

Barriers to sustainable tourism developments tourism essay



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Introduction

Tourism is highly known as one of the world's fastest growing industries and become the major contributor to the country's economic growth in terms foreign exchange earnings and creates job opportunities in both large and small communities. Hence, the increasing economic importance of tourism has captured the attention and interest in most developing countries.

However, people have not been thinking about the range of impacts resulted from tourism which is broad and could even negatively impact on the destination community. The uncontrolled rapid growth of tourism can poses a significant threat towards the environment and social community in other words tourism can result serious environmental and social-cultural problems. Therefore, in a way to controlled and minimize the negative impacts of tourism, sustainable tourism development need to be achieved.

Sustainable tourism today become highly important in the tourism industry and it is important to encourage more people to travel green and to ensure

that the tourism is environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable. Many destinations have also recognized the importance of achieving sustainable tourism development. However, for many developing countries worldwide sustainable tourism has not properly been translated into wide practice and there can be economic, social, and physical barriers that tend to pose great hindrances to sustainable development. In order to determine how the tourism industry can move towards sustainability, it is important to examine the barriers that hinder sustainable tourism, and then develop strategies to reduce the barriers. Thus, aim of this paper is to analyze and evaluate the barriers of implementing sustainability initiatives and achieving sustainable tourism development particularly in Gili Trawangan, Indonesia.

2.0 Literature Review on Sustainable Tourism

Tourism is a significant global industry with a huge impact towards the environment. Tourism is also the world's largest industry, with total receipts from the international tourism equaling US \$682 billion (WTO, 2006). The tourism industry also employs an estimated of 10 percent of the global workforce and capital formation. Due to this significance of this industry and that environmental degradation has impacted most tourism destinations; the need to implement more sustainable practices has come to forefront of global issues (Graci, 2004). The need to plan for tourism in a sustainable manner is evident through the developments that have occurred worldwide since the United Nations Conference on Environment Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. In the conference, tourism was identified as one of the five main industries in need for achieving sustainable development (Theobald 1998, Budeanu 1999, Pryce 2001). The World Tourism

Organization, World Travel and Tourism Council, and the Earth Council published Agenda 21 for the travel and tourism industry in 1995, which this document aimed to establish systems and procedure to incorporate sustainable development considerations into the decision making process of tourism activities. It also highly emphasized the importance of partnership between tourism industry and government and demonstrated the benefits of making the whole industry sustainable, not only just the niche ecotourism sector (Pryce, 2001).

The idea of sustainable tourism has its roots in the concept of sustainable development, defined by the Brundtland Commission as ' development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). Other effective adoption or concept of ecologically sustainable tourism, defined by the World Tourism Organization (2002) is:

“ Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present generation tourists and host communities while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is highly emphasizes the management of all resources in such as a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs are fulfilled while maintaining the cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems”.

(WTO, 2002)

This clearly means that sustainable tourism activities is aim to ensure that development will maximize enjoyment and create positive experience for tourists and communities, at the same time minimizing the negative impacts

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upon the destination site; the environment, community and local population. Therefore the sustainable implementation of sustainable development requires the duties of the tourism industry, environmental supporters and community or the three cycles which need to be interrelated. The latter should be based on three main principles of sustainable development (WTO 1993, Mowforth and Munt 1998):

Ecological sustainability which demonstrates that development is compatible with the maintenance of essential ecological processes, biological diversity and resources.

Social and cultural sustainability suggests that development increases people's control over their lives and it is compatible with the culture and values of people affected by it which maintains and strengthens the community identity.

Economic sustainability ensures that development is economically efficient and that resources are being managed properly in order to support the future generations.

Further explanations by World Tourism Organization (2002) the need for achieving several objectives for ensuring sustainable tourism, which are involve the protection and conservation of resource include natural, historical, and cultural for future generations, whilst at the same time ensuring long term economic viability for businesses, and providing socio-cultural benefits to the wider society. Tourism development is also being planned and managed so that it does not negatively impact on the

environment and cultural society, the overall environmental quality of tourism is maintained and improved as well.

3.0 Sustainable Tourism in Gili Trawangan, Indonesia

Gili Trawangan is known as the largest island located amongst the Gili Islands off the coast of Lombok in Indonesia. The island is also known as a sun, sand and sea destination. It is approximately three by two kilometers and low-lying with a small hill to the south, rising to 72 meters above sea level (Hampton 1998). Gili Trawangan is considered as the most developed of all three Gili islands, which the other two islands Gili Air and Gili Meno are being the newly developed. There are several expatriates lives and work on the island as well and the majority of land on the island is used for tourism and the rest is coconut plantation and some small field of agricultural crops and livestock. Tourism is regarded as the major economic activity on the island with more than 80 percent of families is employed by tourism. However, Gili Trawangan is not highly developed tourism destination in terms of mass tourism, infrastructure, and services, and the island has limited resources of fresh water.

In terms of sustainable tourism, there have been some initiatives for developing sustainable tourism in Gili Trawangan. However, the initiatives have been faced with a slow implementation and have not been completely adopted in practice. The main of the initiatives developed by the dive operators on the island is known as the Gili Trawangan Eco-trust. This Gili Eco-trust was being set up in order to protect and conserve the coral reefs around the island against destructive fishing practices. While the main purpose of this organization is to manage the collection of a dive tax which <https://assignbuster.com/barriers-to-sustainable-tourism-developments-tourism-essay/>

guest are charged about US\$3 per diver and US\$1 per snorkeler. The dive tax is then used to pay the local fisherman to stop damaging the reefs and the funds are also used for beach cleaning, rubbish management and monitoring (Lombok Network 2009).

4.0 Barriers to sustainable tourism in Gili Trawangan

The Eco-trust is one of the initiatives developed by the dive operators on the Gili Trawangan Island for developing sustainable tourism. However they have encountered various barriers to sustainable tourism development in the area that has led to frustration on the island. Based on the research study which was conducted by Sonya Graci in the article, Accomodating Green: Examining Barriers to Sustainable Tourism Development (2004), number of barriers was documented in this research consisting of five main barriers to implementing and achieving sustainable tourism initiatives in the destination. The first barrier is the inadequate resources associated with high cost, lack of information, skills, knowledge, expertise, time and the reluctance to get assistance from outside consultants. The numerous ideas for initiatives such giving payments to fisherman to stop their illegal fishing can be a problem for the Island since they don't have enough resources and many of these plans could fail. Another example such as that the Gili Trawangan Eco-trust also attempted to implement a waste management collection system by building of a landfill with areas to separate and organize recyclables. Yet, again with lack of resources the landfill development would failed. Besides, a number of business owners and the local government also have indentified that the inadequate of resources was the biggest barrier as it is realized on the island without any proper systems in place, the

environment will degrade even further and this will eventually affect the tourism on Gili Trawangan. Thus, the destination needs the ability to implement those systems with the necessary funds and knowledge to develop feasible systems.

The second barrier being emphasized is the lack of momentum to take action concerning to the sustainability initiatives by business owners; restaurants, accommodations, dive operators, and bars. There was a belief by a number of business owners that current practices were lack, yet, there was a lack of momentum to move forward and implement sustainable initiatives. There are several business owners who did not want to take responsibility in managing the implementation of the initiatives especially involving time and money, and they also had complaints about the management of the environment, such only one business owner in conjunction with the local government to manage the eco tax funds to pay the fisherman. Thus, this is a practice that was not look upon favorably as a sustainable solution by many of the business owners and no other solutions were put forward.

The third barrier is related to the corporate culture of the island which comprised of the attitudes, experiences, beliefs, and values of the organization. The isolation of environmental issues from other aspects of the organization or destination, and the bureaucracy that exists within each of organization are barriers that have affected the implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives in the island. The corporate culture in the Island is one of the employees and local which are resistant to change though they realized the benefits associated with sustainable tourism

initiatives such as reducing health problems in the community which arises
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from the lack of garbage collection. Generally this is because of the lack of education that the local people discouraged to participate in the sustainable tourism development. Another barrier to sustainable tourism development in the destination is related to government bureaucracy and corruption which usually arises in many developing countries. The provincial and national governments have consistently collected taxes from the Island without any investment in infrastructure or development of policy in the area. Moreover, in 1998 the provincial government of Western Nusa Dua developed the Gili Mantra Marine National Park strategy. However the marine park strategies were never implemented, but then it was the Gili Trawangan Eco-trust who implemented initiatives to stop illegal fishing to protect the reefs.

Lastly, infrastructure or physical attributes such location and age of facilities are another barriers faced in the destination at the same time this closely related to the problem of having lack of resources on the Island to purchase new technologies. Despite if initiatives such as solar power or a sewage treatment plant were installed, it would be difficult to fix or adapt to the technologies due to the isolation of the Island. The Island also may have an issue on having no enough space or room for businesses to install composters to dispose organic waste.

5. 0 Recommendation

After indentifying the various barriers of implementing and achieving sustainable tourism in Gili Trawangan, Indonesia, there could be some strategies or solutions to overcome the stated barriers which contribute to the development of sustainable tourism in Island of Gili Trawangan. The strategies can include the alternatives of composting, employing financial

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mechanism such as tourist taxes and developing a multi-stakeholder island committee to manage the development and implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives in the destination. Extensive consultation with the locals and all stakeholders on the Island who involves could be performed as well which this allows to motivate and support the implementation of sustainable initiatives in the area. Whereas, the inadequate of resources on the island particularly for financial resources should likely be obtained from outside or non-local interests since it might be difficult for local people in the destination to play a leading role as entrepreneurs in the tourism industry. Local government should also support for educational programs and tourism training on the island to improve the knowledge and skills of the people and therefore it will encourage them to participate in the development of sustainable tourism.

6. 0 Conclusion

Achieving sustainable tourism development is highly important to the island of Gili Trawangan in Indonesia, in which it will help in protecting and conserving the local resources while minimizing the negative impacts of tourism and benefiting the island communities. However, despite the efforts from a number of local businesses, various barriers exist and affect the implementation of achieving sustainability initiatives in the tourism industry in the destination. Yet, a cohesive and inclusive strategy still can be developed to move this tourist destination towards sustainability.