

Tourism attractiveness: Resources and stakeholders' interrelationships

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ABSTRACT

The interaction between tourists and local people determines the quality of the visitor's experience. It becomes crucial to examine local communities' perceptions of the positive or negative impact of tourism on their quality of life. Tourist behaviour plays a crucial role in this. The quality of the tourism experience also depends on the ability of stakeholders to create positive tourism experiences for tourists and locals. Although all stakeholders are affected by tourism activities, and although they can influence and be influenced by tourism policy decisions, they do not have the same status or role. Some divergences may arise in the exchange. As actors with different purposes and functions, public and private actors do not have the same means or the same perspective to apprehend the situation. From this point on, it is necessary to build a consensus between the participants and to manage the interactions between the public and private actors. The search for consensus remains the main guarantee of success for the development of tourism in a region.

1. Introduction

Tourism has rapidly become one of the key activities of the 21st century. It is practiced by millions of people around the world, with both positive and negative effects (Walmsley, 2004).

Tourism is now a worldwide phenomenon, contributing to accelerate globalization. It is an activity closely linked to the location of the event, the development of the tourist area and the interaction between visitors and occupants. In addition to its contribution to the economic development of a country, tourism plays a very important role, especially for developing countries, as it encourages investment to create infrastructure and make improvements to accommodate the flow of tourists in good conditions.

Faced with a growing tourist demand, destinations must innovate, find new resources and new bases of attraction that can constitute a competitive advantage. A reasonable and effective management of these is proposed to attract tourists and ensure the sustainability of tourism activities. Management and marketing strategies have also been updated to ensure that the experiences offered by the tourist destination meet the expectations of tourists, and to maintain and even strengthen the visibility and position of the destination in the market. This experience offered by a destination must be more attractive than or at least as attractive as its competitors, to stand out from the competition. This really depends on how potential tourists perceive the destination (Krešić & Prebežac, 2011).

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It should be noted that tourism is a global phenomenon that has been the subject of a large amount of literature. Using different theories, such as the theory of comparative advantages or the base theory (Vollet, 1998, 2007), many researchers question the importance of tourism and its impact on territorial development.

Tourism is therefore not a static phenomenon. It continues to evolve, so it is difficult to give a perfect definition at this time. It remains a complex business unit with multiple actors, strategies and influences. Despite centuries of practice, authors and researchers interested in the tourism phenomenon have not managed to find a true consensus. Even today, defining tourism remains a difficult task, especially in the field of management (Demen-Meyer, 2005).

The difficulty in defining tourism comes from the fact that it is a phenomenon in constant evolution. The travel practices encountered today are different from what they were in the past. These different changes contribute greatly to the complexity of the tourism industry (Fabry, 2009). However, tourism development must define its scope, where it can be practiced, and the criteria by which an action and activity can be called tourism.

The growing sophistication of the tourism phenomenon is also accompanied by a diversification of products and destinations. Social factors, including the development of transportation, have contributed greatly to the increase in human mobility. More and more destinations are competing to attract the largest number of tourists, while increasing tourism revenues.

From this point of view, it is necessary to consider the regions where tourism products will be built and consumed, because the characteristics of tourism regions can be a lever of attraction (Fabry, 2009). Moreover, the territory is also a place of innovation, a place of development of a system of values that will govern the behaviour of each member of the community. It is a witness to historical evolution (François, 2008). It is therefore necessary to delimit, characterize and value the territory as a place for tourism development.

The research conducted contributes to the understanding of this global economic phenomenon, but it also has its limits, tourism being by nature a multidimensional phenomenon that affects tourist destinations to varying degrees. Moreover, this phenomenon involves many heterogeneous actors. Synchronization of actions between the different actors can improve the efficiency of actions and potentially achieve the objectives in advance. In this context, the choice of an analytical framework that emphasizes the links between actors within a tourism region appears important for the sustainability of a destination's success, as this can lead to the dynamics of regional development. The resources provided by the territory and the actions of the actors can constitute the ideal framework for a collective and coherent development of the destination. To this end, these elements will form the basis of this study.

In the context of this article, it seems important to identify the elements or collections necessary for the development of tourist destinations. For this, the visitor will be at the heart of the reflection, as well as the inhabitants and the various stakeholders involved. Multidisciplinary bibliographical research has allowed us to elaborate this work. In accordance with the principle that tourism is situated at the intersection of several disciplines, the research and related reflections are here broadened by multidisciplinary contributions.

The interests of this research both theoretical and the methodological. From a theoretical point of view, it is proposed to highlight a reflexive framework that includes the systematical approach and brings various reflexive elements to the subject. This research work proposes to build a reconciliation between multiple heterogeneous actors with different capacities and purposes, while trying to explain the links between tourism, territory and actors.

The following will focus on the development of the tourist areas through the integration of resources and the interrelation between the stakeholders and the tourist area. In this perspective, this article will analyse the synergies between public and private actors, highlighting the location of residents and the changes in visitor behaviour that lead to the emergence of new tourism practices.

2. Tourism territory or tourist destination ?

Starting from the observation that the use of terms is crucial to understand tourism phenomena, we will try to present different definitions of tourism territory and tourist destination, and will try to see if there are differences between the two concepts.

2.1 Tourist destination

A tourist destination is a limited area possessing attractions, these attractions and services are offered to tourists. Destinations can be cities or resorts (De Grandpré, 2009). For Piriou (2011), the destination corresponds to a localized tourist space and is accepted by different actors. For him, the destination corresponds to the tourist's imaginary territory (Piriou, 2009).

For Stock (2003), the destination is based on a variable space, including various interactions and as a real tourist system. In this paper, these interactions involve residents, tourists, public and private actors, in their simultaneous presence in tourist destinations, in recurrent periods.

For Botti (2010), a tourist destination is a composite product consisting of facilities that tourists need for their comfort. Following this, Ryglová et al. (2016) list the components of a tourist destination: attractiveness, facilities, accessibility, image, perception and price of a tourist destination. From a marketing point of view, he believes that a destination can be considered as a product with its own qualities that need to be managed.

In summary, we can say that a territory refers to a place inhabited by people who have established their own identity and culture based on the character and attractiveness of the area.

While a tourist destination is a space where several tourist actors interact in a combined way (permanent residents, secondary residents, tourists, public and private actors and associations), allowing it to offer possibilities by providing tourists resources to live a travel experience.

In this relationship with the other, the simultaneous cohabitation of tourists and locals is one of the main characteristics intrinsically linked to a tourist destination. Therefore, the destination can be considered as a tourism system. This system can be compared to a business (Marsat, 2010).

2.2 Tourism territory

The development of tourism cannot be understood in isolation from the territory, which can be considered both as a place of production and as a place of consumption of tourism products. The territory can be seen as a place where its resident identity is built and reflected. These make it a place of life, a place of sharing, a place of interaction with other actors and visitors.

By attempting to synthesize the different definitions of territory, it seems possible to define it according to three dimensions: identity, material and organization. From an identity point of view, a territory is a space with its own identity. Indeed, each territory has its name, its limits, its history and its heritage. It is the home of the inhabitants, who also attribute a certain perception or a specific identity to this spatial entity. It is through this representation of the inhabitants that others can construct a vision and clearly define the identity of the territory (Laganier et al., 2002).

Tourist territories can also be defined by the performance and vision of tourists (Escadafal, 2015). From then on, the requirements set by the latter are the elements that define the tourist area.

In this case, it seems sensible to address this also in the field of marketing. Piriou (2018) argues that territorial marketing aims to satisfy tourists and anticipate their needs. This can be achieved through the development of resources, alliances and incentives for various actors to participate in territorial development. In other words, territorial marketing aims to build a network of actors that can intervene or interact with local territorial development.

3. Tourism Attractiveness

3.1 Stakeholder Interrelationships

The reflections in this research lead to the territorial governance of tourism, since different heterogeneous actors intervene in the tourism sector and influence or are influenced in this changing environment. First, there is a confrontation between public and private actors, but there is also a need

for consensus between local actors and external stakeholders, who are not always well considered by the local community. Then there is the question of how to manage the interaction between actors in the tourism sector and those in other activities. From this perspective, territorial governance must be analyzed not only from the perspective of functional relationships, but also from the perspective of power and legitimacy (Marsat & Bonniot, 2009).

At the organizational level, a territory corresponds to an entity grouping together social and institutional actors organized in a particular way. Each actor has his or her place and mission in the organization. The relationships or interactions between the different actors in the territory are complex. They can refer to the domination of a group or a company over the whole, but they can also join together to achieve a common goal.

There is not always a consensus between the different stakeholders. Divergent views or objectives may be common when stakeholders have conflicting views on how space should be used, what strategies should be implemented, the importance of tourism, the need to protect the environment, the strengths and weaknesses of the destination, etc.

Territorial governance encourages the search for common ground and the identification of common objectives. Similarly, interactions between the various actors must be managed around a common identity and common projects. Residents have a special place in situations where they may oppose the development of tourism or the implementation of certain infrastructures.

In turn, tourists themselves also influence decision-making because they are consumers. Tourists' assessment of the costs and benefits of tourism guides tourism development strategies (Jurowski, 2011).

Investors, local governments, and various stakeholders do not have the same perception of the identity of the destination and use of the space. In this perspective, discussions between the parties and the determination of a common identity in relation to others can be the basis for finding a consensus between the different participants.

Disseminate a common message to all stakeholders goes through communication. Communication should be effective and emphasize the benefits of the destination rather than obscure the truth about the reality on the ground. Indeed, it has been observed that there is a considerable gap between what is said in the communication and what is actually felt in the travel experience, which can lead to tourist dissatisfaction and, in turn, negative word of mouth about the destination.

Depending on the context and the interests sought by the actors, they can carry out complementary actions. Thus, the tourism territory can be seen as a space of interaction and interdependence between actors. Interdependence also takes into account the relationship between a territory and its surroundings (Laganier et al., 2002).

3.2 Resources

Improving tourism attractiveness requires the deployment of human, material, and financial resources to build infrastructure, implement tourism development projects, implement strategies, and ensure security.

Some resources may be less compelling to visitors than others. Some may not stand out sufficiently. Therefore, it is important to pay attention not only to the views of tourism development stakeholders, but also to the views of investors, students, residents, and especially tourists who are the main target.

Tourism destinations sometimes have unidentified or under-exploited resources. Tourism development stakeholders should take steps to address this gap in order to increase the attractiveness of tourism destinations.

4. Conclusion

The development of tourism concerns both the territory and the space. It must be thought of as a system involving multiple actors. It includes the identification and characterization of the various attributes of the space to achieve a regional identity that will be used in communication and marketing.

At a time when the travel industry is facing competitive pressures, it is essential that destinations identify all the assets and attractions to differentiate them from other destinations.

In this sense, the competition to increase the attractiveness of tourism territories leads some tourism actors to expand their fields of action. This approach cannot be achieved without the cooperation of all private and public actors. To face the competition, tourists must refine and even update the image of the tourist destination. This approach requires the deployment of all stakeholders so that they can collaborate with each other.

Tourism cannot take place if it is not rooted in the mentality and practice of the people. The interactions between these different stakeholders, including tourism development actors and local residents, constitute governance, another pillar of tourism development.

Therefore, and with respect to the role of the different stakeholders, communication strategies must therefore reflect a coherent and shared vision and lead to the identification of the identities most likely to attract visitors.

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