community in terms of promotion and training, there is a shared feeling amongst employees and the members of the local community that, in spite of the effort presently made by the hotel sector to recruit at local level, they are not being treated in a fair way in terms of active participation in hotel activities.

**Value/ Originality**

This paper contributes to the literature with regards to the social sustainability of the tourism industry by investigating the local-level recruitment process in the hotel sector in the context of a rapidly developing island economy.

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## **Burnout Syndrome on Hotel Employees: Case of City of Konya**

The aim of this study is to find out the level of burnout of employees who work at the 4- and 5-star hotels in Konya (Turkey), and whether hotel employees' mean scores' of burnout sub-dimensions vary according to their demographic characteristics. For this aim, a survey that consists of Maslach Burnout Inventory and personal information form is applied in 8 hotel enterprises. Data that are obtained from surveys are analyzed by using statistical software (SPSS 16.0). During the analyses, reliability analysis, independent sample t- tests and one-way ANOVA tests are performed. The findings of the study indicated that hotel employees' level of emotional exhaustion is medium, level of depersonalization is low, and, level of personal accomplishment is high.



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## **Importance and Performance Analysis of Visitors' Attitude towards the Environmental Quality of Geopark: A case study of Hong Kong Global Geopark of China**

Nowadays, the notion of sustainability has been seriously considered in tourism development. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2011) analyzed that more countries are making efforts to coordinate with the development of geotourism to achieve sustainable tourism development. The majority of the countries are rendering their best endeavours to coordinate with the development of geopark by locating important geological and geomorphological sites or landscapes within their national boundaries (National Geographic Society, 2010). However, few researches have examined sustainable tourism development through geopark. There are only certain relevant researches of the national parks and the majority of which are concentrated in the European and American regions whereas related researches in Asia are comparatively less. Thus, this study is focused on examining visitors' perceived geopark's environmental quality performance for maintaining sustainable tourism development in Asia. Hong Kong Global Geopark of China (the "Geopark"), which is a new member of the Global Geoparks Network (GGN), has been employed as the case study in this research. The main objectives of this study are to examine (i) visitors' perceived importance and (ii) visitors' perceived performance towards the environmental quality of the Geopark.

A quantitative approach was used by dispatching self-administered survey questionnaire to visitors of the Geopark from August to Mid October 2010. A total of 200 questionnaires were collected through the snowball sampling and on-site convenient sampling methods. Paired sample t-tests were conducted to investigate the relationship between the visitors' perceived importance and performance on environmental quality of the Geopark. Independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA were also conducted to explore whether visitors' demographic profile would affect their attitudes towards the Geopark's performance on environmental quality.

The importance and performance analysis (IPA) was employed to analyze the relationship between importance and performance on environmental quality of the Geopark. The IPA consists of two dimensional matrixes where the X-axis indicating performance and Y-axis indicating importance. It provides an attractive snapshot of how

well the Geopark's environmental quality performance meets visitors' important concerns on 19 selected attributes and further offers guidelines for the management to reallocate resources efficiently and effectively (Wade and Eagles, 2010). The findings show that the environmental quality performance of the Geopark cannot reach the perceived importance of the visitors, as all the attributes rating on importance is higher than performance. In summary, the Geopark performed well in keeping the original environment and could achieve the aim of providing a protected natural area. However, it failed to achieve the function of education and interpretation, as the education facilities were insufficient in the park; surprisingly, the visitors were not interested in these aspects. Such response from the visitors may be due to the recent awareness of the concepts of sustainable tourism and geotourism which are new in Hong Kong. Besides, it is discovered that the visitor demographic profiles could also affect the rating on the Geopark's performance on the environmental quality. The visitors who had higher education level also had better understanding of sustainable tourism, placed more concerns on the Geopark's educational and management aspects. Finally, several suggestions were recommended for the management of the Geopark to make future improvements.

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## **Cardiff & Co**

This paper will focus on the role of new media in the marketing of tourism. Cardiff, the capital city of Wales, a devolved nation within the United Kingdom, has experienced major transformation over recent years, and aims to propel itself forward as a premier league European capital over the next two decades. Cardiff & Co is the organisation charged with promoting the city region, and has stated aims such as helping Cardiff to become a top 5 UK shopping destination, top 10 UK short break destination, and to improve the capital's position in the top 10 of UK conference cities. Within this context the organisation's key areas of activity include managing the city brand and promoting the city region for tourism. The city's representation in new media is evident at [Whycardiff.com](http://Whycardiff.com), the official website for Cardiff which acts as a portal for information regarding investment, tourism, conferences, events, shopping, education, living and working in the city. Through managed efforts by Cardiff & Co the capital city is now represented in a range of new media, whereas the new media representing the national image of Wales for tourism is managed by another organisation, Visit Wales. The research will analyse the use of a range of new media by both organisations, exploring the synergies and differences between the representation of the capital city brand of Cardiff and the national brand of Wales (Skinner, 2009).

Results also reflect a paradigm shift away from value-in-exchange and towards value-in-use, as presented by Grönroos (2006) and Sheth and Uslay (2007), who propose that the marketer's role is no longer to deliver customer value, but is only to support consumers' own value creation by managing our interactions with them. The contribution that this paper makes to theoretical developments in place marketing is therefore in its challenge to the dominance of the concept of integrated marketing communications in light of a consideration of the continued relevance of marketer-led communications when promoting place brands for tourism.

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## **Ecotourism At Nature Reserves in China: Negotiating Preservation and Development**

The development of ecotourism usually concerns the sustainability of protected areas. Facilitated by appropriate management, ecotourism is capable to contribute to both conservation and development, as well as improving the wellbeing of local communities. Therefore, ecotourism has been practiced in different forms in many countries in recent decades, including China. This study examines ecotourism development at Xingkai Lake National Nature Reserve in Heilongjiang Province of China. Key informant interviews are conducted with community members and key officials at the provincial forestry department and the Nature Reserve. Due to its rich and unique resource base and the locational advantage, the potential for providing quality nature experience at Xingkai Lake National Nature Reserve is high and tourism development is occurring rapidly in recent decades. However, it is revealed that current relationships between people, resources and tourism have yet to provide the mutual benefits necessary for successful ecotourism. The multi-stakeholder management style and the ambiguity of landownership within the nature reserve provide structural difficulties for the management and operation of ecotourism. The local fishing community is struggling due to the rapid depletion of fishing resources. Although participation in ecotourism could provide an alternative livelihood opportunity for the local fishing community and interests in tourism participation are identified among community members, the current involvement is low mainly due to the lack of participation mechanism. Therefore, it is recommended that management programs and government policies should be developed to set a platform for community participation in ecotourism, which could supply necessary labors for ecotourism development and replace fishing activities as the major livelihood method for the local community. Then, a positive synergetic relationship between tourism, environment and community could be developed. In addition, planning and policy requirements are also discussed for directing appropriate management strategies for ecotourism in protected areas in China.

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## **Tourism and Carbon Foot Prints in United Arab Emirates (UAE) - Challenges and Solutions**

The article brings into picture the tourism progression and its environmental consequences in a recently emerged international tourist destination, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The country attracted around 8 million tourists in the year 2008 and at the same time made to the news-lines for generating highest carbon footprints per capita in the world! The article intends to generate a comprehensive analysis on background of United Arab Emirates (UAE), its resources, infrastructure and relevance of developing tourism which is strongly emphasized on energy intensive “man made tourism resources”. The article is divided into three sections to assess the challenges and solutions related to tourism and environment in the country. In the first section, an analysis is drawn on the background of United Arab Emirates (UAE), its resources, infrastructure and progression made in the tourism sector. At the same time a discussion is made on the prevailing environment problems in the country and its status in terms of environment performance with regard to other countries. The second section of the paper throws light over the attempts made by the UAE government and major tourism stakeholders to deal with the current situation. A summary of these attempts and environmental laws is also taken into consideration under this section. In the last section, three carbon mitigation methodologies have been identified which best suit the prevailing condition and requirements in the UAE. A special investigation is also carried out to evaluate the business potential of these methodologies attracting the investors’ interest.

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## **Tourism Adventure In Costa Rica and the Influence of Social Demographics, Motives and Travel Condition of the International Tourist in the Amount of Activities Done**

In Costa Rica, the demand for tourist activities shows a tendency for nature-based tourism. The present research work analyzes the international demand for this type of tourism according to reasons for travel, socio-demographic and travel condition variables. The study includes hiking/trekking, visits to volcanoes, observation of flora and fauna, bird watching and canopy. Data are taken from the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT), from the Air Survey (Encuesta Aérea) to non-resident tourists over the age of 18 who left from the Juan Santamaría Airport during the first quarter of 2007. The study comprises two dimensions: 1) the probability of demand for each of these activities, based on the average number of activities. (2) Poisson distribution is used to calculate the average number of adventure tourism activities performed for tourists, given the favorable or unfavorable influence of reasons for travel, socio-demographic factors and travel condition. (3) Through the Poisson probability function models, *ceteris paribus*, the increase or decrease on the average amount of tourism adventure activities to carry out for tourists is calculated, according to the influence of the different variables of analyzes.

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## **An Exploratory Study of Postgraduate Hotel and Tourism Management Students' Experience of Learning by Games: A Case Study of Hotel and Tourism Training and Development Class in Hong Kong**

This research aims to explore postgraduate hotel and tourism management students' experience of learning by games in Hong Kong. This research has pedagogical and industrial significance. From the educational perspective, games have the pedagogical potential in facilitating knowledge transfer and application among adult learners through experiential learning. From the management's viewpoint, developing graduates capable of synthesizing knowledge to develop opportunities and generate innovative solutions is valuable for the hotel and tourism sectors' long-term sustainable development. Postgraduate students enrolled in the class, "Hotel and Tourism Training and Development" in School of Hotel and Tourism Management of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, were the focus of this exploratory study. Games were the integrated teaching component. Quality research in form of classroom observation, in-depth interviews and researchers' reflections was adopted in this exploratory study. Thematic analysis was used for analyzing the results. There are four major findings. Firstly, games have played a significant role in knowledge transfer, especially illustrating and reinforcing abstract concepts, facilitating knowledge application, and enhancing knowledge retention. Moreover, games have facilitated postgraduate students' collaborative learning, which has been extended to other learning contexts, like in group project. Furthermore, instructor has played a crucial role in using games in classroom teaching. Also, the empirical finding has shown that learning by games is accepted in the Asian context. Recommendations on learning by games were then discussed.