
GREEN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AT SPORT TOURISM ENTERPRISES

Submitting author: Ms Elena Spyridopoulou
Democritus University of Thrace, Physical Education and Sport Science
Komotini, 69100
Greece

All authors: Elena Spyridopoulou, Georgia Yfantidou (corresp), George Costa, Ourania Matsouka, Ioannis Trigonis

Type: Scientific
Category: 13: Tourism and Leisure Sport Management

Abstract

Literature review

Bramwell (1990) defines "green tourism" as tourism which enhances local cultural elements, operating under the control of local communities by providing employment while retaining the economic benefits within local communities. In fact, many times, the above definition is poorly attested, since there are cases where the economic benefits of local communities escape outwards. From its side, the tourist industry uses the term "green tourism" as a message to tourists on saving energy, preventing coastal pollution and more. However, there are not a few occasions, where the same tourism businesses are accused of using the term or labeling "green" for purely marketing reasons. Of course it is not disputed that the tourism industry is starting to respond to the changing values of tourists on environmental issues (Long, 1991). Interviews with seven local hospitality and tourism enterprises in the West of England provided valuable insight into the benefits of the scheme. These were related to environmental impacts, financial considerations, marketing opportunities, brand recognition and company image and other issues such as public relations, personal and moral responsibility, and political considerations (Jarvis, N. et al., 2010). The study of Sorensson, A. et al. (2013), establishes that there are differences between the sustainability factors that were important to the two different groups of tourists. For the national tourists, environmental sustainability was much more important: something reflected in the fact that most of them were returning visitors who were staying in their own properties or with relatives or friends. Their results showed that, in order to perform well on sustainability, a mass tourism destination needs to seriously consider how to manage its performance in environmental issues. The national tourists' concerns about environmental issues may well reflect their interest in striking a balance amongst common environmental issues. These issues have to be collectively dealt with at the destination, and

must take into consideration the private tourism producer's need for good economic performance and the tourist's interest in a clean and safe environment.

Aim of the paper

The purpose of this study is to investigate: a. the level of awareness on general sustainability issues among different size enterprises, b. the different sources of information around this subject among different size enterprises, c. their intentions to pursue a strategy of sustainable development, d. the nature and the number of actions that they may already have been taken in the direction of sustainability, e. key characteristics and peculiarities of both the business and the owner.

Methodology

Sample: The sample consists of 60 companies on sport tourism industry in Greece.

Questionnaire: The questionnaire is based on the scale of sustainable tourism of Kilipiris (2006), which has two parts: a) the first part includes questions related to the profile of the enterprise, b) the second part includes questions related to environmental issues and how they may impact their activity.

Also, for research needs, a third part has been added and it is about economic factors. The respondent was asked to give information about their businesses, their previous employment and applicable approaches on their management, details relevant with age, the time of the previous employment to the particular activity, their previous experience, as well as the number and the place of the employees in the enterprise.

Moreover, they were asked to give crucial information about different business approaches to their work, regarding their long term aims as well as everyday practices. These clues are fully necessary for the businesses to be classified concerning their development number, their future direction, as well as the owners' personality clues. An important clue, which interests the sport politic field, especially in level practice, is to look into how the available information and briefing has affected or not their tendency for action. So, in the second part of the questionnaire, the respondent was asked to locate possible information sources about the sustainability issue and their practical implementations in daily activity. This approach was chosen to investigate firstly the possible behavior and secondly the relationship between attitudes and specific conduct.

Discussion and conclusions

The diffusion of information in a local level as well as the implementation of practical tools and instruments should exceed the narrow administrative, regulatory type instructions and decisions. The ultimate goal is to involve the element of preventive (proactive) and less oppressive (reactive) action. This research will investigate, based on existing literature, cases related to the attitudes and the behavior of small and medium sport tourism enterprises (SME) as regards sustainable development and the economic benefits they can have.

References

Bramwell, B., (1990). "Green tourism in the countryside", *Tourism Management*, 11(2):41-2.

Jarvis, N., Weeden C., & Simcock, N. (2010). The benefits and challenges of sustainable tourism certification: A case study of the Green Tourism Business Scheme in the West of England. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 17, 83–93. DOI 10.1375/jhtm.17.1.83

Long, V. (1991). Nature Tourism: environmental stress or environmental salvation? Paper presented at the 3rdWorld Leisure and Recreation Association International Congress, Sydney, July.

Kilipiris, F. (2006). Sustainable tourism development in small tourism businesses (hotels - travel agencies). Dissertation Thesis. Department of Applied Informatics, University of Macedonia, Greece.

Sorensson, A. & Von Friedrichs, Y. (2013). An importance–performance analysis of sustainable tourism: A comparison between international and national tourists. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 2, 14–21. DOI 10.1016/j.jdmm.2012.11.002