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## Article

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# Overview of Management Approaches in the Regional Tourism Development

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### A B S T R A C T

Tourism is considered globally an important tool for regional development. Through its activities and inter-connections with other industries it has a strong impact on the whole environment of the destination in the form of different effects on bodies and objects in that environment. Therefore, it appears necessary to manage tourism strategically, with awareness of its effects and impact assessment, under the principles of sustainable development. Tourism development is strongly associated with the overall concept of regional development and especially with the policy of regional development and tourism policy. Good practice examples show that the unregulated and self-acting tourism development has negative impacts to the destination environment that could be appropriately eliminated, or at least regulated, by appropriate management.

That is why the principles of management come to the fore, especially the principles of strategic management of destinations. These should bring positive effects in the tourism sector in the form of strategically planned activities based on relevant data, information and knowledge. Also involving regional stakeholders should lead to the sustainable and competitive destination development. These approaches are based on general management overall, however it is often necessary to adapt them in many aspects because of the tourism market specifics.

This paper provides an overview of major developmental trends over the past two decades in the field of strategic destination management as an integral part of regional development. Its aim is to identify the main research directions in this area for a defined period, emphasizing the focus on applying strategical managerial approaches and methods in managing a tourist destination. In the concretization of selected approaches deals primarily with the approaches to the management of destinations in relation to the effects resulting from tourism.

Using in-depth resources research on tourism effects and impacts, tourism planning and stakeholder engagement in this planning, it focuses on that part of strategic management, which is ranked among relatively newer planning principles for managing a tourist destination. This is also becoming more and more important in emerging tourist areas. The paper summarizes the main directions of research in this area and points out the focus that researchers, academics and managers themselves are interested in.

*Keywords: Regional tourism development, Strategic destination management, Impacts of tourism, Stakeholder management*

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## I . Introduction

Tourism has gradually become a phenomenon and an inherent part of modern society. Through its activities and effects, it intervenes in many areas of life. Tourism is also considered an important tool for regional development. Bieger (2000) already notes that tourism is a decisive factor for regional policy, due to the importance of the image of the destination, its strategic emplacement in transport and communication networks, as well as the potential for the quality of life for the local population.

In economic terms, tourism is an important source of revenue for the budgets of states, regions and municipalities. For many peripheral areas, tourism is one of the few chances to make it more visible and further developed. The significant multiplier effect and interconnection of the various industries make tourism an interesting, but worse grasp object of exploration, support and management.

The link between the economic (but also socio-cultural) prosperity and the development of tourism is now obvious. Tourism is an important part of the economy of many countries around the world. Tourism market is a highly competitive market, both in terms of within the country or region, as well as from the perspective among states. In this context, it is important to apply the principles of management in the various tourism services and in the strategic management of destinations, all with the help of an adequate tourism policy.

Tourism is a complex social phenomenon, which is influenced and affects a wide range of industries. Therefore, an interdisciplinary approach is needed to explore and use the instruments of other disciplines, with possible modification due to the specificity of tourism.

Looking at the content of scientific publications and the guidelines for tourism education at European universities, it can be observed that the most frequent grasping issue of tourism is the following: economic, public-law, geographic, socio-cultural and environmental, naturally also in combination with each other. Each

science discipline (primarily economics, geography, sociology, regional studies, environmental studies, history, urban studies, psychology, marketing, management) approaches to the tourism exploration from a unique point of view, with its own apparatus. However, their combinations and interconnections are quite frequent. This is what the so-called tourism multidimensionality makes it as a specific sector.

In scientific publications, an increasing tendency towards the sustainability of tourism can be traced over the past two decades, as well as towards the modern marketing and modern management of tourism in destinations. It is precisely the principles of management (in territorial development, destinations or specific tourism services) that are increasingly seen in the interest of researchers who seek to explore them and, to a certain extent, apply them in specific areas.

## II . A brief look at research in destination management

The specificity of tourism research is, among other things, its empirical character and a major emphasis on solving practical problems. In tourism, therefore, prevails applied research. Other characteristic of tourism research is also a shorter up-to-date of its results. Such research is often focused on the future in the medium term and therefore requires operational comparison with actual development and timely corrections. Tourism is viewed primarily as a broad economic sector, which is resulting in the prevailing research focus. Application of research results is primarily limited to the mentioned above.

Scientific research on tourism involves a number of areas, reflecting the cross-cutting nature of the industry itself. Management is represented primarily as a corporate management (most in accommodation services) and as a tourism destination management. This research area has been on the rise just in the last ten years. Destination management organization

(DMO) applying principles of strategic destination management can be regarded as an institutional tool of regional tourism policy, which contributes to the efficient development of the region and to reduce the differences in the economic development based on tourism.

Given the focus of this paper on the management approaches applicable to the strategic destination management, it is possible to emphasize the general concept of the development of a tourist destination due to the positive effects of tourism, with the closely linked concept of strategic approach to the management in a tourist destination, which is particularly reflected in the following aspects: (a) the use of strategic planning to enhance the competitiveness of the destination in the tourism market, (b) involvement of destination stakeholders in the planning and implementation of tourism development strategy.

### III. Tourism destination development in the context of the tourism impacts

The issue of region development exploring and researching is tied to the applications of regional management and can be dated back to the fifties of the last century. In tourism, this area is associated with the tourist destination development due to effects that tourism can generate in each locality.

Examining the impact of tourism development in destinations has been applied from the second half of the 60s of last century, primarily in the UK and the United States. As summarized by Matheison & Wall (1982), initial researches focused primarily on the economic impacts of tourism; however, these authors even define other spheres of the positive impact of tourism in destinations that can be explored, namely impacts on the physical environment of the destination or on social relations.

A certain milestone in the classification of the tourism impacts that determined their further research was the concept of Ritchie (1984), in which he defined

four basic categories of tourism impacts: (a) physical/natural, (b) social/cultural, (c) psychological and (d) political/administrative.

Currently, many authors came to the consensus that tourism can be ranked as one of the major factors of regional development (e.g. Alavi & Yasin, 2000; Kozak, 2004; Sharma, 2004; Cooper et al., 2008; Edgell, DelMastro Allen, Smith & Swanson, 2008; Byrd, Bosley & Dronberger, 2009; Dwyer, Forsyth & Dwyer, 2010; Vanhove, 2011; Gúčík et al., 2012; Kuvan & Akan, 2012; Jaafar, Kayat, Tangit & Yacob, 2013; Pásková, 2014; Pratt, 2015, Mason, 2016; Stoffelen & Vanneste, 2017).

All tourism and recreation activities lead to socio-economic and environmental change. Tourism impacts are generally caused mainly by development and by visitors themselves (Pedersen, 2002). The most commonly used classification of the tourism impacts is the penetration of the above-mentioned division. The impacts are distinguished to (a) economic, (b) socio-cultural (sometimes social and cultural separately) and (c) natural (environmental).

While the main emphasis is put on the economic impacts of tourism, there is also a growing interest in analyzing tourism sector as a factor of cultural, social and environmental changes in destinations. It is recognized that economic impacts are linked to, and cannot easily be separated from other types of impact (Mason, 2008; Kuvan & Akan, 2012). In general, the benefits of tourism can be defined as the positive effects of economic and non-economic processes in each destination that are associated with tourism and positively, whether directly or indirectly, affecting both the local economy and population and the environment.

A strong relationship between tourism and economic environment has been recognized since the 30s of the 20th century (Kaspar, 1995). The authors quite agree on the possible economic impacts, both benefits and negative consequences (e.g. Pearce, 1989; Lickorish & Jenkins, 1997; Zhou, Yanagida, Chakravorty & Leung, 1997; Hall, 2008; Sharma, Dyer, Carter & Gursoy, 2008; Gúčík, 2011; Jaafar et al., 2013; Simão & Mósso, 2013; Pásková, 2014; Pratt, 2015, Mason,

2016, Luštický & Musil, 2017). Impacts at the level of higher territorial units are most often analyzed.

The social impacts of tourism refer to changes in the lives of people living in destination communities. The cultural impacts are those which lead to a longer-term, gradual change in a society's values, beliefs, cultural practices, customs, rituals, arts, artifacts, and architecture of host communities. They appear mainly as long-term changes (Teo, 1994; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Backman, Hsu & Backman, 2011; Styliadis et al., 2014). In the socio-cultural sphere, there is a consensus on the possible impacts of tourism (e.g. Zhou et al., 1997; Pedersen, 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Wall & Mathieson, 2005; Sharma et al., 2008; Byrd, Bosley & Dronberger, 2009; Kuvan & Akan, 2012; Rio & Nunes, 2012; Pásková, 2014; Xie, Bao & Kerstetter, 2014; Mason, 2017; Singh, Chung & Choi, 2017).

Quality of natural environment in a destination is essential to sustainable tourism development. However, the relationship between tourism and natural destination environment is quite complex; many developing activities can have adverse environmental effects. This interaction between tourism development and environmental change is a matter of interest of many authors. They try to classify and examine mainly the negative impact of tourism to destination environment. However, some of the tourism impacts are considered to be positive (e.g. Zhou et al., 1997; Pedersen, 2002; Wall & Mathieson, 2005; Hall, 2008; Mason, 2008; Zhong et al., 2011; Gúčík et al., 2012; Kuvan & Akan, 2012; Rio & Nunes, 2012; Newsome, Moore & Dowling, 2013; Pásková, 2014; Pomucz & Csete, 2015; Mason, 2017), especially those effects acting on nature and heritage conservation and supporting green management principles.

As pointed Pedersen (2002), Vanhove (2011) Nejdl (2011) or Newsome, Moore & Dowling (2013), these effects are often difficult to quantify. It also heavily depends on the specific way of their investigation, when in many cases it is rather a qualified estimate. Musil, Luštický & Švanda (2015) mention the difficulty of quantifying the effects of tourism in the case of

locally defined destinations due to the lack of valid data base. Many authors are focused on determination and quantification of the specific tourism impacts in particular destinations.

Authors of scientific publications and research projects have a strong focus on classifying and assessing the negative/undesirable impacts of tourism on the environment. The reason is quite obvious: for the sustainable tourism development is needed to know the undesirable effects of its development, as well as to be able to assess and evaluate them, in order to influence them managerially. The negative impacts of tourism development can gradually destroy the natural and social resources and in such a way erode tourism development in long-term horizon (Pedersen, 2002; Wall & Mathieson, 2005; Cooper et al., 2008; Hall, 2008; Mason, 2008; Jaafar et al., 2013; Newsome, Moore & Dowling, 2013; Pásková, 2014).

Despite the prevailing consensus on the classification of tourism impacts and their framework definition, the approaches of individual authors to their research differ, as do the research methods used. It is possible to identify researches that fully or predominantly emphasize the impacts of tourism on the destination economy.

In this case, authors are often based on Tourism Satellite Account data or economic data compiled in various studies or government papers. The most common methods of data processing include Input-Output Analysis (e.g. Zhou et al., 1997), Cost Benefit Analysis (e.g. Cheung, 2012), tourism multiplier calculation (e.g. Steenge & Van de Steeg, 2010; Mason, 2017), utilization of CGE model (e.g. Pratt, 2015), or so-called Social Accounting Matrix (e.g. Wagner, 1997; Pásková, 2014). Less frequent are surveys that receive information directly from visitors to estimate their spending in the destination (e.g. Mugambi & Mburu, 2013). All of these approaches have their advantages and disadvantages, as the authors often refer to.

Research on the non-economic impacts of tourism focuses on the impact of this sector on the nature environment and local community. While impacts

on the natural environment are pronounced and solved especially in protected areas, in socio-cultural sphere tourism often perceives as a sector with a strong influence mainly on the social ties between local actors as well as on the overall socio-cultural climate of the destination (Jaafar et al., 2013; Pásková, 2014; Pratt, 2015). As a data source, information from local tourism entities such as entrepreneurs, visitors, residents or local authorities is almost exclusively used. The variety of forms of data processing is considerable, always depending on the research objectives. Typical representatives of frequently used methods include Doxey's irritation index (e.g. Teo, 1994), qualitative content analysis of interviews (e.g. Jaafar et al., 2013), or a variety of statistical data processing methods such as an ANOVA test, t-test, Levene test, frequency analysis, factor analysis etc. (e.g. Sharma et al., 2008; Prayag, Dookhony-Ramphul & Maryeven, 2010; Kuvan & Akan, 2012). Due to the close link with the concept of sustainability of tourism development, corresponding indicators are often used. (e.g. Rio & Nunes, 2012; Newsome, Moore & Dowling, 2013).

The above-mentioned text shows a wide range of approaches to exploring the development of tourist destinations as well as appropriate management approach to the effects of tourism. Williams (1998, cited in Mason, 2017) or Pásková (2014) argued for a holistic approach to tourism impacts and, suggested that such an approach enables a more balanced view of impacts to be obtained and in this way, positive aspects of tourism impacts will be recognized as well negative views.

The vast majority of authors also agree that the use of a conceptual (comprehensive, strategic) approach to managing a destination is a necessary condition for achieving the development, respectively positive effects of tourism. This opinion is well illustrated by Ritchie & Crouch (2003), who point out that attractive and long-term developing destinations are not arise purely by chance. A conceptual approach to managing the destination is required. In their model they identify with the development of tourism policy and its implementation through strategic planning.

Examples of good practice from different locations show that this is indeed the case.

#### IV. Planning in conceptual management of a tourist destination

Conceptual management of a tourist destination can be generally identified with the creation and implementation of a comprehensive tourism policy and at the same time understood as a prerequisite for the sustainable development of the destination. This concept, which began to appear more often in the literature in the 1990s, supports the definition of tourism policy, as described by Hall & Jenkins (1995), who understand it as the targeted activities of various entities aimed at supporting the development of tourism. Gúčík (2011, p. 11), based on this general concept, defines tourism policy as *"a deliberate (purposeful) influence on the development of tourism through specific tools and through stakeholders (policy holders)"*. Similarly, tourism policy is defined by Holešinská (2010, p. 26) as *"a summary of the methods and instruments by which the state and its authorities intervene in the development of tourism in order to fulfill the stated objectives"*. The idea of Biederman et al. (2007) can be connected, which emphasizes the need to achieve tourism policy with the maximum possible economic and social benefits for the positive development of the state, region or certain localities, and the improvement of the quality of life of the population. Finally, Ritchie & Crouch (2003, p. 148) consider the main reason for the existence of tourism policy in *"creating an environment that provides maximum benefits to regional stakeholders while minimizing the negative impacts of tourism"*.

While it is possible to recognize many sub-objectives of tourism policy, as summarized in, for example, Hall (2008), Cooper et al. (2008), Šauer (2008), Gúčík (2011) or Musil, Luštický & Švanda (2015), the primary objective is to increase (or maintain) the competitiveness of the destination as an instrument

to its sustainable development. In this context, the competitiveness of a destination is about its ability to increase tourists' spending and the attractiveness for tourists overall, all to increase the welfare of the local population and protect the natural resources of the destination for future generations (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Competitiveness, therefore, is seen by both authors as an intermediate goal of achieving the benefits of tourism for the destination inhabitants and consequently improving the quality of their lives while preserving the principles of sustainability. This cannot be achieved without the involvement of strategic management principles.

## V. Strategic planning as a factor of destination competitiveness

In the context of increasing competitiveness, the objectives of tourism policy are most often translated into practice through the strategic planning process, which is often considered a significant factor in the competitiveness of the destination (e.g. Inskeep, 1991; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Evans, Campbell & Stonehouse, 2003; Edgell, DelMastro, Smith & Swanson, 2008), which is a major part of the overall success of tourism development policy (Page, 2013). It is therefore possible to say that the development of tourism policy and strategic planning are interrelated. Both processes are geared to long-term tourism development in the destination and are based on a conceptual (strategic) approach to managing a destination (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012). Page & Connell (2009) note that tourism policy focuses more on the "macro level" of management, i.e. it gives more general objectives, sets the basic direction of development, while strategic planning focuses on the comprehensive implementation of tourism policy priorities into practice.

Strategic planning is given considerable attention in the literature. In-depth research on this topic would significantly exceed the scope of this contribution,

therefore it is limited to a general definition of strategic planning in the context of the paper focus, as *"a process aimed at optimizing the benefits of tourism by ensuring a balance between quality and quantity of supply corresponding levels of demand regarding socio-economic development, environmental factors and the principle of sustainability"* (Edgell et al., 2008, p. 297). The aim of the planning is to use the development destination resources to maximize the benefits of tourism, thereby improving the quality of life of the local population, thanks to an active approach to improving the competitive position of the destination (Yoon, 2002).

Strategic planning deals with a number of professional resources. The authors, however, have different perspectives, assign different meanings, recognize different phases, etc. Nevertheless, several identical or similar characters can be traced in their approaches to determine the logical sequence of typical steps, often called a planning cycle (e.g. Evans, Campbell & Stonehouse, 2003; Bryson, 2004; Allison & Kaye, 2005; Cooper et al., 2008; Dess, Lumpkin & Eisner, 2008; David, 2009; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012; Mason, 2017). This includes defining the baseline conditions, performing analyzes, synthesis, setting the development vision and the resulting strategic objectives, selecting appropriate ways (strategies), and implementation of the chosen strategy.

The scope of the planning cycle defined in this way is consistent with the planning role in the concept of managing a tourist destination. However, it must be said that the use of strategic planning in the destination management does not automatically increase destination competitiveness. Likewise, it does not mean an immediate increase benefits from tourism. According to Ritchie & Crouch (2003), planning is very important, but the link between the competitiveness of the destination and its actual success depends mainly on the implementation of the created strategy in the form of activities that correspond to the objectives set. Planning itself cannot guarantee the success of a destination, but it increases the chances of achieving it. In terms of their model, planning can be considered to achieve comparative advantage, but only the implementation of the chosen

strategy, which reflects the interests and needs of regional stakeholders, has assured support, and especially closer to the destination of the objectives set, results in a competitive advantage, without which no sustainable competitiveness is possible (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; De Carlo, Cugini & Zerbini, 2008). That is why, in the context of strategic planning, the stakeholder management are increasingly being used to identify key stakeholders, identify their needs, integrate them into the objectives of the proposed strategy, and ideally cooperate with stakeholders for implementing the strategy.

## VI. Involvement of destination stakeholders in the tourism development planning process

The issue of the stakeholder management in tourism is very complex and long-term attention is paid by experts. Therefore, as in the previous case, the following text is only focused on selected aspects that are related to the theme of destination development through conceptual management.

Any sustainable tourism program must work in concert with stakeholders (or interested parties) including government agencies, key tourism business entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations, developers and local communities (Pedersen, 2002; Murphy & Murphy, 2004).

At this level, there is a predominant opinion that stakeholders are the driving force behind the destination development. The reflection of this concept can be seen in the definitions of tourism policy, competitiveness and strategic planning, where the link to local stakeholders is clearly visible. It is not surprising that a considerable research effort is devoted to the area of stakeholder involvement in the process of managing a tourist destination, where some authors (e.g. Kozak, 2004, Murphy & Murphy, 2004, Aas, Ladkin & Fletcher, 2005; Byrd, Cárdenas & Greenwood, 2008) consider this a condition for achieving sustainable

development and a long-term competitive advantage. Authors also often emphasize the problematic start-up phase when communication between local or regional public administrations and other local stakeholders is not set up and must be built and maintained. The variability of the cooperation, as well as the willingness and ability to engage local stakeholders, may vary, as shown by numerous examples from practice.

Recent attention has been paid to the last phase of the strategic planning cycle, the implementation of the strategy itself. As many authors point out (e.g. Poister & Streib, 1999, Ritchie & Crouch, 2003, Hall, 2008, Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012), it is a critical phase of the planning cycle. The need to focus research into this area is compounded by the difficulty of this phase. Buhalis (2000) notes that the real managing of tourism development in terms of development strategy implementing with the involvement of destination stakeholders is extremely difficult, mainly because of the fragmentation of their interests and often the weak willingness to participate actively in the development of the destination. This is confirmed by Page (2013) or Luštický et al. (2017), who see the main obstacles in many different actors, who are differently involved in the development of tourism, have their own interests and are in mutual (often antagonistic) interactions.

Therefore, a great deal of research focuses on identifying key stakeholders and understanding their attitudes to tourism management and development as a necessary first step for their successful involvement in the implementation of the development strategy. Authors use a variety of methods for mapping and evaluating stakeholders. These are well summarized by Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell (1999), Bryson (2004), or Částek (2010). The basis for most of these is the stakeholders' characterization using a set of attributes (characters) and their display in variously complex graphical schemes. These patterns are oscillating from relatively simple two-dimensional matrices depicting two attributes, e.g. power and interest (Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2008), attractiveness and capacity (Bryson, 2004), to more



complex diagrams showing three attributes, e.g. legitimacy, urgency and power (Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997); interest, strength and attitude (Murray-Webster & Simon, 2006); power, urgency, cooperativeness (Luštický & Musil, 2016), to highly complex schemes containing a number of attributes and often require software support, e.g. so-called Stakeholder Circle (Bourne & Walker, 2006).

The common goal of these research methods is to answer the three basic questions formulated by Mitchell et al. (1997): (a) „Who are the regional stakeholders?“, (b) „To whom the destination management should pay an attention?“, and (c) „What are the attitudes (attributes, characteristics) of these stakeholders?“. How accurate and useful the answer to a destination management is, it always depends on the focus of the research, its scale and its depth. However, at least a basic mapping of the situation in the destination is usually carried out and the research findings can be used to make the work with the target stakeholders more effective. Realization of the cooperation by researchers for the subjects responsible for the destination development cannot be done. Thus, the linking of the academic and research spheres with the destination management bodies is not only highly desirable but also necessary for the sustainable development of competitive destinations.

## VII. Conclusion

Tourism is currently regarded as an integral part of the economy not only of developed countries. In addition, tourism is a sector that fundamentally depends on the human workforce and the quality of human factor is an essential part of the quality and efficiency of the entire sector. Therefore, tourism requires professionals who need adequate data, information and knowledge. The field of tourism management was initially conceived primarily as a management of tourism enterprises. Gradually, this focus has shifted, and the authors have begun to

deal with management as a process, not only for managing tourism businesses but later also for managing tourist destinations. The principles of management penetrate tourism primarily by research, which, however, sometimes lacks a more consistent link with practice. For example, in the Czech Republic this link is still insufficient.

Tourism cannot be perceived only from one point of view. It is a complex synergic phenomenon located and influenced by the environment which also influences significantly. For many years, tourism considered to be the driving force behind the regional development. It can eliminate regional disparities, promote competitiveness, and, if adhere to certain principles, promote sustainable development. However, as is evident from the publications and research of the authors mentioned here, one of the necessary prerequisites for the fulfillment of these theses is the ability to effectively manage the destination using the principles of strategic management. It is therefore necessary to fulfill the individual phases of management, this systematic process aimed at achieving goals, including strategic planning.

The above text also shows how complex and complicated is the issue of managing a tourist destination. There are several relatively separate topics such as tourism policy, strategic planning, the competitiveness of the destination, the impact of tourism on regional stakeholders, the sustainability of activities, but with a relatively strong interrelation, which is indicated in this paper.

The paper cannot be understood as a complex depth research. The main areas in which tourism management research has dealt with over the past 20 years are outlined here. There are also emphasized the key findings that affect major research directions. It should make it possible to create a better idea of the scale of the problem, to identify the research directions and even reveal areas that has not yet been covered by research or are covered only partially. Specifically-oriented tourist research at the local level (in local and regional destinations) can still bring new valuable insights through publications and sub-research, despite extensive coverage of the area. Research

remains largely focused on the specific issue of certain destinations, or is relatively general.

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