

The tourism planning discussion paper tourism essay



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Tourism is one of many human activities in a community or region, and has the idea as a private and public sector activity and especially as an area of government intervention that requires planning and coordination. On the one hand, tourism is also one many activities in an area that must be considered as part of economic, physical, environmental, and social planning. Thereby, it is very important in ensuring that the tourism industry can thrive and develop by trying to maximize all these valuable aspects and to develop comprehensive tourism planning at a community or region. This discussion paper will be mainly discussing about the different approaches to tourism planning and the tourism planning framework for the development of tourism in the destination region of the Central Highlands of the Island. The overall framework in this paper consists of the appropriate steps to be taken in the planning process and in a way to achieve successful planning and development in the destination region, the guiding principles in the planning, and several issues to be considered in the planning.

2. 0 Critical review of approaches to tourism planning

Based on Getz (1987) there are four different approaches of tourism planning at the destination level can be recognized according to the values that support the planning or policy activity include boosterism, economic, physical/spatial, and community-oriented that emphasizes the role the destination community plays in the tourism development and experience. Then to these four approaches, Hall (1998) added an additional approach of sustainable planning. Each of tourism planning approach differs in its underlying assumptions about planning, and their strengths and weakness

that play in the tourism development. The following describes the strengths and weaknesses for each approach.

2. 1 Boosterism

Boosterism is one of the tourism planning approaches that have attitude towards tourism development which is inherently ' good' and will provide benefit to the hosts destination. This approach also characterized as being part of an attitude to the development of ' growth' is good and any negative impact of tourism development will be dominated by positive benefits. From this approach perspective the primary planning problem is one of how to attract as many people as possible to a given location or destination.

Boosterism approach however, doesn't take into account or involves their host community in the decision making process, planning and policy process surrounding the tourism developments. Yet it is still being adopted by governments and politicians to promote tourism growth, regional economic diversification and employment creation.

This attitude approach towards tourism development is seen as to give benefits to the host destination and community which can bring higher living standards to a destination and improves quality of life of the people especially in the developing countries. Tourism development could improves quality of life , as it supports the creation of community facilities and services, through the provision of better or upgraded infrastructure, facilities, services, transport, health, better quality of commodities and food. The indirect benefit of tourism development will also increase job opportunities towards the whole community and at the same time boost up the country's economy. However on the other hand, since this approach does not involved <https://assignbuster.com/the-tourism-planning-discussion-paper-tourism-essay/>

residents of the tourist destinations in the tourism development plan and policy, and decision making process, thus there will be lack of public or community participation in the local tourism development. The tourism development tend to benefit more on the government instead of the local community because the community has no power to make their own decisions in the tourism planning and therefore it will not encourage them to participate and does not allow them to share tourism benefits with the wider community.

2. 2 Economic

The second approach of tourism planning is the economic (industry-oriented approach). It is an approach that aims to promote economic growth and development in a destination, as well apply the use of marketing and promotion to attract visitors. The economic approach emphasizes more on the economic impacts of tourism and the most efficient and effective use of tourism to create income and employment benefits for the regions, communities, and countries as a whole. The main strengths of this planning approach are as it is mainly focuses on the economic impacts of tourism, it believes that tourism development is becomes a key driver of economic growth or will boost the country's economy through the creation of employment, generation of foreign exchange earnings, contribution of government revenues, stimulation or improvement of infrastructure investment, and the create contribution to the local economy. Yet there are some weaknesses from this approach which it doesn't take into account environmental concerns and social issues which means there is limited attention is given towards the environmental and social impacts brought

about by tourism. Another weakness would be the high satisfaction of tourists result from tourism development and the positive attitudes towards tourists in host communities are unknown.

2. 3 Physical/Spatial

The physical/ spatial approach to tourism planning considers tourism as a form of land use to be managed using spatial strategies and regarded as having an ecological base with a resultant need for development to be based upon certain spatial patterns, capacities or thresholds that would minimize the negative impacts of tourism on the physical environment. The key planning approaches from this perspective include carrying capacity, hazard and risk assessment, resource and landscape evaluation, resource appraisal and allocation, decision making and evaluation and the development of appropriate institutional arrangements. While the main point of this approach is to control and maintain the capacities, land use and the number of physical infrastructure being built for tourism, so it won't exceeds the environmental and social carrying capacities of the destination. As a result, it will help to minimize the negative environmental impacts resulting from tourism development.

Besides, a well planned physical destination with structured design and layout would also attract visitors to visit a destination as it can provide a good and open space for tourists. Other strengths would be the increase protection towards the environment due to the less land being use and it keep the sustainability of tourism. The weakness of this approach is if the number of infrastructure, buildings, and capacities are being controlled, thus economically the destination unable to maximize their profit from the result <https://assignbuster.com/the-tourism-planning-discussion-paper-tourism-essay/>

the inability to fulfill the high demand of tourism to build more attractions. Limited attention is also given to social and cultural attributes of the destination.

2. 4 Community

Community tourism planning approach is focuses on the social and political context within which tourism occurs and it advocates greater local community control over the development process. Under this approach, community is considered as the focal point or actor that encourages the development process of the tourism and seeks for public participation in a destination in order to enhance their economic livelihoods while protecting their cultural values, and preserving the natural environment.

Community planning approach which implies a high degree of public participation in tourism planning process, highly involved the community in the decision making and planning process, as well as in the sharing of tourism benefits and in the sharing of tourism profits with the wider community. Therefore, the main strengths of this community based approach in terms of its benefits, will likely to create and increased employment opportunities available to the locals as more community being involved in the process while it also contributes positively in the improvement on household income and general quality of life through the extent of contribution vary from one aspect to another. Moreover, public participation is also to design tourism development in such a way that it is intended to benefit the local community and to encourage them to participate in their own development through mobilizing their own resources, defining their needs and making own decisions about how to meet them.

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Then if the government is being supportive and let the community to take a large part of the decision making for tourism, there will less conflict arises between the government and community, and if problem arises the community would be able to make decisions and solve it on their own.

Bringing educational elements towards the whole community is also one of the strength of community approach. The locals likely to be educated and trained in order to improve their knowledge about tourism and as a results it will help them to recognize and conserve their local culture, natural resource values, and creating a good image about the destination. Tourists who come from different parts of the world will also encourage the locals to interact and provide cultural exchange between hosts and tourists, at the same time it also gives the opportunities for the locals to learn foreign language and lead to a better understanding of cultural differences and build tolerant attitude towards foreigners.

On the other hand, there are weaknesses of this approach in terms of the barriers or the difficulties in implementing a community approach to tourism planning in tourist destination. The major difficulties or barriers to incorporating public participation in tourism planning can include the lack of financial and human resources in the tourism sector especially in the developing country. Resources at the local level may not enough to finance the present scale of tourism development and therefore it will lead to discourage community participation in the tourism planning. Then generally the public may have difficulty in understanding complex and technical planning issues, not always aware the decision making process, and the difficulty in maintaining representativeness in the decision making process

due to the lack of knowledge, experiences and possible conflicts that may arise between cultures. In addition, there is also need for the government to be able to manage the involvement of the community that aims to achieve the desired result however it does not give the impression to the community of being control by the government. Power should also be distributed evenly within a community so that some groups or individuals will not have the ability exert greater influence over the planning process than others.

2. 5 Sustainable

The sustainable approach towards tourism is an integrative form of tourism planning which brings together economic, environmental (physical/spatial), and socio-cultural (community) planning methods. This approach seeks to provide lasting and secure livelihoods which minimize depletion of resources, environmental degradation, cultural disturbance and social instability. It also concern about both inter and intra-generational equity which in sustainable development it means that we should not only concerned with the maintenance of ' environmental capital' (Jacobs, 1991) but also the maintenance and enhancement of social capital (Healey, 1997). The main strengths of sustainable approach are include long term protection of environment resources since it focuses on tourism development which try to avoids damage on the environment, economy, and cultures of a tourist destination as well as provides positive experience for host community tourism industry and the tourist itself. As a result of these, it will also lead to the preservation of essential ecological processes, give beneficial and opportunities for future generation ability to use the resources and enjoy the same situation as now, protection of human heritage and biodiversity,

improve economic benefits to support sustainable tourism, and it also benefit the communities by providing more employment opportunities and the improvement of standard of living.

The weaknesses of this sustainable approach are include the overprotecting the resources will result that the tourists unable to enjoy or being satisfied with the overall tourism experiences, for instance tourists might have high expectation when they travel to the tourism site, yet they are not allowed to connect to the environment thus their perception will be lower because it doesn't meet their high expectation, and become very unsatisfied. Besides, by adopting sustainable tourism approach could also create conflict between public and private sectors in terms of having different views and perspective on sustainable planning. Public sector might want to save and maintain the environment while private sector wants to gain more economic benefit in having less concern on sustainable tourism benefits. Sustainable tourism approach could also be difficult to achieve and has been often criticized for its contradictory goals that never achieved, as it requires cooperation and coordination between industry and the manager of destinations, and the needs to build consumer and producer awareness.

3.0 A review of the main issues or challenges that tourism planners face

As millions more people travel and to seek for personal rewards from their experiences, the massive development of tourism resources is the consequences (Gunn, 2002). The various activities that tourists engage in a tourism destination are important and expanding aspect of the tourist industry in which it creates huge development for tourism in a destination

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and provides tourism benefits in many ways. Thus, it is now recognized that planning is necessary for tourism to develop, to be managed in a controlled, integrated, and sustainable manner in such a way that would lead to enhancing the benefits derived from tourism. By using this planned approach to design of all tourism development, it allows tourism to generate economic, social, and environmental benefits to the host community and any negative impacts results from tourism can be minimized.

Moreover, planning for tourism can be a challenge regarding to the several main issues, complication or challenge that tourism planner may face in trying to plan tourism. Besides, due to the rapid growth and complication nature of tourism have made it difficult for planners to apply even the most fundamental of research findings and recommendations for improved tourism. Based on Claire A. Gunn (2004) described the prospects for tourism planning in term of the key issues and concerns in the field of tourism planning in which the issues include the poor understanding of the need for planning, the lack of systems planning, poor organizational integration, and lack of tourism literacy.

The first issue of poor understanding of the need for planning refers to the unclear understanding or different assumptions on tourism planning that seen as the unnecessary interference in market driven development. Investors and developers might see an opportunity to build various kinds of attractions or tourism related places in the destination to increase tourism development. Then tourism promoters usually believe that all development is positive by bringing better employment and economic benefits and continually to attract tourists. However, this is merely a half truth even though <https://assignbuster.com/the-tourism-planning-discussion-paper-tourism-essay/>

tourism development can provide economic benefit but the understanding on planning doesn't take into account that tourism growth also create negative impacts in which it creates more demand for new investment to build more attractions as a result may lead to increased in pollution, and destroyed natural landscape. The high volume of visitor in the destination could also have reduce the local quality of life, and forcing long time residents to move. Hence, these issues requires new planning techniques and planners must cope with the constantly changing environment results from tourism growth.

The second issue is the lack of system planning. Most tourism planners have modeled the functioning tourism system which have two main drivers of tourism consist of a demand and a supply side. The five supply side major components include transportation, attractions, services, information, and promotion. They are all interdependent which subject to travel demand and require planning that relates to market trends as well as to physical characteristics of land and resources. The supply side is influenced greatly by many external factors such as the governmental policies, competition, community involvement, entrepreneurship, labor, finance, cultural and natural resources. This way of viewing tourism is oppose to the mindset of tourism as an industry and mostly on the business sector. Understanding of tourism as a system is relatively important and knowing how each part of tourism depends upon each other.

Poor organizational intgration is another issue in the tourism planning in which there are lack of communication and integration between different and separate organizations (suh as in in the business tourism sector there are the hotel organizations, restaurant, attraction, and airline organizations)

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developed in tourism in tourism planning,. The lack of organizational mechanism is affect the tourism as entirely. There is a need for better communication aamong many existing tourist organizations in order to gain mutual benefit and assist better understanding of change. Lastly, is the lack of tourism literacy means within parts of tourism all parties are very well knowledgable about their functions and operations. However, there is still remains a lack of understanding among developers and managers considering the full meaning and importance of tourism to them. Due to the tourism illiteracy, community is not well prepared to plan their localities in the best interest of tourism and to protect local lifestyle. Other issue or complication of tourism planning developed by Gunn (2002) is regarding with the worldwide proliferation of ecotourism, acculturation, and the dramatic evolutionary changes in many aboriginal societies. Native populations (non-industrial foundation) could face the dilemma of introducing tourists to their cultural uniqueness and lead them to move into new industrial societies. Thus, it will be difficult for them to plan for tourism development that might generate economic advantages without facing the great internal stress for protection of their cultural heritage and acculturation.

4. 0 The Central Highlands of the Island

The Central Highlands of the Island is the chosen destination region to develop tourism planning to encourage tourism development in the destination. The Central Highlands of the Island is a developing country and known for its tourist destination. Despite having a number of potential tourist attractions, the area still have little development on tourism and facing quite number of problems, based on the facts that the country has experienced a

number of environmental problems include water pollution and having limited of human and natural resources of fresh water resources and electricity. It also experienced a depressed economy with limited infrastructure and supply accommodation in the central region area.

Besides, the destination has a unique ethnic groups living in the central highlands region and having the majority population of 'Islandese', yet several of these ethnic groups are being isolated who have typically been ignored in most government policy exercises. These people also have limited of education background and low levels of languages which can be one reason that discouraged the community participation in the tourism development or make them difficult to participate. However, by experiencing these various conditions the local government should have promote tourism planning to encourage tourism development in the destination by taking account all the tourism resources, organizations, then economic, environmental, and social aspects of tourism development. The government should also need to get involved the local community in the tourism planning process to help support and encourage the tourism development of the destination at the same time intended to benefit the community as a whole and giving them opportunities to participate in their own development. The next part of this paper will be discussing about overall framework on the Central Highlands of the Island which are emphasizes on the steps in the planning process, the set of guiding principles for planning participants and list of issues to be considered in the planning process..

4. 1 Steps in the Planning Process

In the tourism planning process, it takes a proactive role in assisting and promoting the implementation of a good quality of development. A large number of groups or individuals including stakeholders, community, and operator are involved in the tourism planning. They conduct various kinds of planning which include feasibility, marketing, product development, promotion, forecasting, and strategic planning. The following are main series of steps to be taken in the planning process in terms of the tourism development of the Central Highlands of the Region as a tourist destination.

According to Stynes and O'Halloran (1987), there are six steps in the planning process include define goals and objectives, identify the tourism system (resources, organizations, markets), generate and evaluate alternatives, select and implement, lastly monitor and evaluate. The first step that the destination needs to accomplish is to obtain clear statements of tourism development goals and objectives which should acquire more from general community on how they want to achieve specific tourism development, whether the community wants to serve the broader community goals in seeking for better quality of life and to improve living standard. These objectives could be achieved by working together with various groups and organizations in the community. The appropriate types of goals to be achieved and the degree in which tourism is addressed in planning depends on how long the community has been involved in tourism or the importance of tourism to them. Since the Central Highlands region is still in the early stages of tourism development, goals that may want to achieve involve setting up organizational structures and collecting information to

have better understanding on the tourism system in the community. Then later throughout the process, more precise objectives can be created.

The second step involve in identifying tourism as a system by breaking it down into three subsystems; tourism resources, organizations, and market. This will refers to how the community in the destination region coordinates their activities toward common goals and striving to achieve certain objectives by matching available resources and programs with the needs and wants of tourists, and identify the availability to be able to serve the tourists and provide opportunities for tourism development. For instance, for tourism resources in the Central Highlands; natural resources which can be used and available for the tourists are climate, scenery, favorable geographic location for shipping trade and high supply of local food and wine, while for cultural resources could be the unique ethnics' cultures, cultural heritage, archaeological sites, and the local cuisine. Human resources of having a productive labor force and capital resources include the availability of infrastructure (roads, accommodation, utilities of water and electricity) are quite limited. Moreover, the community also needs to recognize and list all the diverse range of public and private sectors in the destination that manage or coordinate tourism activities, and to make all these groups to work together achieving the same goals. Lastly, is to identify the tourism market segments or types of tourists the destination wish to attract and serve.

Furthermore, after the second step moving on to the generating and evaluating alternatives step in tourism planning process. The generating alternatives development and marketing option to meet the goals requires <https://assignbuster.com/the-tourism-planning-discussion-paper-tourism-essay/>

brainstorming. And there are two parts to evaluation of tourism development and marketing alternatives; feasibility analysis, and impact assessment whether it is possible to be done and understand the impacts both positive and negative associated with tourism development. The last critical steps in a tourism plan are the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. As objectives have been set up for the plan, it needs to be implemented through a set of specific actions that should be adopted and developed by the community with clearly defined responsibilities and timetables. Then implementation is should be monitored and evaluated to find out the success of the plan in meeting its goals and objectives. Plans generally still need to be adjusted over time because of changing goals, changing market conditions, unexpected impacts. Thus the most important of all, successful tourism planning and development should able to serve both tourists and host communities. However, tourism should serve the community first since tourism development is closely coordinated and supported by the local population of the destination.

4. 2 Guiding Principles for planning participants

Tourism is very important and as the main key driver of economic growth or development tool for the Central Highlands Region, which its future development should therefore be maintained by tourism developers or planners engaging in the tourism planning process. There are set of guiding principles that can be used to support tourism planning which by providing specific policies that need to be developed to suit the particular area of the Central Highlands of the region. The tourism policies which are include in a plan can aim to maximize the benefits of tourism by ensuring that the

development able to reach its potential contribution to tourism in the destination at the same time providing benefits for local community. Then it is also to integrate development with its surroundings in terms of design and layout in the way that the facility or service is able to function properly and in order to avoid unexpected impacts such as disturbance to activities. In preparing such policies it require planners to understand a number of important factors which are include market demand, environmental impact, transport and accessibility, functional link, regeneration benefits, and labor supply which all these can be vary for different tourism developments such as for labor supply, the quality and amount of labor will be different from one area to another. Tourism planning generally seeks to place new development where the need for employment exists and to benefit the local population from the various ranges of job opportunities.

4. 3 Issues to be considered

In terms of planning tourism development of the Central Highlands destination region, comprehensive planning is required for successful planning and development which involves systematic approach and series of steps that has been mentioned above. In addition, there are still several issues to be considered regarding to tourism planning for tourism development in the destination especially in terms of the complications and issues that tourism planner may encounters. Refer to the previous Claire A. Gunn descriptions of issues or challenges in the field of tourism planning; the major issues that probably face by the tourism planner in the destination are the lack of system of planning and the dramatic evolutionary changes for aboriginal societies and acculturation.

The lack of system of planning can occur in which there is no enough balance between two main drivers of tourism elements both demand and supply. The limited supply in the destination which are include limited infrastructure, accommodation, natural and human resources, as well as tourist attractions would not enough to fulfill the high tourism demand as both elements are dependent on each other. Besides, due to the majority of the island population are ethnic groups and they seems to be distrustful of strangers it will be difficult for the community to develop tourism plan because it requires them adaptation with the industrial societies and they need to decide which areas of the community that will be shared with the tourists and how the community will capture the benefits. Since they need to have a contact with the tourists, it will also lead to modification of the culture as a result of contact of different culture.

5. 0 Conclusion

The Central Highlands of the Island which is the main discussion in this paper, as a tourist destination region, still have a very little development on tourism due to the lack or limited of supply and natural resources (fresh water) that are important to support for tourism activities and development. One way is that the local government needs to encourage tourism planning and get involve the community in the process and decision making, and use different approaches of tourism planning that play important role in the tourism development in the region. Thus, planning is necessary for tourism in the area to develop at the same time it will provide benefits for the communities in terms of economic, social, and environmental aspects of tourism. Besides, comprehensive planning should be also applied by

involving series of steps to achieve specific objectives of tourism development and highly coordinated with the local community and regional planning efforts. However, there are also some issues or challenges in the tourism planning that planners might face include the lack system of planning and acculturation in the area since the community has to still maintain and protect their strong and unique cultures.